



**The Effect of Live Attenuated
Influenza Vaccine and Experimental
Human Pneumococcal Carriage on
Human Immunity**

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of
the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

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*This PhD thesis is dedicated to my amazing parents
Emilia and Fernando Carniel*

*“What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what
you become by achieving your goals”
Henry David Thoreau*

Declaration

This thesis is the result of the original work of the author. Recruitment of volunteers, clinical procedures and experiments were conducted in collaboration with internal colleagues outlined in Table 1.

The laboratory experiments presented in this thesis were carried out at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and clinical procedures were conducted at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital, Liverpool, United Kingdom.

The contents of this thesis have not yet been presented, nor are currently being presented, wholly or in part, for any other degree or qualification.

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December 2019

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Table 1: Collaboration and support from the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine staff and researchers to the work presented in this thesis.

Procedure	Collaborator
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BAL cell stimulation	Simon Jochems
Statistical analysis	Simon Jochems
Scoring tolerability of nasal sampling procedures	Katherine Piddock
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Nasal mucosa methodologies assessment	Simon Jochems

Abstract

Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV) is used in immunisation campaigns but may alter the dynamics of naturally occurring nasal colonisation by *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (Spn), a common human pathogen. We tested how the attenuated influenza viruses contained in the vaccine and Spn interact in the host's nasopharynx using for the first time an Experimental Human Pneumococcal Challenge model (EHPC) with multiple live pathogens: LAIV and Spn of serotype 6B. Two double blinded randomised clinical trials represented two scenarios of controlled co-infection: 1) Antecedent LAIV administration followed by nasopharyngeal Spn inoculation or 2) Concurrent LAIV administration during established Spn colonisation, separated by a 3 day interval. We validated non-invasive micro-sampling techniques for mucosal immunity analysis by comparing reliability and reproducibility of available methods. Absorptive matrices and nasal currettes were established as the preferred techniques to investigate lining fluid and immune cells in the nasal mucosa. In addition, we collected nasal wash, BAL and serum from healthy adults to investigate immune cell recruitment, cytokine and influenza-specific antibody responses using flow cytometer, human cytokine 30-plex panel and ELISA analysis. Here, we showed that LAIV-induced inflammation in the nasopharynx was associated with Spn colonisation. Immune responses to Spn and to the attenuated influenza virus were impaired by LAIV, reducing chemoattractant cytokines, recruitment of monocytes, and activation of T-cells and neutrophils. In the lung, our results demonstrated that LAIV induces inflammatory cytokines produced by T-cells and that tissue-resident memory T-cells have an important role in producing specific

cytokines against the attenuated influenza virus. In short, LAIV was shown to be immunogenic in healthy adults, but less in Spn colonised individuals, highlighting the significance of nasal microbiota when developing vaccines and assessing its efficacy.

Papers published with work presented in this thesis

- Jochems, Simon P. ; Marcon, Fernando ; Carniel, Beatriz F. ; Holloway, Mark ; Mitsi, Elena ; Smith, Emma ; Gritzfeld, Jenna F. ; Solórzano, Carla ; Reiné, Jesús ; Pojar, Sherin ; Nikolaou, Elissavet ; German, Esther L. ; Hyder-Wright, Angie ; Hill, Helen ; Hales, Caz ; De Steenhuijsen Piters, Wouter A. A. ; Bogaert, Debby ; Adler, Hugh ; Zaidi, Seher ; Connor, Victoria ; Gordon, Stephen B. ; Rylance, Jamie ; Nakaya, Helder I. ; Ferreira, Daniela M. **Inflammation induced by influenza virus impairs human innate immune control of pneumococcus.** Nature Immunology, v. 19, p. 1, 2018.
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- Beatriz Carniel, Elena Mitsi, Jamie Rylance, Seher Zaidi, Andrea Collins, Jesus Reine, Helen Hill, Victoria Connor, Katerina Cheliotis, Elissavet Nikolaou, Sherin Pojar, S. Alessandra S. Schanoski, Edessa Negera, Simon P. Jochems, Daniela M. Ferreira. ***Streptococcus pneumoniae* Colonisation Affects Mucosal Responses To Influenza Vaccination In Adults (in preparation).**
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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
μL	Microliter
Antecedent LAIV	Live attenuated influenza vaccine given before <i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i> inoculation
BAL	Bronchoalveolar lavage
BSA	Bovine serum albumin
Concurrent LAIV	Live attenuated influenza vaccine given after <i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i> inoculation
DC	Dendritic cell
EDTA	Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
EGF	Epidermal growth factor
EHPC	Experimental human pneumococcal carriage model
Epcam	Epithelial cellular adhesion molecule
FGF-Basic	Basic fibroblast growth factor
G-CSF	Granulocyte colony-stimulating factor
GM-CSF	Granulocyte-macrophage colony-stimulating factor
HA	Hemagglutinin
HGF	Hepatocyte growth factor
HLA-DR	Human leukocyte antigen-d related
IFN-α and IFN-γ	Interferon alpha and interferon gamma
IL-2R	IL-2 receptor
KC	Keratinocyte chemoattractant
LAIV	Live attenuated influenza vaccine
LOESS	Locally estimated scatterplot smoothing
MCP-1	Monocyte chemoattractant protein-1
MHC I and II	Major histocompatibility complex class i and class ii

MIG	Monokine induced by gamma
MIP-1α and MIP-1β	Macrophage inflammatory protein alpha and beta
mL	Millilitre
NA	Neuraminidase
Nod2	Nucleotide-binding oligomerisation domain containing 2
NS	Nasosorption
NW	Nasal wash
PAFR	Platelet-activating factor receptor
PBS	Phosphate buffered saline
PRRs	Pattern recognition receptors
PspA and PspC	<i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i> protein a and c
RANTES	Regulated on activation, normal t cell expressed and secreted
Spn	<i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i>
Spn colonised	Individuals who are nasally colonised by <i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i>
T-cell	Thymus lymphocyte cell
Th17	T-helper 17
Th2	T-helper 2
TIV	Tetavalent inactivated influenza vaccine
TLR	Toll-receptor
TNF-α	Tumour necrosis factor alpha
TRM	Tissue resident memory cell
VEGF	Vascular endothelial growth factor

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Streptococcus pneumoniae

Streptococcus pneumoniae (Spn) is a gram-positive coccus of approximately 1µm of diameter. This bacteria is a facultative anaerobe, generating energy by carbohydrate fermentation. They are generally grouped in pairs (diplococci) or in short chains and are able to replicate outside host cells, for example in circulation, connective tissues, and tissue spaces such as the airway lumen.

The Spn are coated with a polysaccharide capsule which is its main virulence factor ^{1,2} and protects the bacteria from phagocytosis by host immune cells ^{3,4} as well as reduces the autolysis process ⁵. Spn capsules vary in size, composition, and antiphagocytic properties ⁶⁻⁸ and bacteria presenting different types of capsule can colonise hosts simultaneously ⁹. Moreover, its cytoplasmic membrane is composed of lipoprotein bound to lipoteichoic acid by hydrophobic interactions. Penicillin-binding proteins represent a small percentage of the membrane and are the primary targets of anti-microbials ¹⁰. In addition, the capsule's chemical composition is used to categorise the pathogen into serotypes, with over 95 serotypes identified ^{6-8,11-13}. Notably, the distribution of serotypes varies according to population, geographic region, time of year and age of the patient ⁷.

Furthermore, many factors contribute to Spn pathogenicity, such as pneumolysin, autolysin A, neuroaminidases (NA), choline binding proteins, Spn protein C (PspC), Spn surface protein A (PspA) and, especially, pilus subunits ¹⁴⁻¹⁸. Importantly, pneumolysin is a multifunctional toxin that acts as a protective antigen ^{19,20}, showing cytotoxic action and activation of the host complement system ¹⁸ while bacterial pili contributes to Spn adherence ²¹. Furthermore, Spn

can form biofilms that aid growth during colonisation and contributes to the development of invasive diseases ^{17,22}.

1.1.1 Spn colonisation and transmission

Spn is part of the common children's upper respiratory tract microbiota, colonising nostrils, pharynx and larynx ²³ for up to 2 weeks, although some studies have observed events lasting up to 30 weeks ^{3,24-28}. The nasopharynx is the natural site of colonisation ²⁹ and prevalence in healthy individuals varies mainly with age, with colonisation rates higher in children than adults and elderly. Importantly, Spn colonisation events start soon after birth and prevalence increases between 1 and 2 years of age, followed by rate reduction to below 10% in adults ^{27,30-32}. In addition, colonisation rates are variable depending on location ^{9,33,34}. In England, Spn colonisation was observed in 52% of children under 2 years and 45% in 3 to 4 year old ³⁰, whereas in Gambia and Kenya, the prevalence is 80% and 66%, respectively ^{35,36}.

However, it is important to notice that colonisation rates may vary according to sampling techniques and devices used as well as the site and frequency of collection in humans. Various methods have been used for quantification of Spn colonisation density through nasal lavage such as nasal pool devices ³⁷, micro-suction ³⁸, aspiration ³⁹, sponges ⁴⁰, nasal secretion collectors ⁴¹, gauzes ⁴² and swabs ^{43,44}. The nasal lavage technique selected in this thesis was nasal wash based on the methodology published by Naclerio et al. ⁴⁵ and was previously used successfully in several clinical trials ⁴⁶⁻⁵³. This method combined with cell culture have been proven effective for assessing colonisation

⁴⁷, cytological analysis ⁵⁴ and quantification of inflammatory markers even in children ⁵⁵.

Nevertheless, regarding increased Spn colonisation rates, the host can show susceptibility characteristics such as sickle cell anaemia, HIV infection, neoplasia and chronic degenerative conditions, for instance diabetes mellitus, chronic renal failure, nephrotic syndrome, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and chronic liver diseases ⁵⁶. Additionally, the interaction between Spn and the resident microbiota in the upper respiratory tract affect colonisation rates as observed in studies with *Haemophilus influenzae* ⁵⁷ and *Staphylococcus aureus* ^{17,58,59}. Importantly, the continuous use of antibiotics is shown to develop resistance in Spn and impact prevalence of bacteria in the population ^{60,61}.

In healthy individuals, an asymptomatic colonisation triggers immunisation ⁹, providing benefits to the host as it develops cellular and adaptive immunity ^{49,62}. However, even when asymptomatic, colonisation is not entirely benign as it primes the host for transmission, tissue invasion or dissemination into the lower airways, a prerequisite for invasive disease ⁵⁸. Notably, the transmission of Spn between humans occurs through direct contact or dispersion of aerosol secretions by colonised people ^{27,58,63} with higher rates during the winter season ⁶⁴. Moreover, outbreaks of increased Spn transmission can occur in nursing homes, day care centres, military units, shelters, schools and prisons ⁶⁵⁻⁷¹

1.1.2 Pneumococcal epidemiology and disease

Previous to antibiotics development, pneumonia and invasive pneumococcal disease were the leading cause of death in humans ^{19,72} and currently - according to the World Health Organisation ⁷³- it is estimated that 1.6

million people die every year from pneumococcal disease worldwide, with nearly all these deaths occurring in children living in low income settings.

The vast majority of Spn disease are associated with a relatively small number of serotypes ⁷⁴ and requires colonisation of the nasopharynx ⁵⁸ as well as high bacterial load ^{75,76} and aspiration to the lungs ⁷⁷ that elicits inflammatory pathology in the host ⁷⁸. Pathogenesis ranges from less severe infections such as conjunctivitis, otitis and sinusitis to severe disease such as pneumonia, bacteremia and meningitis ^{79,80}. Importantly, invasive pneumococcal disease have increased rates in elderly as well as people that present dementia, convulsive disorders, heart failure, cerebrovascular disease, chronic lung disease, HIV infection, alcoholism, smoking, malnutrition, diabetes, liver cirrhosis, renal failure, antibody deficiency and phagocytic function deficiency ^{81,82}.

1.1.3 Immunity to Spn

After Spn entry in the nasopharynx, the host elicits immune responses against major infection events, that start with the recognition of bacteria by the host immune system which Spn can evade to colonise the nasal mucosa, with subsequent invasion into epithelial tissue resulting in damage to the host's cells ^{20,83}. Specifically, the innate immune response acts to defend against the bacteria by first recognising pathogen-associated molecular patterns (PAMPs) through pattern recognition receptors (PRRs) such as the Toll-like receptor (TRL) family ^{84,85}. In addition, surfactant proteins also play an important role in innate immunity phagocytosis of Spn by modulating cellular responses ^{85,86}, activating macrophages and neutrophils as well as inducing cytokine production ^{87,88}. In short, the ability of the host to control epithelium damage, inflammatory

responses and bacteria multiplication without releasing excessive debris in the nasopharynx is essential for bacterial clearance and prevention of subsequent invasive Spn disease ^{89,90}.

The innate immune responses against Spn consists of pre-infection protective host mechanisms, typically non-specific responses using physical (mucus ciliary clearance) and chemical barriers, blood proteins, resident phagocytes, neutrophils, macrophages, NK-cells, cytokines and dendritic cells (DCs) ⁹¹. Indeed, in healthy individuals, asymptomatic colonisation responses include classic activation of macrophages, Spn-specific memory CD4⁺ T-cells, as well as sustained TGF- β levels, responsible for increasing T-regulatory cells (T-regs) in the nasopharynx and protection of the host from exaggerated inflammation and tissue damage ^{49,92-95}.

In addition, this immunising stable colonisation is maintained by a fine balance between pro-inflammatory and anti-inflammatory immune responses ⁹⁶. After Spn recognition, monocytes are attracted to the site of the infection and are considered one of the essential players in immunity against Spn. Moreover, monocytes are white blood cells that typically circulate through the blood for 1 to 3 days before migrating into other tissues, where they become macrophages or DCs ⁹¹. Particularly, macrophages are monocytes that have migrated from the bloodstream into the tissue where they aid in Spn phagocytosis and cleaning of cellular debris ⁹¹.

Activation of macrophages in pneumococcal disease is signalled by TLR - a class of PRRs surface receptors expressed by phagocytes and other cell types - particularly TLR-2 and TLR-4 ⁹⁷⁻¹⁰² which recognize Spn molecular structures such as surface lipoteichoic acid ¹⁰³, pneumolysin ^{97,104} and lipoproteins ¹⁰⁵, and

enables further host immune responses ¹⁰⁶. In mice, the recruitment of monocytes correlates with Spn clearance, dependent of TLR-2 and IL-17A ⁹⁴. Furthermore, early recruited monocytes differentiated into macrophages and produce MCP-1 ¹⁰⁷. In turn, this cytokine attracts more monocytes to the site. Studies in elderly mice have demonstrated that reduced monocyte recruitment to the nasopharynx results in decreased bacterial clearance ¹⁰⁸.

Also part of the initial innate immune response are DCs, that play an important role in eliciting T-cell responses against Spn later in the infection ⁹¹. When immature, DCs are located in the respiratory system epithelium and migrate to the lymph nodes where they mature and reside ⁹¹. Further, when at the infection site, DCs are activated via TLR ¹⁰⁹ and decrease Spn-induced apoptosis of host's cells ^{110,111}. In addition, the complement system mediate protection from Spn in early infection ¹¹². This mechanism is subverted by the bacteria by altering expression of its surface proteins ¹¹³.

Subsequently, if the innate defence is not enough to control the bacteria, the adaptive responses armory of humoral and cellular immunity will mediate clearance at the nasal mucosa ^{89,101}. Contrary to initial innate responses, adaptive immunity is pathogen specific and elicits memory cells that prevent future infections ⁹¹.

Firstly, humoral response develops with the production of antibodies by B-cells. Notably, induction of antibodies against Spn in human proteins occurs naturally throughout the life course as a result of continuous exposure to the bacteria, with reported increases in titres of lung and serum antibodies IgA and IgG, associated with protection from colonisation ¹¹⁴ and reduced bacteraemia ^{115,116}. IgA is known to bind to Spn in the nasopharynx in order to promote

bacterial agglutination and adherence to host cells ¹¹⁷ as well as phagocytosis ^{118,119}. Spn IgA protease can however be used to evade host IgA defences and instead facilitate internalisation of Spn in the epithelium ¹²⁰.

Secondly, cellular immune responses have been demonstrated to modulate inflammatory responses to Spn, with production of cytokines by resident cells. Spn induces production of cytokines TNF- α , IL-6, IL-12, IL-4, IFN- γ and IL-10 ^{121,122}. This cytokine cascade then mediate the recruitment of neutrophils, monocytes and other effector cells to clear bacteria ^{78,123} as well as differentiate T-cells into T-helper 17 (Th17), T-helper 2 (Th2) and T-regs ¹²⁴⁻¹³².

Notably, the cytokine TNF- α is essential for both innate and adaptive responses to Spn, specially for recruitment and activation of neutrophils ¹³³ and monocytes ⁹¹ to the site of infection. Moreover, IL-4 elicits development of CD4⁺ Th2 cells and IgG signalling ⁹¹. whereas IFN- γ induces activation of T-cells ¹³⁴, T-regs ¹³⁵ and NK-cells ^{136,137}. Importantly, macrophages and DCs produce anti-inflammatory cytokine IL-10 during pneumococcal disease ³ and is associated with host protection against exaggerated pro-inflammation and tissue damage, in part because of its ability to inhibit DC activity ^{138,139}.

In murine models, the bacteria can evade adaptive immunity by inducing T-cell death ¹⁴⁰. As expected, this mechanism is associated with increases in the disease severity ¹⁴¹ and susceptibility to pneumonia ^{142,143} as Spn colonisation control is dependent on CD4⁺ T-cells ^{144,145}.

1.2 Influenza virus

The influenza virus is an single-stranded, segmented RNA virus, of spherical or filamentous form and about 80 nanometers when observed in nature

¹⁴⁶. The viral lipidic envelope derives from the host cell's plasma membrane and presents surface glycoproteins hemagglutinin (HA) and neuraminidase (NA) ¹⁴⁷ - the main targets of immune responses ¹⁴⁶ - as well as nucleoprotein molecules that protect the RNA strand ¹⁴⁸. Both proteins are known to bind to sialic acid receptors on the surface of host's cells, mediating the fusion of the viral envelope to the cell membrane ^{146,149,150}.

Importantly, influenza virus is unique among respiratory virus regarding their capability for antigenic variations, as it continuously undergoes mutation to escape host immune mechanisms ¹⁵¹. The surface proteins HA and NA can mutate in two distinct ways: antigenic drift or antigenic shift. On one hand, antigenic drift occurs when there is an accumulation of point mutations due to the virus low ability to correct errors after RNA replication ¹⁵² and is a common result of the pressure exerted by the host immunity ¹⁵³. On the other hand, antigenic shift is the exchange of segments between different influenza virus ¹⁵⁴.

Moreover, the genetic and antigenic differences in virus HAs and NAs are commonly used to categorise into types A, B and C ^{146,153,155}. Importantly, humans are mostly infected by types A and B, although type C can cause subclinical disease ^{146,156-159}.

1.2.1 Influenza epidemiology, transmission and disease

The influenza virus is responsible for an acute infection, also called influenza, with global distribution and mostly associated with winter due to increased transmission ^{160,161}. The constant contact between humans and the various types of influenza virus allows the host to create immunological memory. Influenza virus often causes epidemics due to its unique ability to mutate and

adapt as well as, less frequently, pandemics^{156–158,162}. The epidemic and pandemic outbreaks of infection results in significant morbidity in all age groups¹⁶³, and mortality in children^{164–169}, elderly^{170,171}, as well as in patients with chronic and autoimmune diseases^{172,173}, resulting in over 5 million cases of severe illness and approximately half a million deaths annually¹⁷⁴.

Importantly, since the 16th century, at least 30 pandemic episodes have been caused by various mutants and combinations of influenza virus. Noteworthy pandemics that occurred in 1918 and 2009 (known as spanish flu and swine flu, respectively) were both caused by H₁N₁ variant of influenza virus, whereas the 1957, 1968 and 2004 pandemics (known as asian flu, Hong-Kong flu and avian flu, respectively) were caused by the H₂N₂, H₃N₂ and H₅N₁ strains^{156–158,162,175,176}.

Notably, the spanish flu was known as the deadliest pandemic that ever affected humans, infecting 50% of the world's population and causing 40 to 50 million related deaths¹⁷⁷. The pandemic occurred in two waves, with the first being mild and the second with higher mortality as infection spread even in remote areas and islands¹⁷⁸.

The influenza virus incubation period ranges from 1 to 3 days and recovery usually occurs between 4 to 7 days after infection¹⁷⁹. Moreover, transmission occurs through direct contact with secretions or aerosols as well as surfaces contaminated with the virus¹⁸⁰. In addition, it can remain viable for 8 to 10 hours on porous surfaces and for up to 48 hours on non-porous surfaces and hands¹⁸¹. Importantly, transmission is increased under low temperature, high humidity and decreased ultraviolet radiation. Furthermore, animal hosts can serve as reservoir for virus with transmission to humans after virus mutation¹⁸².

Importantly, symptoms include fever accompanied by respiratory and systemic symptoms such as nasal obstruction, cough, muscle aches and fatigue^{183,184}. In addition, the severity of the influenza infection varies greatly, ranging from mild rhinopharyngitis to fatal lung pathology¹⁸⁵.

1.2.2 Immunity to influenza virus

When wild-type influenza virus infects the host, it passes through the mucus layer of the upper respiratory tract and is recognised by epithelial cells' pattern recognition receptors TLR2 and Nod2^{107,186}. In the early stages of respiratory infection, T-cells move to the site independent of their specificity¹⁸⁷ which allows a cascade of adaptive immune responses following virus recognition.

Adaptive immunity elicited against influenza include CD4⁺ and CD8⁺ T-cell proliferation as well as the production of type I IFNs, IL-6 and MCP-1^{186,188 189}. This inflammatory process recruits neutrophils¹⁸⁹ that limit viral replication in the nasopharynx and eliminate infected cells¹⁹⁰. Although influenza virus lung infection induces recruitment of monocytes and neutrophils, it decreases their ability to phagocytose pathogens as well as the ciliary action of the epithelium mucosa^{124,191–193}.

Notably, CD8⁺ T-cells play a critical role in viral clearance through production of cytokines that regulate recruitment and function of a broad array of cells^{194,195}. Furthermore, these cells contributes to lysis of influenza-infected cells¹⁹⁶ by releasing cytolytic granules and producing cytokine IFN- γ ^{197–199}. Interestingly, the absence of CD8⁺ or IFN- γ -producing CD8⁺ T-cells were associated with severe cases of influenza^{199,200}.

1.2.3 Vaccination against influenza virus

A World Health Organisation committee meets twice a year to formalize the recommendation of influenza virus strains to be included in the vaccine composition ²⁰¹. This committee uses epidemiological data collected throughout the year so that the appropriate formulation for the next circulating influenza virus is obtained ^{202,203}. Importantly, the benefits of influenza vaccination have been extensively proven flu reduction ^{204–206}, with reduction in otitis media incidence and use of antibiotics against secondary bacterial infections, as well as school absence and transmission ^{207–209}.

Currently, there are two types of influenza vaccines developed for immunisation, containing inactivated or attenuated influenza virus, showed to be effective in preventing the development of the disease in multiple placebo-controlled studies ^{210,211}. Since 1977, the influenza vaccine composition recommendation has included three viral strains: 2 type A strains, respectively of the H₁N₁ and H₃N₂ subtypes, and 1 type B, so the vaccine is considered trivalent. Recently, since 2012, licenced vaccines that contain H₁N₁, H₃N₂ and 2 type B are also used for immunisation and are called tetravalent inactivated influenza vaccine (TIV) ²¹², which is given intramuscularly, and live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) ²¹³, which is administered intranasally.

Inactivated vaccines are produced with the influenza virus inactivated with formaldehyde in embryonated chicken eggs ²¹⁴ and are available in whole, fractional and subunit virus forms. On one hand, the whole virus vaccine is composed of the whole viral particle, including lipidic cell membrane that is highly immunogenic ²¹⁵. On the other hand, the fractionated vaccine contains viral

components such as HA, NA and nucleoproteins, that are fragmented and then purified ²¹⁶. Moreover, the subunit vaccine consists only of HA and NA, and also provides satisfactory protection rates ²¹⁷. After vaccination with inactivated vaccines, the most frequent adverse reactions occur at the application site, such as pain and redness in 15% of vaccinated and rarely (in 1 to 2%) fever and myalgia is observed ²¹⁸.

Similarly, the attenuated vaccine is also produced from the infection of influenza virus into embryonic chicken eggs, but in the presence of antibodies against the strain's surface glycoproteins ^{219–221}. However, contrary to the inactivated vaccine, production of attenuated influenza virus vaccine takes advantage of the segmented nature of the viral genome to recombine genes that encode wild-type virus HA and NA as well as 6 internal segments from attenuated virus (segments PB1, PB2, PA, M, NP, and NS) ²²². Additionally, adverse effects from vaccination such as nasal congestion, rhinorrhoea, fever and muscle pain ²²³ are uncommon, whereas severe reactions are rare, although it has been reported cases of wheezing and post-vaccine hospitalisation ²²³.

While both vaccines protect against influenza infection ²²⁴, studies have shown differences in the immune responses elicited by the inactivated vaccine when compared to the live attenuated one. The primary response to inactivated vaccine is from B-cells ^{218,225} that are activated at the immunisation site and recruited into the lymph nodes where they proliferate and specialise to migrate to other host tissues ^{226–229}. B-cells produce specific antibodies, specially influenza-specific IgG antibodies in the serum, and lower concentrations of IgM and IgA ^{230,231}. Importantly, these antibodies stimulate host response against viral HA and

NA , and can be cross-reactive ²³². Further, antibody production elicits memory ²³³ and adaptive immunity, especially CD4⁺ T-cells ^{234,235}.

On the other hand, with attenuated vaccines, the goal is to induce similar immune response to a wild-type influenza infection in the upper respiratory tract, inducing local and systemic immunity by viral replication ²³⁶, especially influenza specific memory T-cells and B-cells ^{237,238}. Notably, only attenuated virus stimulates recruitment of CD8 and TCR- $\gamma\delta$ T-cells ^{14,239}. In addition, systemic immunity is elicited by the attenuated vaccine, however, serum antibodies IgA and IgM peak only after 2 weeks post-vaccination whereas IgG takes at least 4 weeks to reach its maximum levels ²⁴⁰ and titres are not as marked as with inactivated vaccines ²¹⁷ .

Nevertheless, even with delayed antibody responses, studies have shown that the attenuated vaccine formulation present greater persistence ^{241,242} and efficacy against influenza virus in vitro and in children when compared to inactivated virus vaccines ^{210,225,243–247}. This suggests that the most appropriate way to investigate antibody production against influenza following vaccination is by measuring responses in the nasopharynx - the site of infection and replication of the wild-type virus ²⁴⁸. Indeed, the attenuated influenza vaccine has been shown to induce antibody production in nasal wash, particularly IgA until 6 months after vaccination ²⁴⁰, not seen in inactivated vaccines.

Interestingly, attenuated vaccines have an advantage in those with no prior immunity to influenza virus as its efficacy depends on the attenuated virus replication in the nose to elicit host immune memory ²⁴⁹. However, inactivated vaccines are superior in those with greater prior exposure such as elderly, who

do not elicit immune responses to influenza after vaccination with attenuated virus vaccines ²⁵⁰.

1.3 Spn and wild-type influenza virus co-infection

1.3.1 Epidemiology and disease

Secondary infection following pandemic and seasonal influenza virus infection is a significant cause of mortality worldwide and, of all influenza co-infections, Spn is the pathogen most commonly detected ²⁵¹ - especially during influenza pandemics ^{177,252–255}. Spn and wild-type influenza virus co-infection is associated with 3 times increased odds of Spn colonisation ^{46 256} and it causes 1 in 3 cases of bacterial pneumonia following severe influenza infection ²⁵⁷. In addition, higher susceptibility to co-infection has been demonstrated in elderly and immunosuppressed, with greater risk of mortality ²⁵⁸

1.3.2 Window of susceptibility to co-infection

A fine balance of pro- and anti-inflammatory responses maintains a stable and asymptomatic Spn colonisation ⁹⁶, however, this equilibrium is altered by wild-type influenza virus co-infections, affecting essential inflammatory mechanisms in the nasal mucosa ¹⁹⁰. The impact on Spn colonisation is due to complex interactions between virus, host and bacteria, associated with morphologic and immunological alterations of the upper respiratory tract ²⁵⁹. For that reason, following host initial recognition and response to virus entry in the nasopharynx, influenza infection can cause a window of susceptibility to Spn that

generally starts 48 hours after virus infection ^{186,260,261}. Notably, studies have demonstrated this modified state can last several months after resolution of influenza ²⁶².

Initially, the virus causes damage to the epithelium, the first line of defence against the Spn ¹⁹⁶. Viral NAs denude the host epithelial surface by removing sialic acid which increases its availability as nutrients for bacteria. The damaged epithelium exposes Spn to new receptors in the membrane such as platelet-activating factor receptor (PAFR) ^{263,264}, increasing bacterial adherence mediated by Spn such as PspC ⁶². Additionally, the virus reduces mucociliary bacterial clearance ¹⁹⁶ and desensitizes epithelial cells to Spn pathogen-associated molecular pattern, impairing bacterial TLRs ^{193,196,265–267}.

In order to clear the virus, the host elicits production of IFN- γ mainly by CD4⁺, CD8⁺ T- and NK-cells, however, this cytokine also modifies macrophages in its scavenger receptor, reducing innate defences against Spn by inhibiting its phagocytosis ^{124,186,191,192,262,268}. Regarding this aspect, Metzger and Sun ²⁶⁹ hypothesize that the mechanism of macrophage receptor alteration could have evolved to prioritise specific and efficient anti-influenza T-cell memory in acute infections. Moreover, reduction in macrophage efficacy consequently diminishes the overall production of TNF- α , a strong chemoattractant of neutrophils ^{188,270}.

In addition, neutrophil influx is also impacted by the increased expression of cytokine IL-10, stimulated by rises in IFN- γ , and type I IFNs levels produced by CD8⁺ T-cells ^{92,132,186,262,271}. Importantly, epidemiological studies in humans show that CD8⁺ T-cell levels were increased by influenza in the lung ¹⁸⁸, a critical aspect considering the strong correlation between higher levels of IFN- γ -producing CD8⁺ T-cells and less severity of co-infection disease ¹⁹⁹.

Furthermore, type I IFNs are responsible for inducing anti-viral cytokines and chemokines to stop virus replication and stimulate adaptive immunity. However, the exaggerated accumulative production of type I IFNs has been related to susceptibility and Spn colonisation, indicated by mice's resistance to co-infections in the absence of type I IFN signalling ^{186,262}.

In short, wild-type influenza virus facilitates adhesion to cells and impairs host's innate and cellular protection, resulting in increased susceptibility to colonisation by Spn due to its higher levels in the nasopharynx. Importantly, bacterial transmission is increased by influenza infections, and driven by increased Spn density ²⁵⁶.

1.3.3 Established Spn and wild-type influenza virus co-infection

Following establishment of Spn and wild-type influenza virus co-infection, the presence of high levels of both pathogens in the nasopharynx leads to disbalance of inflammatory responses in an attempt to contain invasive virus and bacteria ^{193,196,265,266}. In murine models, pneumococcal disease prior to influenza virus leads to improved survival, with less morbidity and lung immunopathology ²⁷². On the other hand, if virus infection occurs before bacterial infection, as first shown in a ferret model by McCullers ²⁷³, the infection presents increased Spn density in the upper respiratory tract ^{76,92,274}. Additionally, there is evidence that viral load also increase during co-infection ²⁷⁵ although the unbalanced immune responses have no proven correlation to the augmented virus titers ²⁷⁶. Importantly, in humans, clearance of co-infection requires a robust adaptive immunity ²⁷¹ as innate defences alone are unable to provide protection to the host

Firstly, the host's nasopharynx reacts to co-infection with Spn-induced TGF- β and T-reg levels increase⁹². Importantly, exaggerated production of this cytokine during co-infection suppresses NK-cells induction and macrophages activation¹³² and is associated with decrease in IL-2 concentration which, in turn, impairs T-cell development¹⁸⁸ and reduces levels of CD3⁺ and CD4⁺ T-cells²⁷⁰. Further, the established co-infection express signals to the host from both pathogens, causing reducing of TCR- $\gamma\delta$ and Th17 T-cells levels²⁷⁰.

In addition, modulation of B-cell response is altered by inhibition of cell development and activation^{188,270,277}. The reduced B-cell immunity is possibly due to the decreased numbers of CD4⁺ T-cells, which reduces support of B-cell function and production of cytokines²⁷⁰. Interestingly, murine models demonstrate that the decrease in influenza-specific T-cell response correlates with the increase in T-regs¹⁸⁸ due to T-reg production of adenosine, perforin and granzymes that are toxic to T-cells²⁷⁸. Moreover, similarly to influenza virus infection alone, low levels of CD8⁺ T-cells are associated with virus and Spn co-infection severity^{188,199}. Importantly, in murine models of coinfection, CD8⁺ T-cells are presented in lower levels¹⁸⁸, consequently reducing production of cytokines such as TNF- α ¹⁸⁸ and recruitment of immune cells¹⁸⁸.

Interestingly, studies have shown contradictory results regarding how excess production of type I IFN affects Spn and wild-type-influenza co-infection. Although there are studies where type I IFNs do not affect neutrophil recruitment¹⁸⁶, the majority of researches demonstrate impairment in both neutrophils^{192,279,280} and macrophages due to lower expression of keratinocyte chemoattractant (KC) and MCP-1, of critical role in control of co-infection¹⁸⁶. Furthermore, in co-infection models, the increased production of type I IFN

suppresses expression of pro-inflammatory cytokine IL-17 - especially by TCR- $\gamma\delta$ - associated with increased Spn density ²⁶² due to its involvement in the early control of bacteria by recruiting neutrophils to the infection site.

In summary, Spn and wild-type influenza virus co-infection deregulates innate and adaptive immune defences and increases Spn colonisation rates and density which, in turn, increases Spn transmission ²⁷³, susceptibility to invasive disease ¹⁸⁶ and bacterial density ^{260,261}.

1.4 Murine Spn and live attenuated influenza virus (LAIV) co-infection

A controversial epidemiological aspect of Spn and wild-type influenza virus co-infection is the use of live attenuated influenza virus to immunize the mucosa due to its mimicry of virus natural infection in the nasopharynx and activation of host inflammatory immune responses. Importantly, this transitory attenuated virus replication, known as viral shedding, increases Spn levels analogously to wild-type influenza virus infection and affects Spn-induced immunity as well as colonisation density, transmission and host susceptibility to invasive disease ²⁸¹.

Similarly to Spn and wild-type influenza co-infection models, when mice were primarily colonised with Spn, LAIV is efficient in controlling infection and reducing mortality ⁷⁶. Additionally, in models where mice are first vaccinated, it has been shown an inflammatory state ²⁷⁴ presenting increased type I IFN levels ²⁷⁴, bacterial density and duration of Spn colonisation ²⁸² as well as bacteria transmigration to the middle ear ^{274 283}. On the other hand, LAIV was not shown to increase Spn density in the lower respiratory tract ²⁷⁴ as the vaccine consists of temperature sensitive virus strains that replicates only in the upper airways. Interestingly, human models of co-infection with Spn and LAIV is also associated with increased Spn density ²⁸⁴ and disease. However, opposite to mice models, some studies indicate that LAIV in humans is protective against acute otitis media during influenza season ^{209,285,286}.

1.5 Experimental Human Pneumococcal Challenge model for study of Spn and attenuated influenza virus co-infection

The Experimental Human Pneumococcal Colonisation (EHPC) ⁴⁷ is an unique model of controlled infection that induces nasal Spn colonisation in healthy adults at a typical density and duration (1 to 3 weeks) in 50% of subjects following inoculation with different strains of Spn ⁴⁷. This model is the ideal biological system to study immune protection mechanisms as the onset, duration and termination of a colonisation episode are known and serial measurements of immune responses can be made with controlled rates of Spn acquisition and density.

In healthy adults, EHPC was used to determine that Spn challenge confers protection against recolonisation and development of invasive disease by inducing immunoglobulin production in the nasal mucosa ⁶² and blood ⁴⁹ as well as pulmonary IL-17A⁺ CD4⁺ memory T-cells ²⁸⁷. Furthermore, in the nasal mucosa, protection granted by EHPC is associated with pre-existing antibodies against PspA but not with antibodies against capsular polysaccharide ²⁸⁸. In addition, establishment and maintenance of Spn colonisation after EHPC was associated with TGF- β 1 and T regulatory cells ⁹².

The EHPC model has also been used as a new method for vaccine testing ^{51,52} and investigation of nasal microbiota and its interaction with Spn. Past studies have demonstrated that viral infections increase susceptibility to EHPC, eliciting higher levels of mucosal factor H and Spn density. This occurs due to higher Spn adherence caused by increased epithelial layer inflammation and factor H ⁴⁶. Moreover, different microbiota profiles were associated with Spn

colonisation of the nasopharynx using EHPC and different strains inoculated were demonstrated to cause disturbances in microorganism diversity²⁸⁹.

1.6 Thesis Aims

Our main goals and specific aims for this thesis were to:

1. Determine the best methodology for investigation of immune responses in the nasopharynx by:
 - a. Comparing phenotypes of cells collected by nasal curettage and nasal wash.
 - b. Analysing cytokine levels using nasosorption and nasal wash.
2. Investigating if Spn colonisation, LAIV and TIV alter cell-mediated response in the nasal mucosa of human hosts by:
 - a. Assessing recruitment of monocytes, neutrophils, T-cells and DCs.
 - b. Measuring activation levels of neutrophils and T-cells.
3. Assess if Spn colonisation, LAIV and TIV alter cytokine responses in the nasal mucosa of human hosts by:
 - a. Analysing induction of cytokines related to pro- and anti-inflammatory responses.
 - b. Investigating levels of elicited cytokines that regulate cell growth and adaptive immunity.

4. Determine the effects of Spn colonisation, LAIV and TIV on immunity against influenza antigens by:
 - a. Establishing levels of induced T-cell subsets producing cytokines after stimulation with influenza, including CD4⁺, CD8⁺, T-regs, TCR- $\gamma\delta$ and TRM T-cells.
 - b. Comparing antibody levels to influenza (IgA and IgG) in serum, nasal wash and lung.

CHAPTER TWO

MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Funding and study approvals

Funding for Antecedent LAIV as well as Concurrent LAIV studies were received by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the UK Medical Research Council, the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, the Royal Liverpool, Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust (United Kingdom) and Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (Brazil).

Ethical approvals are shown in Table 2 and were obtained from the National Health Service Research Ethics Committees (REC), and Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals Trust. The clinical trial authorisation was granted by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Volunteer appointments took place in the Clinical Research Unit at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital.

Table 2 Ethical and clinical trial approvals for Concurrent LAIV and Antecedent LAIV studies.

Registry	Approval
REC	14/NW/1460
EudraCT	2014-004634-26
ISRCTN Registry	ISRCTN16993271

2.2 Recruitment and ethics/ consent

The recruitment for the Antecedent LAIV study cohort took place in the period between October 2015 and April 2016 while the Concurrent LAIV study cohort was recruited between October 2016 and April 2017. Volunteers gave written and informed consent and recruited if they were healthy, non-smokers and aged 18-50.

Subjects were unable to participate if they fell under any of the following exclusion criteria during screen:

- Influenza or Spn vaccination or clinically confirmed disease in the preceding 2 years;
- Close contact with “high-risk” individuals (children under 5, immunosuppressed or elderly);
- Current febrile illness;
- Use of antibiotics;
- Immune-modulating medication;
- Pregnancy.

2.3 Study design

In both the Antecedent LAIV and Concurrent LAIV studies subjects were randomised using a permuted-block algorithm (1:1 in blocks of 10) held in sealed envelopes and distributed in two groups based on vaccination status: TIV (Control) or LAIV.

Volunteers participating in the Antecedent LAIV study were vaccinated at day -3 and inoculated at day 0 relative to Spn inoculation serotype 6B (Figure 1). On the other hand, subjects in the Concurrent LAIV study were inoculated with Spn at day 0 and vaccinated at day +3 post-inoculation. Vaccinations were done in the TIV control group with TIV flu jab (2015/2016 Fluarix Tetra, GlaxoSmithKline, UK) and the LAIV group with LAIV nasal spray (Fluenz Tetra and FluMist Tetra, AstraZeneca, UK).

In the Antecedent LAIV study, 222 participants consented, 162 were screened, 137 vaccinated (n=68 with LAIV, n=69 with TIV) and 130 were inoculated. Volunteers were excluded from analysis based on screen failure (n=5), stopping follow-up appointments (n=7), vaccination error (n=8), natural colonisation by Spn at baseline (n=1) and use of antibiotics (n=1). In addition, demographics were similar between groups (Table 4).

Furthermore, in the Concurrent LAIV study, 316 participants consented, of which 206 were screened, 198 were inoculated and 194 were vaccinated (n=97 with LAIV, n=97 with TIV). Volunteers were excluded from analysis based on screen failure (n=8), stopping follow-up appointments (n=4), vaccination error (n=13), naturally colonisation by Spn at baseline (n=13) and naturally acquired Spn colonisation during the study (n=4). Moreover, demographics were also similar between groups in this study (Table 5).

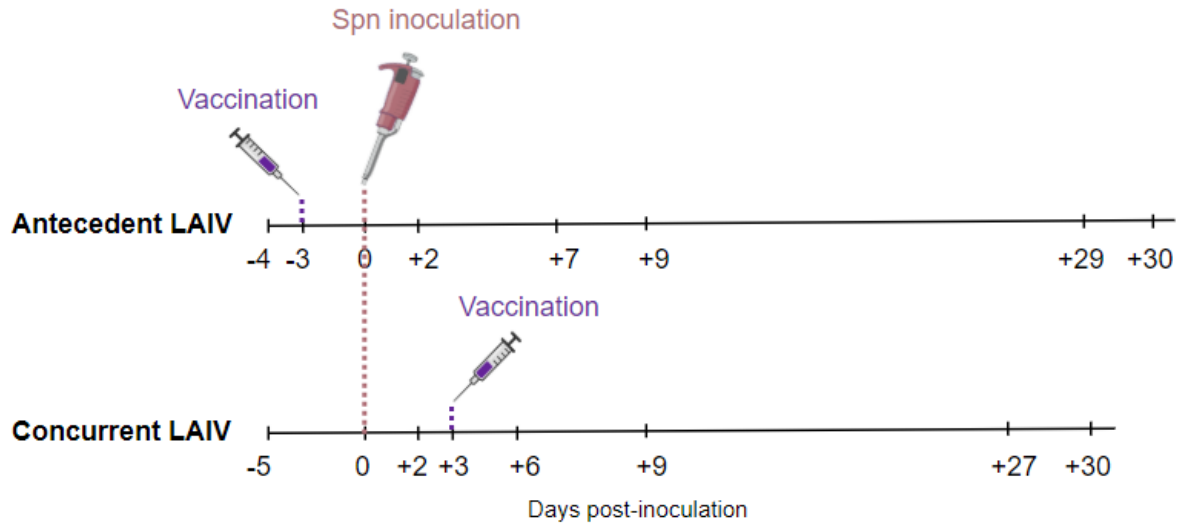


Figure 1. Design for Antecedent LAIV and Concurrent LAIV studies. The diagram represents nasopharyngeal inoculation with Spn serotype 6B as a red dotted line, and vaccination as a dotted purple line. In the Antecedent LAIV study, participants were screened on day -4, vaccinated on day -3, inoculated on day 0, and samples were collected on days +2, +7, +9, +29 and +30 relative to inoculation. In the Concurrent LAIV study, participants were screened at day -5, inoculated at day 0, vaccinated at day +3, and provided samples during visits on day +2, +6, +9, +27 and +30 post-inoculation.

Table 3. Demographics of volunteers enrolled in the Antecedent LAIV and Concurrent LAIV studies.

Antecedent LAIV			
	LAIV	TIV	Overall
Median age (range)	20.0 (18.0 - 34.0)	20.0 (18.0 - 48.0)	20.0 (18.0 - 48.0)
Female (%)	65.5	51.6	58.1
Median dose (range) – CFU/nostril	74,500 (51,000 - 88,000)	77,250 (51,000 - 88,000)	76,333 (51,000 - 88,000)
Time from vaccination to inoculation – days\pmSD	3.0 \pm 0.1	3.0 \pm 0.1	3.0 \pm 0.1
Concurrent LAIV			
	LAIV	TIV	Overall
Median age (range)	20.0 (17.0 - 46.0)	20.0 (18.0 - 32.0)	20.0 (17.0 - 46.0)
Female (%)	53.4	56.7	55.2
Median dose (range) - CFU/nostril	82,167 (60,667 - 93,000)	81,083 (60,667 - 93,000)	82,167 (60,667 - 93,000)
Time from vaccination to inoculation – days \pm SD	3.0 \pm 0.2	3.0 \pm 0.1	3.0 \pm 0.1

2.5 Clinical procedures

2.5.1 Clinical consumables

Procedure	Consumables
Vaccination	LAIV (Fluenz Tetra and FluMist Tetra, AstraZeneca, UK); TIV (2015/2016 Fluarix Tetra, GlaxoSmithKline, UK)
Nasal cells collection	Rhinoprobe (ASL Rhino-Pro©, Arlington Scientific); PBS+Ca+Mg
Nasosorption collection	Nasosorption strip (Nasosorption™, Hunt Developments)
BAL collection	Benzodiazapine antagonist (flumazenil) Benzodiazepine (midazolam) Sphygmomanometer Instilagel (lidocaine gel) 2% and 4% lidocaine (Xylocaine) Nasal speculae Cannula (18-20G)

2.5.2 Volunteers symptoms log and evaluation of procedures

Volunteers from the Antecedent study (n=148) documented local and general symptoms for a period of 7 days since baseline (day -4). Severity ratings ranged from 1 (less severe) to 7 (more severe). Symptoms evaluated were sneezing, runny or itchy nose, congestion, throat symptoms, cough, eye or ear symptoms, headache, as well as additional symptoms added by the participants.

For evaluation of the tolerance to the sample collection procedures, volunteers were asked to use a 5-point modified Likert scale. A range of 1 to 5 was used to collect individual opinions about how painful and how uncomfortable the procedure was, along with if it made their eyes water.

2.5.3 Experimental Human Pneumococcal Carriage (EHPC) model

Volunteers (n=130 in Antecedent and n=198 in Concurrent study) received 100µl of Spn inoculum prepared in advance (see section 2.6.3) inside each nostril and remained seated for up to 15 minutes without blowing their nose or sniffing up. Each subject received an emergency pack including: Amoxicillin 9x500mg, antibiotic information sheet, thermometer and inoculation information sheet.

2.5.4 Vaccination

Participants were vaccinated (n=137 in Antecedent and n=194 in Concurrent study) with either nasal LAIV (Fluenz Tetra or FluMist Tetra, AstraZeneca, UK, used interchangeably due to acquisition shortages) paired with intramuscular placebo (0.5 mL of normal saline) or with intramuscular TIV (2015/2016 Fluarix Tetra, GlaxoSmithKline, UK) paired with nasal placebo (0.2 mL normal saline) as control. In the Antecedent study, 65 volunteers received LAIV and 64, TIV, whereas in the Concurrent study 97 subjects were vaccinated with LAIV and 97 with TIV.

2.5.5 Nasal wash collection

The NW method used in the thesis was previously described by Gritzfeld et al. ⁴⁷ and based on the methodology published by Naclerio et al. ⁴⁵. For collection of NW, participants received 5 mL of saline in one nostril, rapidly expelling the liquid for collection in a foil bowl ⁴⁵. This procedure was repeated until 20 mL was used in one nostril. The liquid collected was stored at room temperature for further processing described in Section 2.6.5. Importantly, NW was performed after nasosorption but before nasal curettage in order to keep samples uncontaminated.

2.5.6 Nasal cells collection

The nasal inferior turbinates were visualised with a light with the participant being seated with the head tilted posteriorly. A curette (ASL Rhino-Pro®, Arlington Scientific) was used to scrape a small collection of cells from the nasal mucosa. Two scrapes per nostril were taken and placed in a 15 mL Falcon tube

placed on ice containing PBS+Ca+Mg (Section 2.5.1) for processing, described in Section 2.6.6. Importantly, nasal scrape was performed before NW and nasosorption since the intervention could contaminate other collected samples.

For this procedure to be done consistently, all clinical staff responsible for nasal cell collection was trained using 3D models of human noses as well as volunteers. The results of collected epithelial, immune, neutrophils, T-cells and monocytes were compared between the clinical staff. In addition, quality checks of the results were performed continuously throughout the studies and additional training was given if staff did not show the accuracy necessary for trustworthy analysis.

2.5.7 Nasosorption collection

The nasosorption collection technique used in this thesis was based on the methodology previously published by Thwaites et al.²⁹⁰. An adsorptive matrix strip (Nasosorption™, Hunt Developments) was held parallel to the volunteers' nasal septum with the absorptive part inside one of the nostrils for nasal fluid collection. The nostril was pressed so that the strip held its place for 2 minutes. After that, the strip was deposited in its original tube and froze immediately in a -80°C freezer for further analysis. Importantly, nasosorption was the first sample collected from the nose of volunteers, before NW and nasal curettage, in order to preserve the nasal lining from contamination.

2.5.8 Serum collection

Serum was sampled from volunteers by collecting 5 mL of blood and storing in a tube with anticoagulant EDTA. Immediately after collection, the sample was placed in a -80°C freezer for future experiments.

2.5.9 Bronchoalveolar lavage collection

The collection of BAL cells was conducted at the clinical research unit (CRU) of the Royal Liverpool Hospital. To assure safety during the procedure, monitoring equipment was available (three lead ECG, pulse oximeter, spynomanometer and anaesthetic support, Section 2.5.1).

First, oxygen was delivered via nasal cannula at up to 4L/min and topical anaesthesia with lidocaine was achieved in the nasal passages (using Instilagen) and the oral mucosa (using Xylocaine). After topical anaesthesia at the larynx

was completed using 4% lidocaine, further mucosal anaesthesia was achieved by using 2 mL aliquots of 2% lignocaine.

Following, the bronchoscope was inserted in the nostril and positioned. Further, hand suction was performed using 50 mL saline syringe and repeated 3 times, using a maximum volume of 200mL. The sample was kept in ice and the bronchoscope was slowly withdrawn and processed as described in Section 2.6.8. For an additional following of volunteers' health, participants were followed-up at 1-5 days post-procedure with a clinical examination.

2.5.10 Safety monitoring

Every volunteer that enrolled in the studies was required to send a text message to the clinical team every day for a week. If the text was not received, the volunteer was contacted personally to ensure their safety.

Antibiotics were used if the volunteer was colonised with Spn at the end of the study or in the event they were unwell. In case of serious disease, a direct admission to the Infectious Disease ward at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital was available.

2.6 Laboratory procedures

2.6.1 Laboratory consumables

Procedure	Consumables
Bacterial stock preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blood agar plates PB0122A (Oxoid, Basingstoke, UK) - Vegitone media (Oxoid, Basingstoke, UK) - Glycerol - PBS (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - 6 and 12-well plates (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Spectrophotometer (FLUOstar Omega plate reader)
Experimental Human Spn Inoculation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blood agar plates PB0122A (Oxoid, Basingstoke, UK) - 96-well Nunc Maxisorp plates (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA)
Nasal cells staining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 70 µm filter (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Cytometer (LSRII, BD Bioscience, UK) - Antibodies for Concurrent LAIV study: Epcam-PE; HLADR-PE.Cy7; CD66b-FITC (Biolegend, San Diego, CA); CD3-APC.Cy7; CD14-Percp.Cy5.5 (BD Biosciences, San Jose, California, USA); CD45-PACOrange (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA). - Antibodies for Antecedent LAIV study: Epcam-PE; HLADR-PE.Cy7; CD16-APC; CD66b-FITC, CD19-BC650, CD8-BV785 (Biolegend, San Diego, CA); CD3-APC.Cy7; CD14-Percp.Cy5.5 (BD Biosciences, San

	<p>Jose, California, USA); CD45-PACOrange (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anti-Rat Ig, κ/Negative Control Compensation Particles Set (BD Biosciences, San Jose, CA). - Anti-Mouse Ig, κ/Negative Control Compensation Particles Set (BD Biosciences, San Jose, CA).
<p>Luminex human cytokine 30-plex</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human cytokine magnetic 30-plex panel (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Hu Cytokine Mag 30-plex antibody bead solution (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Hu Cytokine Mag 30-plex Biotinylated Ab (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Hu 14-Plex standard (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Hu 16-Plex standard (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Wash Solution Concentrate (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Incubation buffer (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Biotin Diluent (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Streptavidin RPE diluent (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Streptavidin RPE concentrate (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Assay diluent (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Luminex MAGPIX calibration/verification kits. Calibration Kit MPX-CAL-K25 and Performance Verification Kit MPX-PVER-K25 (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Luminex MAGPIX + xPonent software for Luminex (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - 96-well Nunc Maxisorp plates (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Magnetic 96-well plate separator (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Luminex Flat bottom 96-plate and black cover (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA)
BAL processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 6-, 12-, 24-, 48- and 96-well plates (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Complete medium: RPMI, 10% of heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum (FBS, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA), PSN antibiotic mixture (Penicillin-Streptomycin-Neomycin). - FBS-DMSO: 90% heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum (FBS) and 10% Dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO), (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA)
BAL intracellular staining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PBS (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - Cytometer (LSRII, BD Bioscience, UK and Becton Dickinson, UK) - TIV (2015/2016 Fluarix Tetra, GlaxoSmithKline, UK) - Antibodies: CD3-APCH7 (clone SK7), TCR-$\gamma\delta$-PECy7 (clone 11F2), IL-10-BV786 (clone JES3-9D7), IL-17A-BV510 (clone N49-653), (BD Biosciences, San Jose, California, USA), CD4-PerCP5.5 (clone SK3), CD8-AF700 (clone SK1), CD69-BV650 (clone FNSO), CD25-PE.TxsRed (clone M-A251), CD103-BV605 (clone Ber-ACT8), CD49a-APC (clone TS2/7), FOXP3-FITC (clone 259D), IFN-γ-PE (clone 4S.B3), TNF-α-BV711 (clone MAb11) (Biolegend, San Diego, CA).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anti-Rat Ig, κ/Negative Control Compensation Particles Set (BD Biosciences, San Jose, CA). - Anti-Mouse Ig, κ/Negative Control Compensation Particles Set (BD Biosciences, San Jose, CA). - ArC Amine Reactive Compensation Bead Kit (Invitrogen Corporation, Carlsbad, CA).
<p style="text-align: center;">IgG and IgA ELISA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 96-well Nunc Maxisorp plates (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - TIV (2015/2016 Fluarix Tetra, GlaxoSmithKline, UK) - PBS (Sigma Aldrich, Gillingham, UK) with 0.005% Tween 20 (Sigma, PP1379, Deisenhofen, Germany) - 1% bovine serum albumin (BSA) in PBS - 0.1% bovine serum albumin (BSA) in PBS - Detection antibodies: anti-human-IgG (Sigma, A3188, Deisenhofen, Germany) and anti-human-IgA (Sigma, I1261, Deisenhofen, Germany) - Streptavidin–Alkaline Phosphatase (Bio-rad, STAR6B, Hercules, CA) - p-Nitrophenyl Phosphate (Sigma-Aldrich, Poole, U.K.) - FLUOstar Omega ELISA microplate reader (BMG Labtech) - Omega Analysis (BMG Labtech).

2.6.2 Reagent preparations

2.6.2.1 For Experimental Human Spn Inoculation

Reagent	Consumables and procedures
STGG medium ²⁹¹	Consumables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oxoid tryptone-soya broth (CM 129) 3.0mL - glucose 0.5g - Oxoid skim milk powder (CM L31) 2.0g - glycerol 10.0mL; double distilled water 100.00mL.
	Procedure: 1 mL amounts were dispensed into bijoux's and autoclaved at 15lb for no more than 10 min. The tubes were stored at 4-6°C.

2.6.2.2 For nasal wash processing

Reagent	Consumables and procedures
STGG medium ²⁹¹	Consumables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oxoid tryptone-soya broth (CM 129) 3.0mL - glucose 0.5g - Oxoid skim milk powder (CM L31) 2.0g - glycerol 10.0mL; double distilled water 100.00mL.
	Procedure: 1 mL amounts were dispensed into bijoux's and autoclaved at 15lb for no more than 10 min. The tubes were stored at 4-6°C.

2.6.2.3 For nasal cells processing and staining

Reagent	Consumables and procedures
PBS+Ca+Mg	Consumables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - phosphate-buffered saline (PBS, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum (FBS, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA)
	Procedure: Phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) + 0.5% heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum (FBS) and 2.5 mM ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA)
Violet viability dye working solution	Consumables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LIVE/DEAD Fixable Dead Cell Stain kit (Invitrogen, UK) - PBS+Ca+Mg
	Procedure: 1µL of Violet Live/Dead staining in 500µL PBS+Ca+Mg.

2.6.2.4 For Luminex human cytokine 30-plex

Reagent	Consumables and procedures
Wash buffer	Consumables: Wash Solution Concentrate (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA)
	Procedure: 15 mL of Wash Solution Concentrate (20X) to 285 mL of ddH ₂ O.
Detector antibody mix	Consumables: Biotin Diluent and Biotinylated Antibody (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA)
	Procedure: 25 μ L of Biotin Diluent and 2.5 μ L of 10x Biotinylated Antibody per well
Substrate mix	Consumables: RPE-Diluent and Streptavidin-RPE (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA)
	Procedure: 25 μ L of RPE-Diluent and 2.5 μ L of 10x Streptavidin-RPE per well

2.6.2.5 For staining of non-adherent cells from BAL tissue

Reagent	Consumables and procedures
Complete Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RPMI (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - FBS (10%, heat inactivated, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) - PSN antibiotic mixture (Penicillin-Streptomycin-Neomycin)
TIV for stimulation	TIV (2015/2016 Fluarix Tetra, GlaxoSmithKline, UK)
Violet Viability dye working solution	Consumables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Violet Viability dye (LIVE/DEAD Fixable Dead Cell Stain kit, Invitrogen, UK) - PBS (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA)
	Procedure: 1µL of Live/Dead diluted in 300µL PBS
BD Golgiplug	BD Golgiplug (BD Biosciences, San Jose, California, USA)
Fix/Perm working solution	Consumables: Foxp3/Transcription Factor Staining Buffer Set (eBioscience, 00-5523)
	Procedure: 300µL of FOXP3 Fix/Perm Concentrate in 900µL of FOXP3 Diluent.
FIX/Perm wash buffer	Consumables: Foxp3/Transcription Factor Staining Buffer Set (eBioscience, 00-5523)
	Procedure: 90µL of 10x Permeabilisation buffer (Foxp3/Transcription Factor Staining Buffer Set, eBioscience, 00-5523) in 810µL of ddH ₂ O

2.6.3 Bacterial stock preparation

For the preparation of the bacterial stock used in the Experimental Human Spn Inoculation, first a “parent” stock was prepared, quantified, aliquoted and frozen for future use. To assure no animal products besides Spn was inoculated into volunteers, the stock was grown in Vegitone Infusion broth (Oxoid, Basingstoke, UK) as well as all processing involving the bacteria was performed with sterile fumehood, incubator and pipettes.

The first stock was prepared by streaking Spn of serotype 6B in a blood agar plate (Oxoid, Basingstoke, UK), which was incubated overnight at 37°C and 5% CO₂. After that, each half of the plate was swabbed and mixed separately with 12 mL of Vegitone. The cell cultures were incubated in plates (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) at 37°C until detection of turbidity in the liquid was achieved or at least for a period of 2 hours.

Subsequently, 40 mL of Vegitone was added to each culture, the OD was quantified in a Spectrophotometer and adjusted to 0.15 OD at 620nm using the Bacterial stock quantification method (see section 2.6.3.1) for further incubation. During incubation at 37°C and 5% CO₂, the culture's OD were measured hourly until an OD between 0.30-0.35 - early-mid log phase - was achieved. In one culture, 10% sterile glycerol was added, and 1 mL aliquots were prepared and frozen in a -80°C freezer while the other culture was centrifuged at 3345xg for 15 minutes. Afterwards, the supernatant was removed, and the pellet was resuspended with 22.5 mL of Vegitone.

Aliquots of 1 mL were prepared and stored at -80°C. Later, 10% sterile glycerol was added to the culture and after at least 48 hours, three aliquots were quantified to ensure the accuracy in the stocks' CFU.

2.6.3.1 Bacterial stock quantification

To determine the CFU/mL in the final aliquots of bacterial stock, we diluted it by adding 20 μ L of stock to 180 μ L of sterile saline. After that, a dilution of 1:10 was prepared in a 96-well plate (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA) and three 10 μ L drop of the 6 first dilutions were added to a blood agar plate divided in 6 parts (Figure 2). The plate was left to dry and then incubated for 9 to 16 hours at 37°C and 5% CO₂.

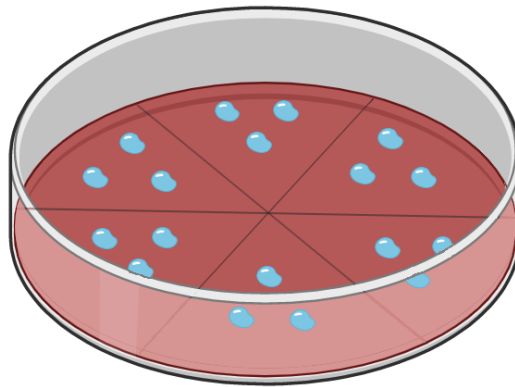


Figure 2. Agar blood plate layout for quantification. Division of agar blood plate into 6 sections represented by black lines and three 10 μ L drops of diluted bacterial stock per session represented by blue drops.

In the next day, the visible colonies in each plate division were counted by dividing the number of colonies by three, taking the average number, multiplying by the dilution factor and further dividing by the volume of 10mL. Finally, the number was multiplied by 1000 to obtain a result in CFU/mL as described in the equation below with x being the number of colonies:

$$\left(\frac{x}{3} \times 10^x \right) \times 1000$$

2.6.4 Experimental Human Spn Inoculation

For the inoculation of volunteers, after quantification of stable and accurate CFU results from the bacterial stock, an aliquot was thawed from the -80°C freezer and centrifuged at 17000xg for 3 minutes. The supernatant was removed, the pellet was resuspended with 1 mL of saline and centrifuged again with the same specifications. One more time, the supernatant was removed, and 1 mL of saline was added to the sample.

Using the original concentration of stock, the aliquots were diluted 1:10 according to the desired dose of 80,000CFU/100µl by using the Bacterial stock quantification procedure (see section 2.6.3.1).

2.6.5 Nasal Wash Processing

Following NW collection (see section 2.5.4), the sample obtained from the volunteer was immediately centrifuged at 3345xg for 10 min at room temperature. Aliquots of 1 mL were taken from the supernatant and stored in a -80°C freezer for further analysis.

After that, the pellet was resuspended with 100µL of STGG and quantified for investigation of respiratory pathogens, using the Bacterial stock quantification procedure (see section 2.6.3.1).

2.6.6 Nasal cells processing

Upon collection of nasal cells described in Section 2.5.5, the sample was dislodged from the rhinoprobes by washing the cells with PBS+Ca+Mg (Section 2.6.2.3). Subsequently, the cells were centrifuged at 440xg for 5min at 4°C and the supernatant was removed so the cells could be stained (see section 2.6.6.1).

2.6.6.1 Nasal cells staining

After processing, the nasal cells from volunteers were resuspended in 50µL of Violet viability dye working solution (Section 2.6.2.3) and incubated for 15 minutes in ice. Afterwards, the antibody mixture was added accordingly (Section 2.6.6.1.1) and incubated for 15 minutes in ice.

Then, the stained cells were washed with 3.5 mL of PBS+Ca+Mg (Section 2.6.2.3) at 440g for 5mins and 4°C, resuspended, filtered over a pre-wetted 70µm filter and placed into a tube for further cytometry analysis. The contents were centrifuged again and resuspended in 200µL of PBS+Ca+Mg in the Antecedent LAIV and of cell fix (BD Biosciences) in the Concurrent LAIV study for acquisition on a flow cytometer (LSRII, BD Bioscience, UK and Becton Dickinson, UK).

2.6.6.1.1 Antibodies for nasal cell staining

In order to investigate cells populations in the human nasopharynx and cell-mediated immune responses to LAIV and Spn colonisation, nasal cells were stained for monocytes, neutrophils, lymphocytes and cell activation markers.

During the Antecedent LAIV study (Table 6), cells were dyed with the extracellular antibodies CD45 (for identification of neutrophils and immune cells), Epcam (the epithelial cellular adhesion molecule was used as a marker for

epithelial cells), CD14 (to distinct monocytes), CD3 (for recognition of T-cell population), CD16 and CD66b (for measurement of neutrophil recruitment) as well as the marker HLA-DR was analysed, an MHC class II cell surface receptor expressed by human leukocytes and commonly used to identify an activation signal^{292,293}.

Likewise, in the Concurrent LAIV study (Table 6), volunteers' cells were stained with CD45, Epcam, CD14, CD19, CD3, CD66b and HLADR, with additional BDCA-1, BDCA-2, CD4 and CD8, markers for a deeper immunophenotyping of subsets of dendritic and T-cells present in the sample. The results were analysed using FlowJo X (Treestar Oregon, USA) and the gating strategy is shown in Figures 3 and 4 for the Antecedent and Concurrent LAIV studies, respectively. Samples with less than 500 immune cells (15% of all samples measured) or 250 epithelial cells were excluded from further analysis.

Flow cytometry compensation was set individually for each of the fluorochromes in the panel in order to adjust for spillover (physical overlap) between fluorochrome channels and acquire trustworthy results. Two sets of single-stained compensation samples were prepared using Anti-mouse and anti-rat BD positive and BD negative compensation beads accordingly (Biosciences, San Jose, CA, Section 2.6.1). Compensation staining for the Violet fluorescent dye was performed separately using the ArC Amine Reactive Compensation Bead Kit (Biosciences, San Jose, CA, Section 6.2.1).

Table 6. Surface antibody markers applied to nasal cells in each study as well as volume used for each sample.

Antecedent LAIV study	
Antibody	Volume per test (μ L)
CD3-APC.Cy7	3
CD16-APC	5
CD14-PerCP.Cy5.5	5
CD66b-FITC	5
CD45-PacOrange	5
EpCAM-PE	5
HLA-DR-PE.Cy7	5

Concurrent LAIV study	
Antibody	Volume per test (μ L)
CD66b-FITC	1
EpCAM-PE	1,5
HLA-DR-PE.cy7	1,5
CD8-BV785	1,5
CD45-PacOrange	3
CD3-APC.Cy7	3
CD19-BV650	3
CD4-BV605	3
CD14-PerCP.Cy5.5	5
BDCA-1-BV711	5
BDCA-2-APC	5

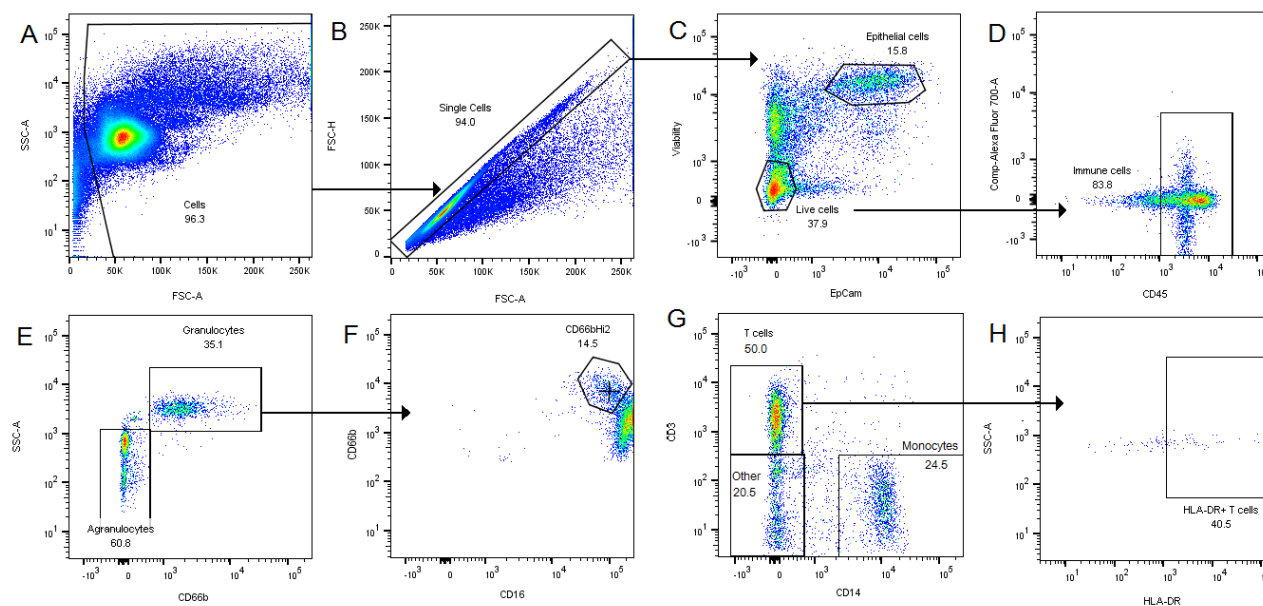


Figure 3. Representative flow plots of nasal cells from the Antecedent LAIV study analysis by flow cytometry. The gating tree was set as follows. A: FSC-A/FSC/SSC-A (represents the distribution of cells in the light scatter based on size and intracellular composition, respectively) to B: FSC-H/FSC-A (to distinct single cells) to C: Viability/EpCam (Live gate represents the fraction of viable cells within the sample analysed and EpCam was used for identification of epithelial cells) to D: AlexaFluor/CD45 positive (represents the immune cells) to E: SSC-A/CD66b (identifies non-neutrophils and neutrophils) to F: CD66b/CD16 (from the analysed neutrophils, CD66bHi were gated) or G: CD3/CD14 (from the analysed aneutrophils, T-cells, monocytes and other cells populations were identified) to H: SSC-A/HLA-DR (from analysed T-cells, HLA-DR⁺ cells were gated)

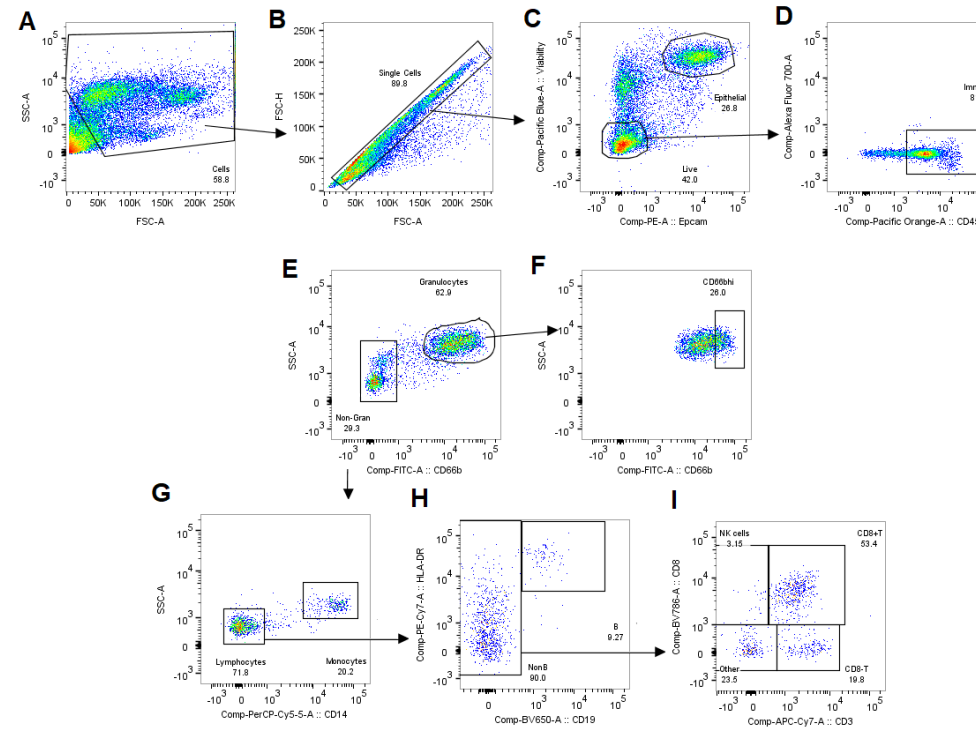


Figure 4. Representative flow plots of nasal T-cells from the Concurrent LAIV study analysed by flow cytometry. The gating tree was set as follows. A: FSC-A/FSC/SSC-A (represents the distribution of cells in the light scatter based on size and intracellular composition, respectively) to B: FSC-H/FSC-A (to distinct single cells) to C: Viability/Epcam (Live gate represents the fraction of viable cells within the sample analysed and Epcam was used for identification of epithelial cells) to D: AlexaFluor/CD45 positive (represents the immune cells) to E: SSC-A/CD66b (identifies non-neutrophils and neutrophils) to F: SSC-A/CD66b (from the analysed neutrophils, CD66bHi were gated) or G: SSC-A/CD14 (from the analysed non-neutrophils, T-cells, monocytes and other cells populations were identified) to H: HLA-DR/CD19 (identifies B-cells) to I: CD8/CD3 (from non-B-cells, identifies NK cells, CD8⁺ T-cells and CD8⁻ T-cells).

2.6.7 Luminex Human Cytokine 30-plex of nasal fluid

Nasal fluid was collected, processed and frozen from a set of volunteers (see section 2.5.6). After thawing, the nasosorption strip (NS) was washed with 100 μ L of Assay Diluent (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA. Section 2.6.1) and centrifuged for 10 min at 16000xg in order to elute the sample. Subsequently, 30 μ L of the liquid was placed on a plate followed by addition of 30 μ L of Assay diluent and 30 μ L of incubation buffer to each well.

Afterwards, 75 μ L of the mixture was transferred to the Luminex plate. Furthermore, 60 μ L of standard was combined with 30 μ L of incubation buffer and 75 μ L of this solution was also moved to the Luminex plate (all Thermo Fisher Scientific, Section 2.6.1). At this time, 12.50 μ L of Antibody Bead was added into the wells of the Luminex plate filled with samples or standards. The duplicate samples were acquired by transferring 43.75 μ L from a well to the well beside it. The plate was incubated overnight at 4°C under agitation on an orbital shaker (500 rpm agitation).

On the next day, the plate was washed twice with 200 μ L Wash Solution and 25 μ L Biotinylated Detector Antibody was added to each well (Thermo Fisher Scientific). Following incubation for 1 hour, the plate was washed twice one more time and 25 μ L Streptavidin-RPE solution was added to each assay well (Thermo Fisher Scientific). The samples were incubated for 30 minutes at room temperature on an orbital plate shaker.

Moreover, the wells were washed three times and 105 μ L 1X Wash Solution to each assay well and placed on an orbital plate shaker for 2–3 minutes prior to analysis. The plate was then acquired using a 30-plex magnetic human Luminex cytokine kit ((Thermo Fisher Scientific). Results were analysed on a

LX200 with xPonent 3.1 software following manufacturer's instructions. Cytokines with a CV>50% for a given sample were excluded from further analysis.

2.6.8 BAL Processing

2.6.8.1 Isolation of non-adherent cells from BAL tissue

The BAL sample collected from a set of volunteers (see Section 2.5.8) was passed through a sterile medical cotton gauze into 50 mL Falcon tubes in ice in order to remove viscous portions of the lavage. Next, 10 mL of sample from the filtered sample was separated and centrifuged at 400xg for 10min at 4°C. Its supernatant was removed, and the pellet resuspended with 2 to 3 mL of complete medium (Section 2.6.1). After that, the centrifugation process was carried on again and the pellet was resuspended in FBS-DMSO (Section 2.6.1) to obtain a concentration of 2×10^5 cells/mL. Finally, the BAL cells were stored in a -80°C freezer overnight then transferred to liquid nitrogen for storage and further analysis.

In order to isolate BAL lymphocytes for antibody staining, on the next day, the aliquot was resuspended and washed with 1 mL of complete medium at a time until clean. The sample was topped up with media to complete 50 mL and centrifuged at 400xg for 10 minutes in 4°C. The pellet was then reconstituted with complete medium and plated (Thermo Fisher Scientific) to obtain a final concentration of 5×10^5 macrophages per well. Following, the plates were incubated at 37°C for 2 to 3 hours to promote adherence of macrophages. Finally, the non-adherent cells were removed from the plate supernatant after rinsing and washing with 3 mL of complete medium.

2.6.8.2 Intracellular staining of non-adherent cells from BAL tissue

Non-adherent BAL cells obtained from volunteers (see section 2.6.8.1) were counted and incubated at 1×10^6 cells/mL in complete medium at 37°C. Samples were stimulated with influenza antigens (TIV) concentrated at 1.2 µg/mL (see Section 2.6.2.5) or left unstimulated as negative control and incubated for 2 hours. Then, 1000x diluted BD Golgiplug (see Section 2.6.2.5) was added and cells were incubated for an additional 16 hours as previously described.

After 16 hours, the cells were washed with 3 mL of PBS, resuspended and stained with Violet Viability dye working solution (see Section 2.6.2.5). After 15 minutes, cells were stained with the surface markers CD3-APCH7 (clone SK7), TCR- $\gamma\delta$ -PECy7 (clone 11F2) from BD Biosciences (San Jose, California, USA), CD4-PerCP5.5 (clone SK3), CD8-AF700 (clone SK1), CD69-BV650 (clone FNSO), CD25-PE.TxsRed (clone M-A251), CD103-BV605 (clone Ber-ACT8), CD49a-APC (clone TS2/7) from Biolegend (San Diego, CA) according to Table 7 and incubated for 15 minutes. Cells were fixed and permeabilised using the Foxp3/Transcription Factor Staining Buffer Set as per manufacturer's instructions described in Section 2.6.2.5. Cells were stained with intracellular markers FOXP3-FITC (clone 259D), IFN- γ -PE (clone 4S.B3), TNF- α -BV711 (clone MAb11) Biolegend (San Diego, CA) and IL-10-BV786 (clone JES3-9D7) IL-17A-BV510 (clone N49-653) from BD Biosciences (San Jose, California, USA). (Table 7). For investigation of TRM T-cell responses to influenza, we used the extracellular markers CD69, CD103 and CD49a. In this thesis, TRM was ultimately defined as CD4⁺ CD69⁺ cells, following scientific consensus²⁹⁴, as over one third of CD4⁺ CD69⁺ cells did not express the additional resident memory

markers CD103 and CD49a. In addition, to assess the frequency of regulatory T-cells (T-regs) in the lung, we measured the frequency of CD25^{hi} FOXP3⁺ T-regs among CD4⁺ T-cells using intracellular staining.

After 30 minutes, samples were washed with 3 mL of PBS and resuspended in 200 μ L of PBS for acquisition on a BD LSR flow cytometer (Becton Dickinson, UK). Flow cytometry data was analysed using FlowJo cell analysis software version 10 (FlowJo, LLC, Ashland, Ore) and the gating strategy as shown on Figure 5 and 6. For participants displaying less than 500 immune cells for a given sample, the participant was excluded from further analysis. Similarly, to staining nasal cells, flow cytometry compensation was done individually for each of the fluorochromes in the panel as described on section 2.6.6.1.1.

Table 7 Surface antibody markers applied to BAL cells as well as volume used for each sample.

Extracellular staining		Intracellular staining	
Antibody	Volume (μL)	Antibody	Volume (μL)
CD49a-APC	3	FOXP3-FITC	5
CD69 – BV650	3	IL-10 – BV786	3
CD3-APCH7	3	IFN-γ – PE	3
TCR-$\gamma\delta$ – PECy7	3	IL17A – BV510	3
CD25-PE.TxsRed	2	TNF-α – BV711	3
CD103 – BV605	1.5		
CD4 – PerCP5.5	0.5		
CD8 – AF700	0.5		

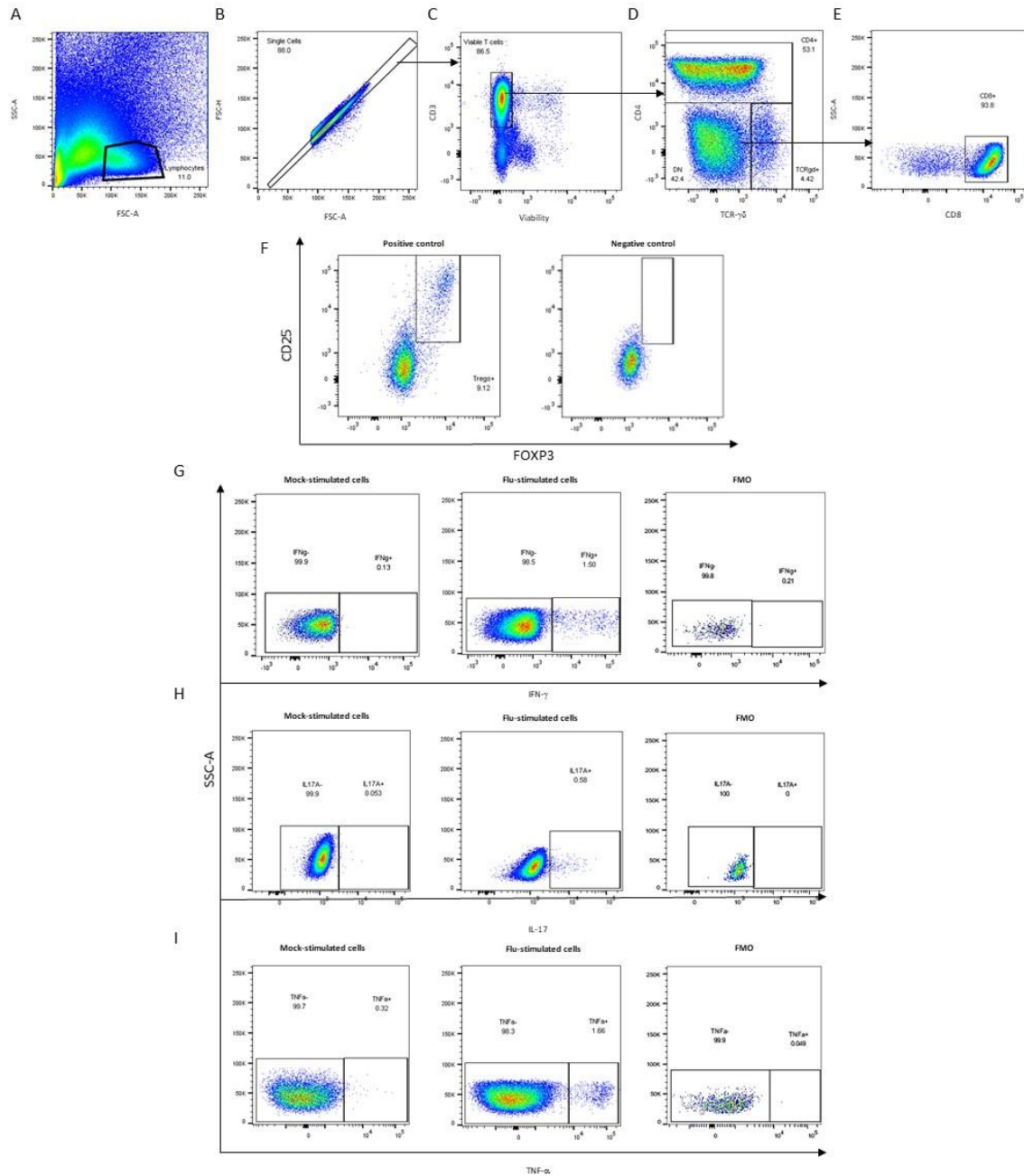


Figure 5. Representative flow plots of BAL T-cells and cytokine production analysed by flow cytometry using intracellular staining. To assess the frequency of cells in human BAL, we employed the following gating strategy. (A) FSC-A/SSC-A to (B) FSC-H/FSC-A (in order to exclude doublets) to (C) CD3/Viability to (D) CD4/TCR- $\gamma\delta$ to (E) SSC-A/CD8. (F) The markers CD25/FOXP3 (CD25^{hi} and FOXP3⁺) were used to assess the frequency of T-regulatory cells in human BAL after restimulation with influenza antigens. A negative control (CD25⁻ and FOXP3⁻) was used to validate flow cytometric data. To assess cellular production of (G) IFN- γ , (H) IL-17A, (I) TNF- α , cells were stained by intracellular staining after overnight mock or influenza-stimulation. Fluorescence Minus One (FMO) controls were used to verify flow cytometric data

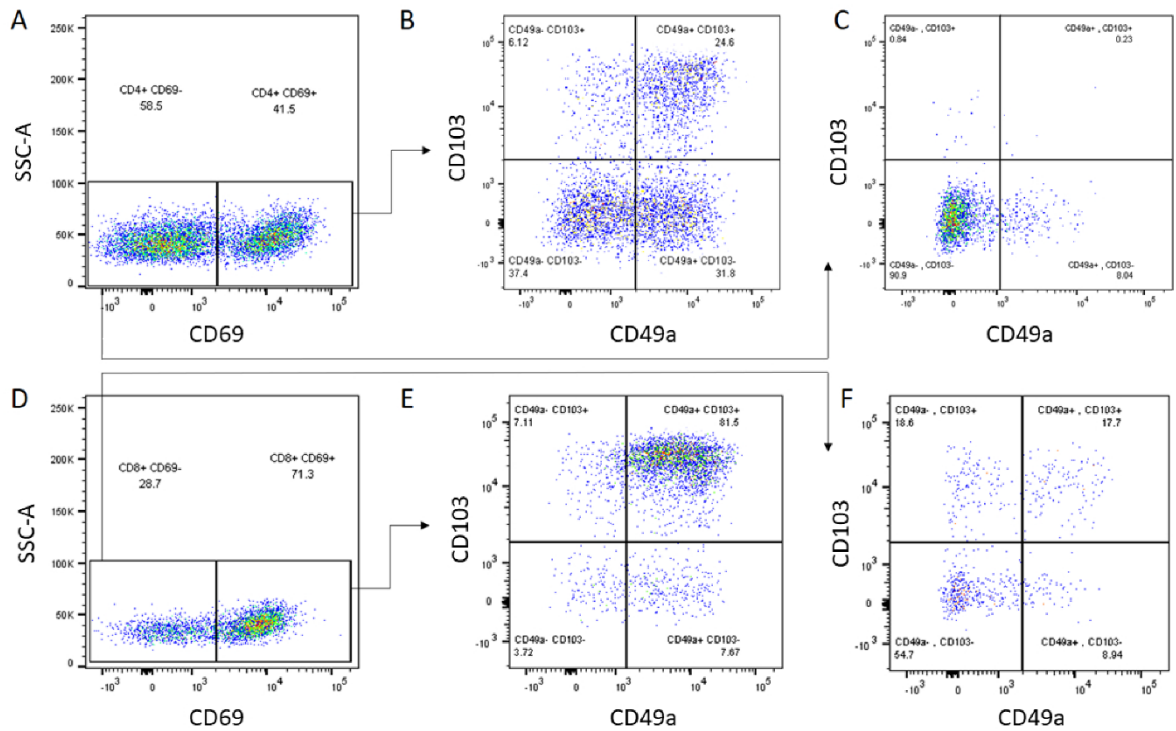


Figure 6. Representative plots of TRM T-cells identified by flow cytometry. The markers CD69, CD103 and CD49a were used to assess the frequency of TRM cells in human BAL. (A) CD4⁺ T-cells gated into CD69 negative and positive cells. CD103 and CD49 marker expression are shown for (B) CD4⁺ CD69⁺ T-cells and (C) CD4⁺ CD69⁻ T-cells. (D) CD8⁺ T-cells gated into CD69 negative and positive cells. CD103 and CD49 marker expression are shown for (E) CD8⁺ CD69⁺ T-cells and (F) CD8⁺ CD69⁻ T-cells.

2.6.9 ELISA procedures

2.6.9.1 IgG and IgA ELISA on serum, nasal wash and BAL

ELISA was used to quantify levels of IgG and IgA antibodies to influenza in the serum, nasal wash and BAL supernatant from volunteers participating in the Antecedent LAIV study. Pooled sera of 7 TIV vaccinated volunteers was heat-inactivated (at 56°C for 30 min) and used as standard in both total IgA and IgG to influenza ELISA. Antibody levels were expressed in arbitrary units. For IgG standard preparation, a dilution of 1:4000 was applied, while for IgA was diluted 1:40.

Briefly, 96-well plates (Thermo Fisher Scientific) were coated with 100µL of 0.2 µg/mL TIV in PBS overnight at room temperature. During the experiment, each wash consists of washing plates three time with PBS with 0.005% Tween (Sigma, see Section 2.6.1). After incubation overnight, plates were washed following blocking with 100µL of PBS with 1% BSA for 1 hour in room temperature. Then, plates were washed, and samples were added in duplicate and incubated for 2 hours at room temperature.

For detection of IgG and IgA, a 1:5000 and 1:4000 dilution of anti-human-IgG and anti-human-IgA antibodies respectively(Sigma, see Section 2.6.1), was made using 0.1% BSA and 100µL added to each well after washing and incubated at room temperature for 2 hours. For IgA ELISA, 100µL of 1:2000 dilution of Streptavidin–Alkaline Phosphatase using 0.1% BSA was added to each well and incubated at room temperature for 1 hour.

Then, for both IgA and IgG to influenza, plates were washed and 100µL of p-Nitrophenyl Phosphate (Sigma) was added to the wells. Plates were incubated

at room temperature for a fixed period (IgA: 30 min and IgG: 90 minutes). The optical density of each well was measured at 405nm using a FLUOstar Omega ELISA microplate reader, the average blank corrected value was calculated for each sample and the data analysed using Omega Analysis.

2.7 Statistical analysis

All sampling, processing and analysis were performed while blinded to vaccination and colonisation group to achieve unbiased results. Non-parametric tests were used for statistical analysis since number of samples were insufficient for a normal distribution of results. Statistics were calculated in GraphPad prism version 5.0, 6.0 and 7.0 for Windows (GraphPad Software, California USA) and R Statistical Software (R Foundation for Statistical Computing) with packages gplots, shiny, mass, vegan and RcolorBrewer. Differences were considered statistically significant if $p \leq 0.05$. Benjamini-Hochberg multiple correction was performed in R for 30-plex cytokine data.

CHAPTER THREE

DEVELOPMENT OF METHODOLOGY FOR NASAL MUCOSA ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

The human oro/nasopharynx is the major site of Spn colonisation²⁹⁵ and LAIV attenuated virus replication^{153,296}. In order to establish reliable and reproducible methodologies for nasal cell immunophenotyping and cytokine analysis of the mucosal immune responses, we assessed and compared 3 minimally-invasive micro-sampling techniques (nasal wash, nasal curettage and nasosorption).

Currently, the most used method for collecting cells from within the nasopharynx is a NW procedure. The technique is well tolerated, however, luminal cell populations can vary significantly from intra-mucosal populations^{297,298}. Cell collection using nasal curettes is an alternative method that has previously been used to collect epithelial cells for culture, as well as for gene expression analysis^{299,300}. Herein, we sampled the nasal mucosa using nasal curettes and studied the composition of nasal cells using flow cytometry. Nasal immune cell yields and viability were compared between nasal curettes and nasal washes.

Cytokines and other soluble immune mediators are also commonly measured in NW samples. However, an absorptive matrix to collect nasal fluid (NS) has been tested in neonates, and has the potential to be better tolerated and more widely applicable³⁰¹. This technique has recently been used to investigate nasal responses to grass pollen, LPS and rhinovirus^{302–304}.

Immunological findings in murine, or other animal models, often fail to translate to humans, which indicate the need for more accurate non-invasive techniques to measure immunological response in the nose. Furthermore, an improved method of sampling the nasal mucosa would certainly lead to a greater

understanding of the cellular components in the human nasopharynx. In this chapter, we aimed to compare cells and cytokines detection between different techniques.

3.2 Methods

3.2.1 Volunteers recruitment

In total 240 samples were collected from 139 healthy individuals (requirements described in Section 2.2) from the Antecedent Study (Section 2.3) to investigate techniques for studying immune responses at the mucosal level.

3.2.2 Collection of nasal samples

All participants were sampled for NW (Section 2.5.4) using 20 mL of sterile saline and underwent nasal curettage and NS collection.

In order to collect nasal cells by curettage, volunteers had their inferior turbinates scraped using a rhinoprobe (BRAND ASL Rhino-Pro©, Arlington Scientific) in each nostril, as described in Section 2.5.5. The sample was placed in 8 mL of PBS +Ca+Mg and placed on ice for further analysis.

For NS collection, an adsorptive matrix strip (Nasosorption™, Hunt Developments) was inserted into the nostril and placed against the nasal lining of the inferior turbinate for 2 minutes and then placed in its transport tube (Section 2.5.6).

3.2.3 Flow cytometry analysis

As described in Section 2.6.6.1, cells were dislodged from the curette and, were spun down (440xg for 5 minutes) and resuspended in PBS+Ca+Mg containing LIVE/DEAD Fixable Aqua Dead Cell Stain (ThermoFisher). After 15 minutes incubation on ice, a cocktail of conjugated antibodies against key cell surface markers such as Epcam-PE, HLADR-PECy7, CD16-APC, CD66b-FITC (Biolegend), CD3-APCCy7, CD14-PercpCy5.5 (BD Biosciences) and CD45-PACOrange (ThermoFisher) was added to the cells. Following a further 15 minutes incubation on ice, cells were filtered over a 70µm filter (ThermoFisher). Next, the cells were spun down (440xg for 5 minutes), resuspended in PBS+Ca+Mg and acquired on a flow cytometer (LSRII, BD). NWs were similarly processed excluding the dislodging step as described in Section 2.6.5. Flow cytometry data were analysed using Flowjo V.10 (Treestar).

3.2.4 Cytokine detection

As described in Section 2.6.7, nasal lining fluid was extracted from nasosorption strips by centrifugation (1880xg for 10 minutes) and frozen at -80°C until use. Supernatant from NW was collected by centrifugation at 1008xg for 3 minutes and was stored at -80°C until use. The human magnetic 30-plex cytokine kit (ThermoFisher) was used to detect 30 cytokines simultaneously on a LX200 with xPonent3.1 software (Luminex) following manufacturer's instructions described in Section 2.6.7.

3.2.5 Scoring tolerability of nasal sampling procedures

Following NS, nasal curettage and NW, participants rated using a 5-point modified Likert scale (Section 2.5.2) how 'painful' and how 'uncomfortable' each procedure was, and how much it made their 'eyes water'. 39 participants also completed a symptoms log for 7 days documenting both local and general symptoms with severity ratings from 1 to 7 (Section 2.5.2).

3.2.6 Multi-dimensional scaling and heat map generation

Multi-dimensional scaling and heat map representations were generated using statistical software R. Flow cytometry data (epithelial cell yield, immunophenotyping and activation) was log-transformed and a distance-matrix was calculated. The Kruskal stress was calculated using the 'MASS' package on the R software. Heat maps of log-transformed cytokine data were generated using the 'gplots' package.

3.2.7 Statistical analysis

As described in Section 2.7, non-parametric two-tailed tests were used throughout using Prism 5 (Graphpad). If 2 groups were compared, a Mann-Whitney test was used. If multiple groups were compared, a Kruskal-Wallis test was used, followed by a Dunn's post-test. A Spearman test was used to measure correlations between 2 continuous variables. Analysis of similarity (ANOSIM) testing was performed using the 'vegan' package in R.

3.3 Results

Nasal curettage yields robust and reproducible data

To verify the repeatability of nasal curettage, we initially collected samples from the left and right nostril of 3 healthy volunteers and performed flow cytometry to identify cellular composition (Figure 7).

Samples from both nostrils were processed independently and frequencies of neutrophils, monocytes and T-cells were compared for each of the 3 volunteers. Cellular samples collected from the 2 nostrils were similar for each of the 3 volunteers, compared to samples collected from the other 2 volunteers. These results demonstrate the repeatability of nasal curettage as well as the presence of inter-individual variation in immune cells in the nose.

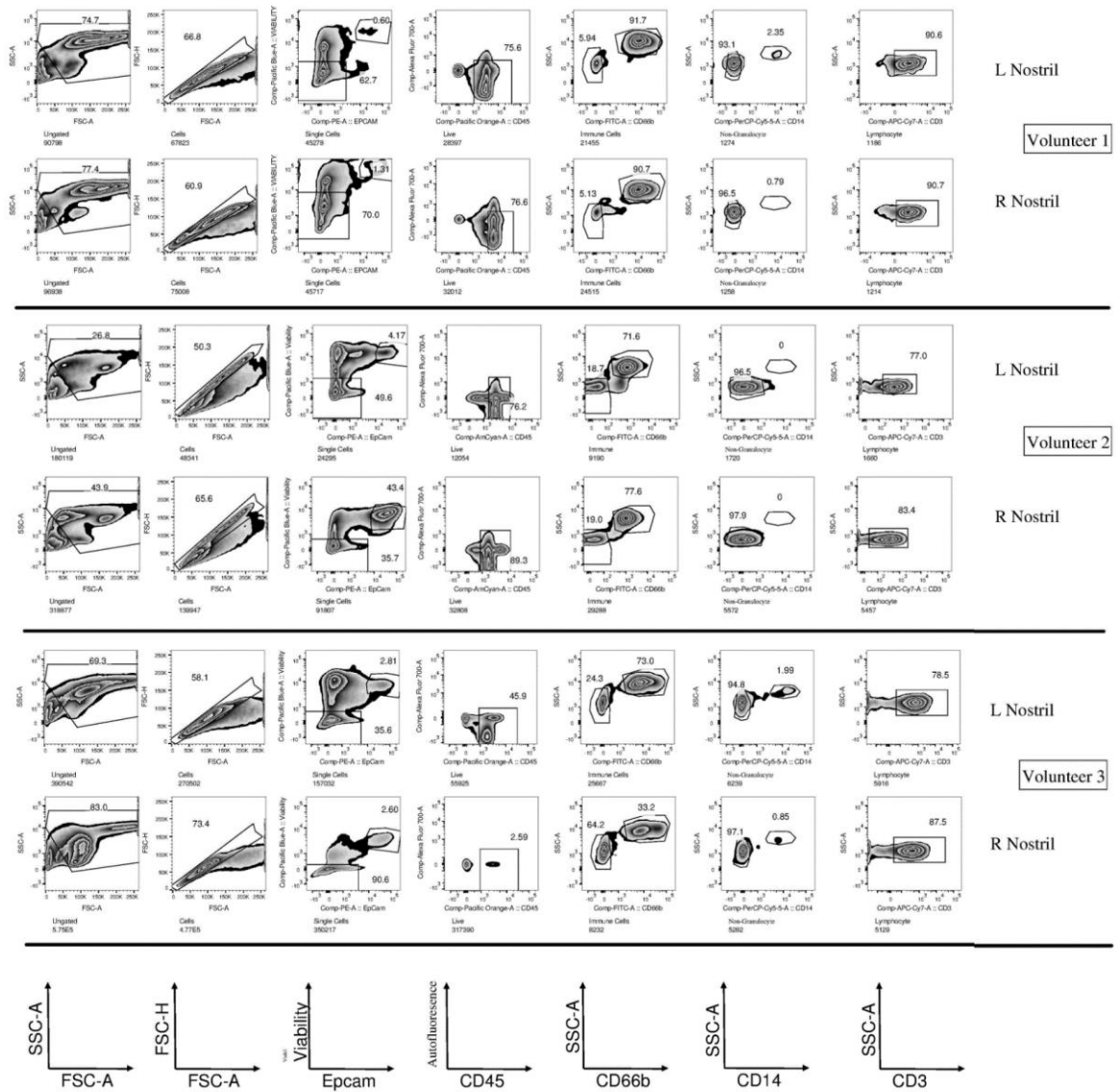


Figure 7. Repeatability of nasal curettage sampling. Nasal cells were collected from the left (L) and right (R) nostril of three volunteers, processed independently and their composition was assessed by flow cytometry. After excluding debris and doublets, epithelial cells were identified by Epcam expression. A viability dye and CD45 were used to identify live immune cells. Among those cells, side scatter, CD66b, CD14 and CD3 were used to identify neutrophils, monocytes and T-cells respectively.

To verify that nasal curette sampling yields stable data, cells were collected from healthy volunteers (n=117) over a 5-month period (Figure 8). The percentage of neutrophils and T-cells among immune cells was stable during this period (Figure 8A). Moreover, for a subset of volunteers, up to 4 nasal samples were collected during a 33 day period. The levels of both neutrophils and T-cells correlated on an intra-individual level between repeated sampling (Figure 8B and 8C). These results demonstrate that despite variation between individuals, the immunological profile in the nose is stable in the absence of disease or immune intervention such as vaccination.

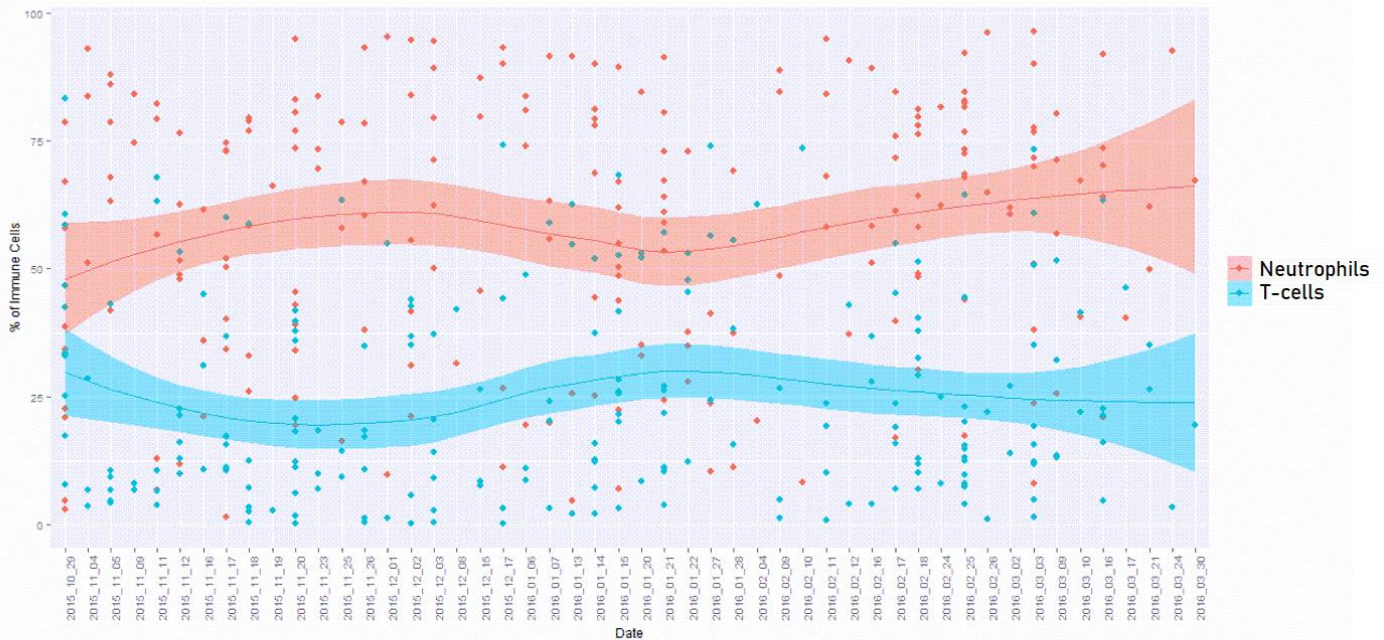
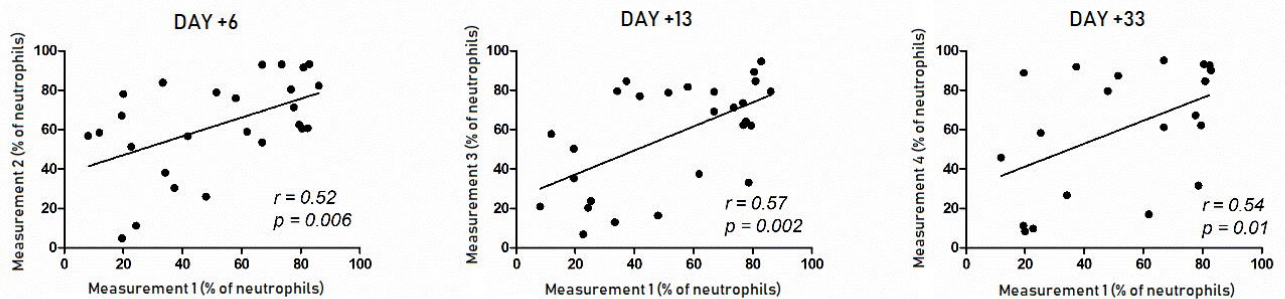
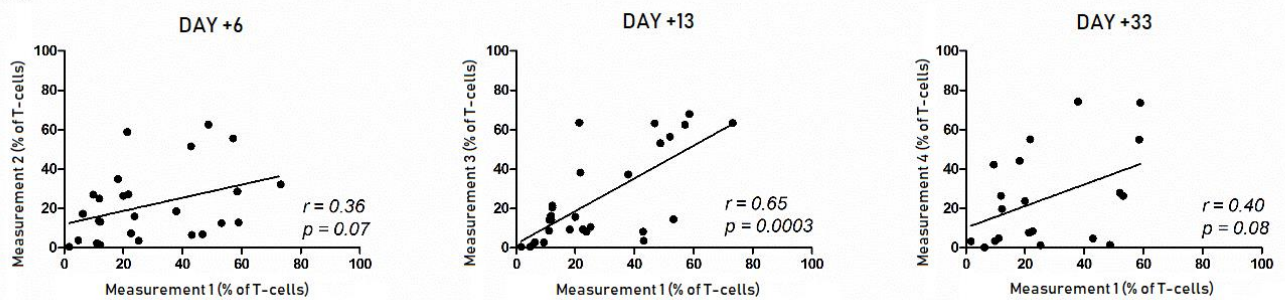
A**B****C**

Figure 8. Nasal curettage yields reproducible and consistent results over time. (A) The percentage of neutrophils (red) and T-cells (blue) in 218 nasal cell samples collected over a 5-month period ($n=117$ volunteers, sampled up to 5 times). Circles represent individual samples and loess curves are depicted for both populations. (B, C) Correlations for individuals in 4 repeated measurements over a 33-day period for (B) neutrophils and (C) T-cells

Nasal curettage and nasal wash yield different cell populations

We then compared the yield and composition of nasal cells collected using currettes to those collected using a NW (Figure 9A and 9B). Nasal curettage yielded a median of 4367 (interquartile range, IQR: 1511–10348) immune cells and 1407 (IQR: 570–3194) epithelial cells, respectively. The number of immune cells obtained was similar between NW and nasal curette. In contrast, there were a median 22.7-fold increased numbers of epithelial cells collected by nasal curette (Figure 9A, $p < 0.05$). Figure 9B shows the composition of the collected immune cells. NW immune cells consisted almost exclusively of neutrophils (median 96%, IQR: 93–97%). On the other hand, nasal curette samples contained predominantly neutrophils (median 64%, IQR: 39–79%, $p < 0.0001$ compared to NW), but also consisted of a larger fraction of T-cells than NW (median 16%, IQR: 9–38%, $p < 0.0001$ when compared to NW).

A median of 2591 (IQR: 691–7666) neutrophils and 633 (IQR: 210–1740) T-cells were acquired per sample. Nasal curette samples also contained more HLA-DR⁺ cells, which are likely to consist of B-cells and DCs (median 1.7%, IQR 0.9–3.2%, $p < 0.001$ compared to NW). Of all immune cells collected by curettage and NW, 81.7% and 96.4% could be characterised, respectively.

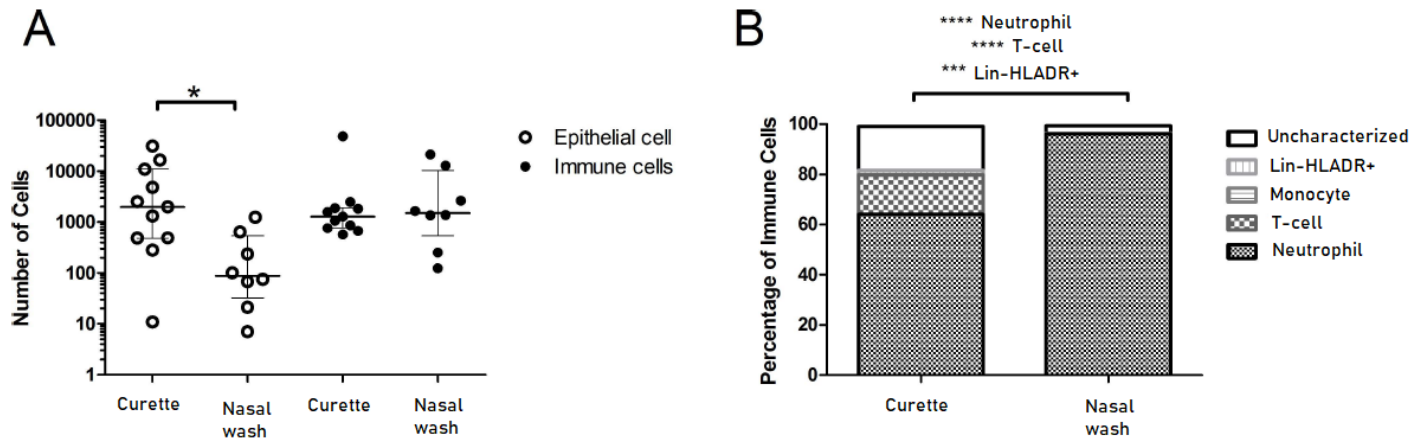


Figure 9. Comparison of samples collected by nasal wash and nasal curette. (A) Immune (black) and epithelial (grey) cell yields were compared between nasal wash pellets and nasal curette samples. Individual samples and median with interquartile range are shown. (B) Median levels of neutrophils (blue), T-cells (red), monocytes (black) and lineage- HLA-DR+ (grey) among immune cells in nasal curette (n=139 individuals) and nasal wash (n=8) samples. ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$, **** $p < 0.0001$ Mann-Whitney test.

Cytokine detection from nasal lining fluid using nasosorption devices

To investigate cytokines in the nose, we used NW and NS to collect nasal lining fluid. The median volume of nasal lining fluid returned using this technique was 42.5 μ L (IQR: 29.25–71.25 μ L, n=41). We compared cytokine levels in nasal lining fluid and NW supernatant for 30 cytokines by Luminex (Figure 10A).

Levels of different cytokines varied considerably, with median levels of IL-1RA at 212,000pg/mL and GM-CSF at 2pg/mL in nasal lining fluid. Relative cytokine abundance correlated well between NS and NW, as cytokines that were abundant in NS were also highly present in NW. Of interest, T-cell cytokines (IL-10, IL-17, IFN- γ , TNF- α , IL-4, IL-5, IL-2) were only present at low levels (Figure 10B), which correlates with the absence of T-cells in the lumen. Growth factors as EGF, HGF and VEGF were expressed at moderately high levels, reflecting the homeostatic nature of mucosal surfaces.

Levels of cytokines were higher in NS compared to NW (median 4.7x, IQR: 3.1–8.0x). However, some cytokines had a ratio between NS and NW that differed substantially from this: IL-1RA and IL-5 were respectively 51.5x and 45.2x higher in NS than in NW. In contrast, MIG, RANTES and IP-10 were found at similar levels in NS and in NW (ratio of 1.5x, 1.0x and 0.9x, respectively) (Figure 10B).

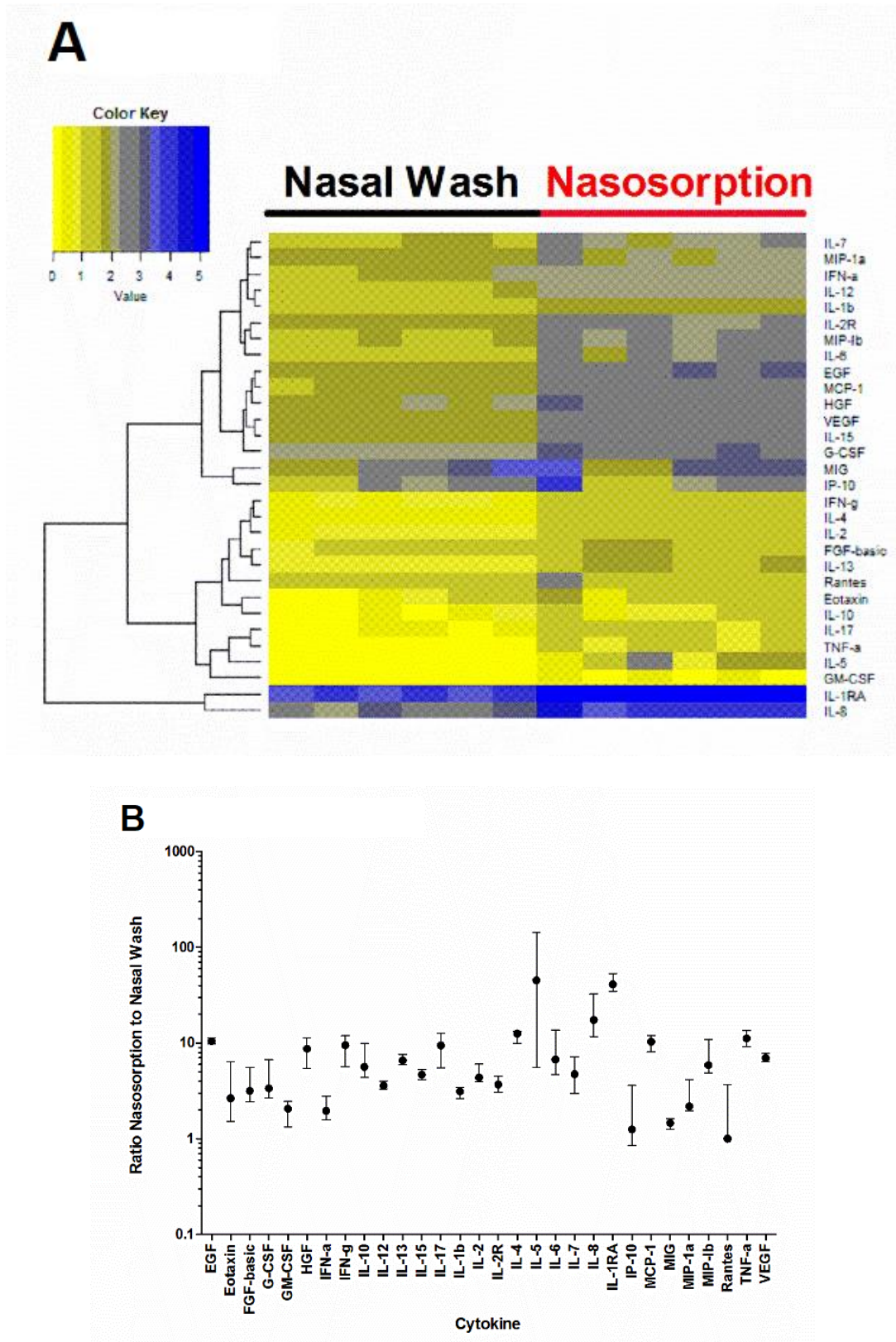


Figure 10. Comparison of cytokine levels in samples collected by NW and using NS strips. (A) A heat map depicts log-transformed cytokine concentrations, with yellow and blue indicating low and high levels, respectively. Each of the columns corresponds to 1 sample ($n=6$ NW and NS) and each of the rows to 1 cytokine. A distance tree shows similarity between cytokines. (B) The ratio of cytokine concentrations measured in paired NS and NW (median and IQR are shown, $n=6$).

Methods of nasal micro-sampling are well tolerated by volunteers and do not lead to symptoms

Using the 5-point modified Likert scale, 20 participants gave ratings for nasal curettage (88 ratings) and NS (60 ratings) with regards to pain, discomfort and lacrimation (Table 2).

For nasal curettage and NS (Figure 11), the proportion of responses that reported any degree of pain (any score > 1) were 73% and 10%, respectively. Additionally, the proportion of responses that reported any degree of discomfort (score > 1) were 86% and 47%, respectively. Moreover, the proportion of responses that reported any degree of lacrimation (score > 1) were, 84% and 28%, respectively.

For NS the maximum rating was moderate for levels of discomfort, pain or causing lacrimation. A small proportion of responses rated nasal curettage as very painful (2%), uncomfortable (8%) or causing lacrimation (6%).

Finally, we assessed whether these sampling methods led to increased general and nasal symptoms over a longer period in 39 healthy volunteers (Table 3). All participants had NW procedures and 20 of those participants had nasal curettage and NS to investigate whether these additional sampling methods affect nasal symptoms. Daily symptom logs for nasal and general symptoms were completed by all volunteers. Age and sex distribution were similar in each group. The median ratings for overall nasal symptoms were 1 (range 1–4) and 1 (range 1–5) in the group with and without additional nasal sampling, respectively.

In the symptoms log, a score of 1 represented 'none to occasional symptoms' and 5 represented 'moderately bothersome'. Comparison of area under the curve between the 2 groups showed no significant difference in either overall nasal symptoms or general symptoms. In addition, we compared nasal

and general symptoms between participants with and without additional nasal sampling on day 1 (before additional sampling) and day 3 (after additional sampling). There were no significant differences between nasal or general symptoms with or without additional nasal sampling at these time points.

Table 8. Levels of pain, discomfort and lacrimation associated with nasal curettage and NS.

Volunteer responses (% , n)		
<i>PAIN RATING</i>		
Pain rating	Nasal curettage	Nasosorption
1 - Not at all	27% (24)	90% (54)
2 – Slightly	43% (38)	10% (6)
3 – Moderately	27% (24)	0% (0)
4 – Very	3% (2)	0% (0)
5 – Extremely	0% (0)	0% (0)
<i>DISCOMFORT RATING</i>		
Discomfort rating	Nasal curettage	Nasosorption
1 - Not at all	13% (12)	53% (32)
2 – Slightly	47% (42)	40% (24)
3 – Moderately	32% (28)	7% (4)
4 – Very	8% (7)	0% (0)
5 – Extremely	0% (0)	0% (0)
<i>LACRIMATION RATING</i>		
Lacrimation rating	Nasal curettage	Nasosorption
1 - Not at all	17% (14)	71% (4)
2 – Slightly	60% (53)	22% (13)
3 – Moderately	18% (16)	7% (4)
4 – Very	3% (3)	0% (0)
5 – Extremely	2% (2)	0% (0)

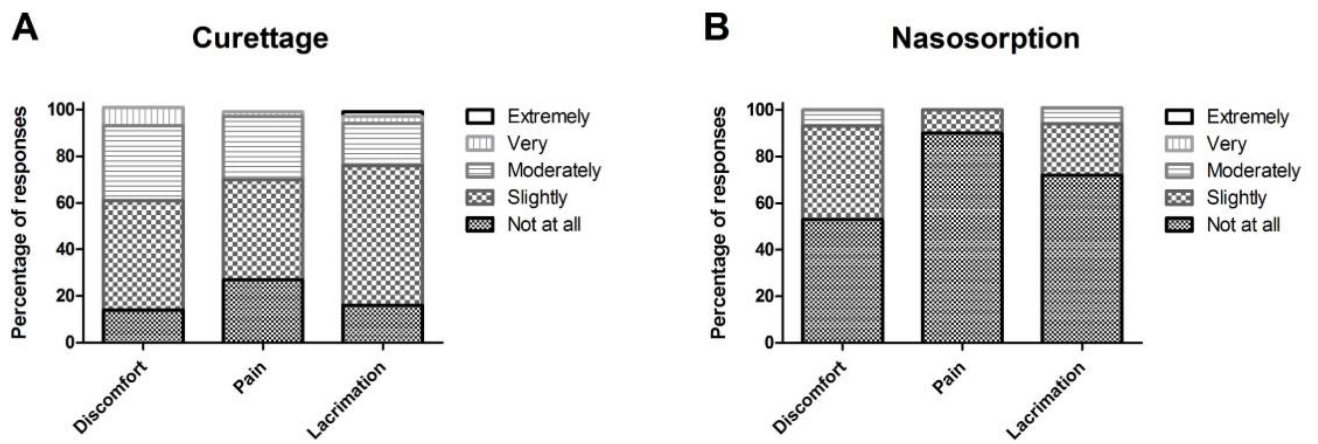


Figure 11. Tolerability of novel nasal sampling methods. The percentage of volunteers rating (A) nasal curettage and (B) nasosorption on discomfort, pain and lacrimation.

3.4 Discussion

Here we described 2 novel non-invasive nasal mucosal micro-sampling techniques and their use for measuring immunological parameters in the nasal mucosa: 1) using nasal cures to collect cells from the inferior turbinate and; 2) absorptive matrices to collect nasal lining fluid (NS). Both techniques were well tolerated and yielded reproducible and robust data. We demonstrated differences in immune populations and activation state in nasal mucosa compared to nasopharyngeal lumen in healthy adults. We also found superior cytokine detection with NS compared to NW. This was the first time that nasal cells collected in this way were analysed by flow cytometry, demonstrating the presence of immune cells in these samples.

NW yielded almost exclusively neutrophils, indicating differences in immune cells were collected by NW and nasal curette. The lack of T-cells in NWs reflects earlier findings showing that neutrophils and monocytes readily enter the lumen in the gut, while T-cells are mostly associated with the sub-epithelial layer ^{47,305,306}.

We also assessed the use of NS devices to collect nasal lining fluid. Importantly, the nasal lining fluid contained cytokines in concentrations that were increased compared to concentrated NW. Moreover, a positive correlation between cytokine levels that were detected in both nasal lining fluid and those from NW was observed. However, the ratio between cytokine concentrations in nasal lining fluid and NW was not similar for all cytokines assessed, which could be due to the existence of cytokines in different nasopharyngeal compartments. As NWs sample the entire nasopharynx in contrast to a localised sample coming from the NS strip this might lead to different returned cytokine levels.

Alternatively, these differences could arise from cytokines binding affinities to the NS paper. NW is currently the most commonly used method to obtain samples from the nasopharynx, however, it has limited application in multiple clinical scenarios such as sampling of children as NW consists of holding in and expelling saline through the nose. Here we have demonstrated that NS has greater sensitivity than the traditional NW and is extremely well tolerated by participants. Nevertheless, there are potential issues with sample collection using NS devices, such as poor return volume, which was corrected in future samplings by adding diluent buffer to the samples afterwards.

In conclusion, non-invasive mucosal sampling yields nasal cells and nasal lining fluid that can be used to study both cellular and soluble immune responses at the mucosal surface. Such samplings are well-tolerated and do not lead to a change in nasal symptoms being ideal for research. These techniques were used throughout the 2 LAIV studies and can be widely implemented in order to provide researchers with an effective tool to study immunological responses in the respiratory tract.

CHAPTER FOUR

EFFECT OF SPN AND LAIV ON RECRUITMENT OF IMMUNE CELLS TO NASAL MUCOSA

4.1 Introduction

The mucosal tissue is described to have an epithelial cell layer that interacts directly with the environment, making it the body's first line of defence against infectious agents. Mucosal surfaces have a high tolerance to antigens that are not dangerous, coming from ingested food or commensal microorganisms, inhibiting unnecessary local and systemic immune responses in order to maintain homeostasis and normal physiological functions ³⁰⁷.

The mucosa form the largest mammalian lymphoid organ system. As part of this complex barrier, the nasal mucosae are protected by specialised innate and adaptive immune mechanisms can recruit a large number of immune cells such as monocytes, neutrophils, DCs and T-cells, which can be resident cells or migratory cells that travel through the mucosa-associated lymphoid tissue (MALT) ^{308,309}.

Nasopharyngeal Spn colonisation is the primary reservoir for bacterial transmission ³¹⁰ and a prerequisite of invasive disease ³¹¹. However, it is common for humans to be naturally colonised by Spn asymptotically many times during lifetime for weeks or even months at a time ³¹². Therefore, a successful control of the Spn load by immune cells in the nasal mucosa is the key for preventing severe illness ³¹³ as uncontrolled Spn colonisation and increased bacterial load has been associated with transmission within households ³¹⁰, elevated risk of Spn pneumonia ²⁶⁶ and mortality ³¹⁴.

Moreover, it is known that during Spn and wild-type influenza virus co-infection, the host ability to control bacterial growth is affected ^{75,270,315–317}. The presence of the virus induces additional adaptive CD8⁺ T-cell responses in the nasal mucosa to achieve virus clearance and support innate host defences ¹⁸⁸.

Consequently, adaptive and innate responses synergize to culminate in an inflammatory cytokine and chemokine storm ²⁷¹.

It is important to notice that influenza attenuated viruses contained in the LAIV can impact on Spn density in children ³¹⁸. Furthermore, LAIV in 2 to 4 year old increased prevalence of Spn when compared to other microbiota in the nose ³¹⁸. In adults, asymptomatic viral infection has been shown to predispose to experimental colonisation by facilitating Spn adherence to the epithelium ⁴⁶. Murine models also confirms that LAIV increases susceptibility to and duration of Spn colonisation with similar mechanisms to the wild-type influenza virus ²⁸². However, as most of the observed interactions between Spn, attenuated influenza virus and host derive from mice and children models, these findings may not accurately correspond to the human adult counterpart. Therefore, it becomes important to confirm this observation using samples from healthy adults.

4.2 Methods

4.2.1 Volunteer recruitment, vaccination and inoculation

216 healthy adult volunteers were recruited to the Antecedent and Concurrent LAIV study (Section 2.2) and received vaccination (LAIV or TIV as control) and intranasal inoculation with Spn6B (EHPC). In the Antecedent study, vaccine was administered 3 days before inoculation, while in the Concurrent study, subjects received the vaccine 3 days after the inoculation (Section 2.3).

4.2.2 Nasal cells collection, processing and staining

Before and after vaccination and inoculation, 106 volunteers recruited to the Antecedent study and 110 to the Concurrent study had their inferior turbinates scraped with a rhinoprobe (Section 2.5.5) on predetermined timepoints.

Nasal cells were washed (Section 2.6.6) and stained with extracellular antibodies (Section 2.6.6.1). In the Antecedent study, nasal cells were stained with against CD45, Epcam, CD14, CD3, CD16, CD66b and HLADR cell surface markers, whereas in the Concurrent study 2 additional antibodies for DCs (anti-BDCA-1 and anti-BDCA-2) were included in the flow cytometry panel.

Volunteers were stratified into 4 groups for analysis: TIV Spn-, vaccinated with TIV and negative for Spn colonisation (Antecedent n=25, Concurrent n=33); TIV Spn+, vaccinated with TIV and Spn colonised (Antecedent n=18, Concurrent n=25); LAIV Spn-, vaccinated with LAIV and not colonised (Antecedent n=26, Concurrent n=30); LAIV Spn+, vaccinated with LAIV and Spn colonised (Antecedent n=22, Concurrent n=22).

4.2.3 Flow cytometry and statistical analysis

To account for the differences in the length of sample collected by curettage and accurately compare the number of immune cells recruited to the nasal mucosa, the analysis of specific cell numbers was made using the number of the specific cell population compared to the epithelial cell numbers contained in the collected sample. The recruitment of immune cells was analysed in each group by comparing the median number of immune cells to epithelial cell ratio at each timepoint compared to baseline (Antecedent study: day -4; Concurrent study: day -5 from Spn inoculation) by Wilcoxon test. Comparisons of median results between groups were done by Mann-Whitney test.

Stained nasal cells were analysed in a flow cytometer using FlowJo X (Treestar) and gating strategy is shown in Section 2.7. Statistical analysis was done using Prism 7 (Graphpad) software.

4.3 Results

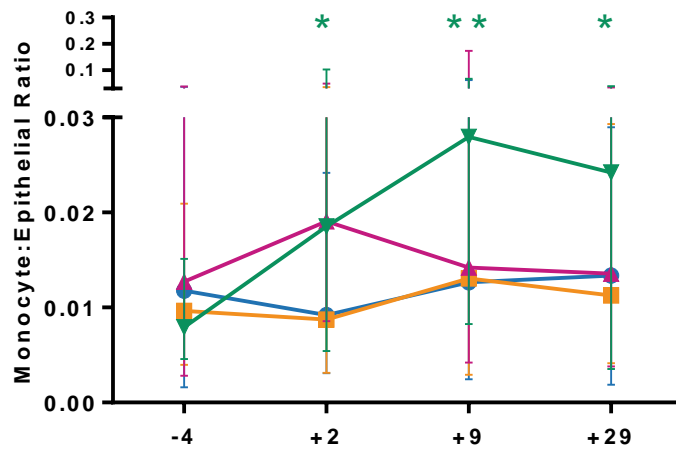
4.3.1 Antecedent LAIV

In the Antecedent study, 106 volunteers were vaccinated with either TIV (n=51) or LAIV (n=55) and inoculated with Spn 3 days later. Subjects were sampled for nasal cells on days -4 (baseline), +2, +7, +9, +29 relative to Spn inoculation. For analysis, volunteers were stratified into the groups: TIV Spn-, TIV Spn+, LAIV Spn- and LAIV Spn+. In addition, for analysis regarding only Spn colonisation status, volunteers were divided into the groups: Spn- (not Spn colonised, n=60) and Spn+ (Spn colonised, n=46).

Induction of monocyte recruitment to the nose by Spn colonisation is impaired by antecedent LAIV vaccination

Here we compared the recruitment of monocytes to the nasopharynx using the median of monocytes to epithelial cell ratio. When assessing all volunteers colonised by Spn independent of vaccine, Spn-induced monocyte recruitment was significant at day +2 (Spn- vs. Spn+, median 2.1-fold increase, $p=0.014$, Figure 12B). Importantly, when stratified by vaccination, colonised volunteers showed a significant induction in recruitment at day +2 when compared to baseline, but only when vaccinated with TIV (TIV Spn+: median 2.3-fold increase, $p=0.038$). Further, at day +9, a median 3.4-fold increase in monocyte levels was still observed in TIV Spn+ ($p=0.002$). The significant induction shown in this group continued to be demonstrated as far as day +29, with 3.1-fold increase ($p=0.030$, Figure 12A). However, in colonised subjects, LAIV given before inoculation reduced the Spn-induced recruitment of monocytes.

A



B

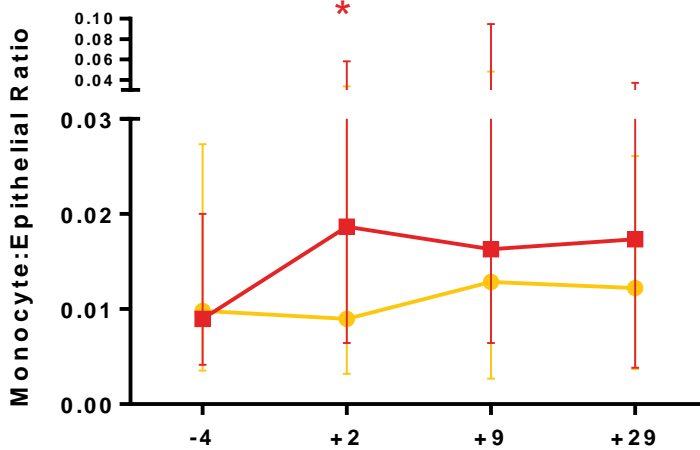


Figure 12. Induction of monocyte recruitment to the nose by Spn colonisation is impaired by antecedent LAIV vaccination. (A)

Recruitment of monocytes was measured in 106 volunteers (n=20-31 in each group) by comparing the ratio of median of monocytes to epithelial cell in each timepoint compared to its baseline (day -4). (B) Median of monocyte to epithelial cell ratio of volunteers stratified by Spn colonisation status. Comparison between groups was made by Mann-Whitney test with p value signifying *p<0.05.



Monocyte recruitment is associated with density of Spn only in TIV vaccinated.

In order to investigate if the monocyte infiltration observed was associated with the increase in Spn density in the nasal mucosa, we performed correlation tests by using the maximum Spn density and maximum ratio of monocytes in the nasal mucosa in a subset of 45 colonised volunteers of the Antecedent LAIV-EHPC study (TIV n=22, LAIV n=23). We demonstrated that the peak in monocyte numbers correlates with Spn density in the TIV- ($p=0.016$, $R^2=0.64$, Figure 13A), but not in the LAIV-vaccinated group ($p=0.70$, $R^2=-0.03$, Figure 13B).

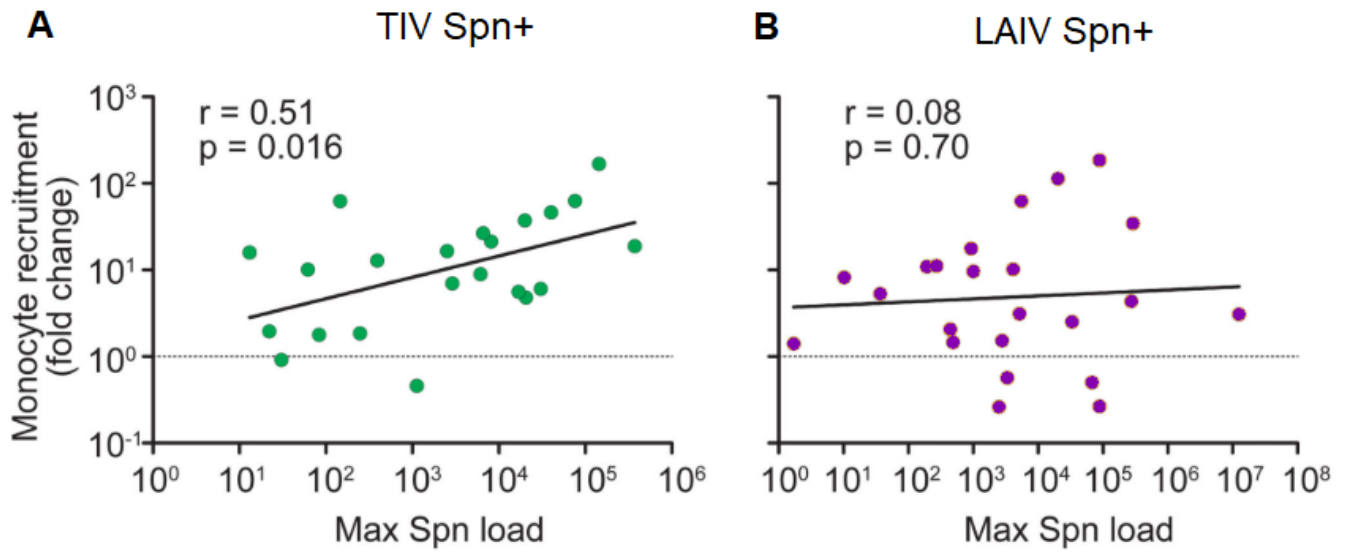


Figure 13. Monocyte recruitment is associated with density of Spn only in TIV vaccinated group. Levels of maximum Spn load are shown for the (A) TIV Spn+ (n=22) and (B) LAIV Spn+ group (n=23) and correlated with the maximum monocyte recruitment (fold-change to baseline). Individual subjects and Spearman correlation analysis are shown

Spn-induced activation of neutrophils in the nose is impaired by antecedent LAIV.

To assess the levels of neutrophils we analysed CD66b, a marker for active neutrophils^{319,320}, in 106 volunteers divided in the groups. In addition, we measured the average median fluorescence intensity of CD66b from neutrophil (MFI of CD66b) to test the intensity of this marker.

We observed that neither Spn colonisation nor influenza vaccination significantly alters the number of active neutrophils recruited to the nasal mucosa (Figure 14A, 14B). However, in TIV Spn-, the number of active neutrophils were slightly higher at day +2 when compared to baseline (Day +2 with median MFI of 8534,8 and IQR 6495-14560 vs Day -4 with median 6846,6 and IQR 5260-11101, $p=0.002$, Figure 14C). Such a response was impaired in the LAIV group. When compared by Spn colonisation status, no significant differences in neutrophil recruitment between the groups were observed (Figure 14D).

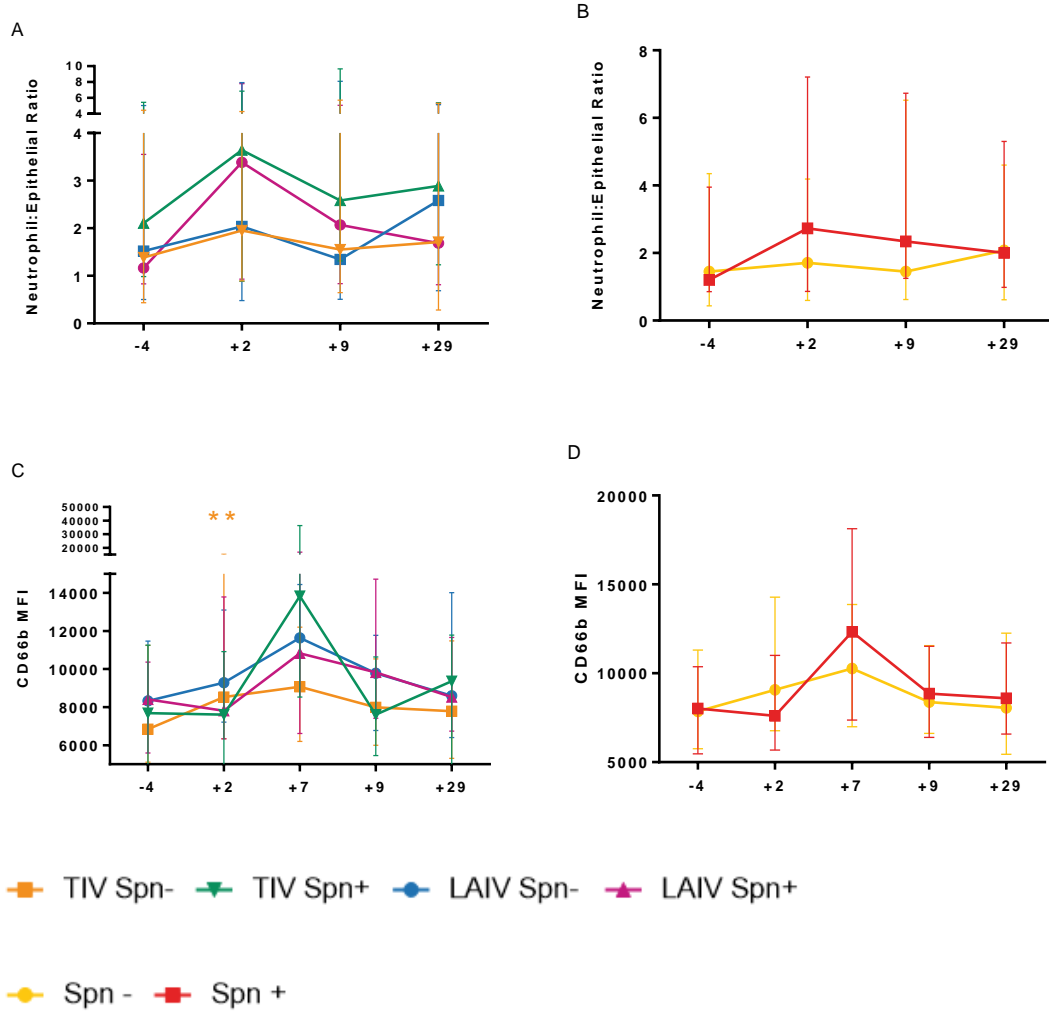


Figure 14. Spn-induced activation of active neutrophils in the nose is impaired by antecedent LAIV. Recruitment of neutrophils was measured in 106 volunteers with groups stratified by vaccination status (TIV or LAIV) and Spn colonisation (Spn-, non-colonised, and Spn+, colonised): TIV Spn- (n=31), TIV Spn+ (n=20), LAIV Spn- (n=29) and LAIV Spn+ (n=26). We compared (A) the median of neutrophils to epithelial cell ratio in each timepoint to baseline (day -4). (B) Median of neutrophils to epithelial cell ratio in volunteers stratified by Spn colonisation status (Spn- and Spn+). (C) Activation of neutrophils was assessed by comparing the median of MFI of CD66b in each timepoint to baseline. (D) Median of MFI of CD66b was compared between groups stratified by Spn colonisation. Comparisons within groups were performed by using Wilcoxon test and between groups by Mann Whitney test with **p<0.01

Antecedent LAIV induces activation of T-cells in the human nose.

We examined T-cell recruitment to the nasal mucosa, comparing 106 volunteers divided in groups considering vaccine and Spn colonisation status. Additionally, activation of T-cells was determined by analysing T-cell populations positive for the marker HLA-DR.

Similar to neutrophils, neither the influenza vaccines nor Spn colonisation induced significant recruitment of CD3⁺ T-cells to the nose (Figure 15A and 15B). Nevertheless, antecedent LAIV induced T-cell activation independent of Spn colonisation status. LAIV administration before the bacterial challenge resulted to a peak of T cell activation 10 days (LAIV Spn+, day +7 median 1.3-fold increase, $p=0.039$) and 13 days after vaccination (LAIV Spn+, day +9, median 1.2-fold increase, $p=0.042$), whereas non-colonised subjects demonstrated a similar peak after 7 days (LAIV Spn-, median 1.3-fold increase, $p=0.007$) with another median 1.3-fold increase 29 days post-inoculation (LAIV Spn-, $p=0.046$, Figure 16).

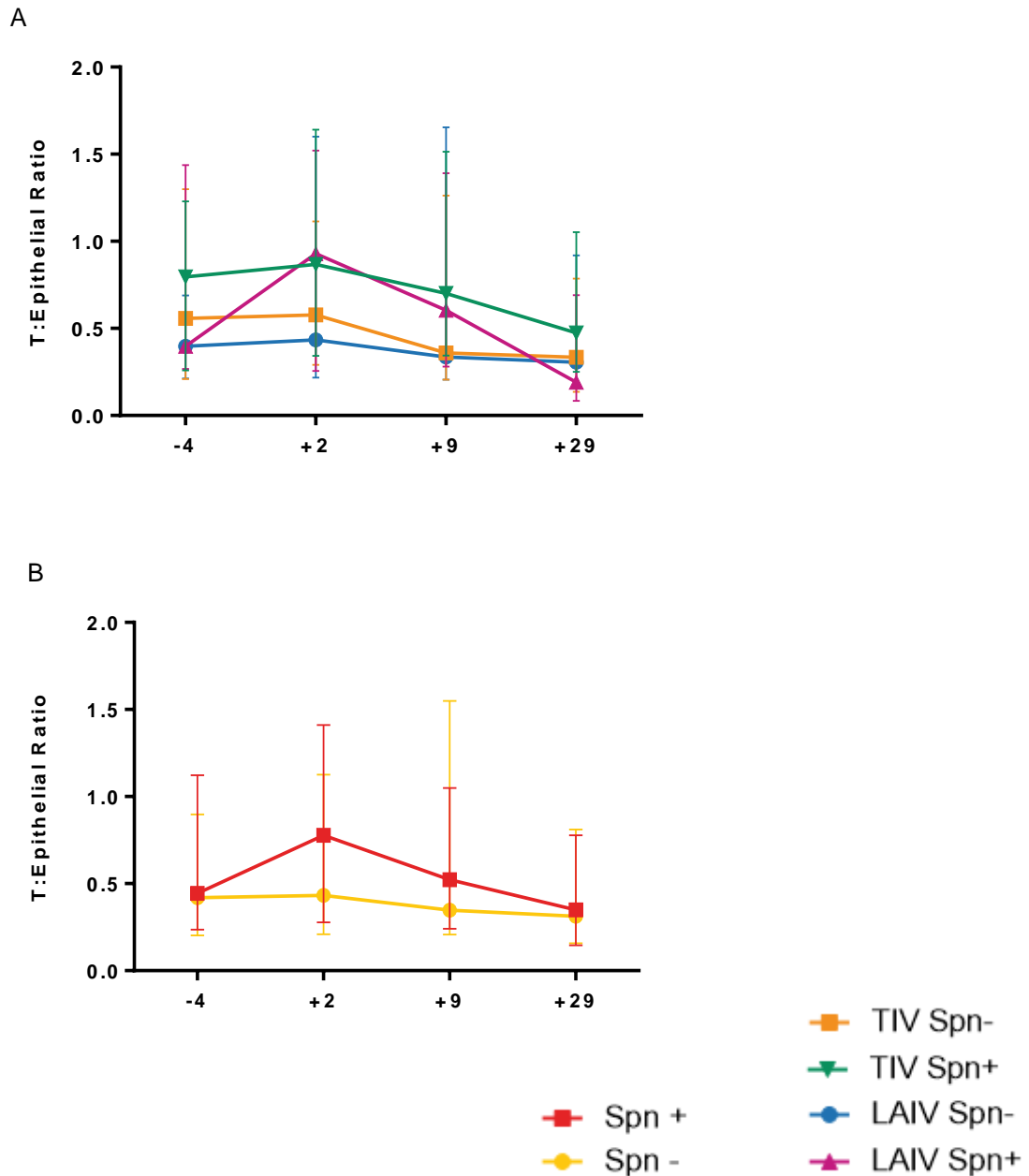


Figure 15. Antecedent influenza vaccines and Spn colonisation do not affect T-cell recruitment to the human nasal lumen. (A) Nasal recruitment of T-cells was measured in 106 volunteers divided into groups: TIV Spn- (n=31), TIV Spn+ (n=20), LAIV Spn- (n=29) and LAIV Spn+ (n=26). We compared the (A) Median of T-cells to epithelial cell ratio in each timepoint to baseline (day -4) within groups using Wilcoxon test. (B) Median of T-cells to epithelial cell ratio in volunteers stratified by Spn colonisation status using Mann Whitney test for comparison between groups

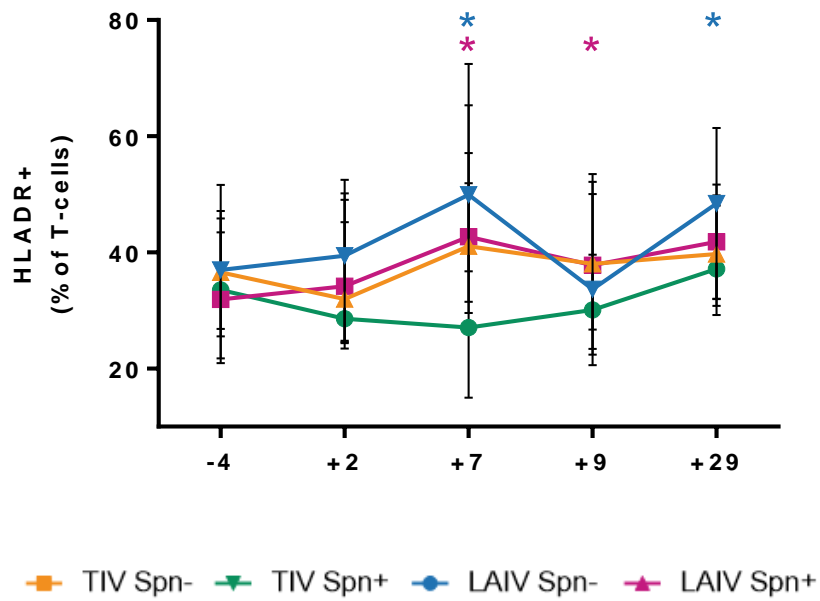


Figure 16. Antecedent LAIV, but not TIV, induces activation of T-cells in the human nose.

Activation of T-cells was measured by comparing median percentage of HLA-DR+ T-cells in 106 volunteers (n=20-31) using Wilcoxon test for each timepoint to baseline (day -4) with *p<0.05.

4.3.2 Concurrent LAIV

During the Concurrent LAIV-EHPC study, 194 volunteers were inoculated with Spn and vaccinated with either TIV (n=97) or LAIV (n=97) 3 days later. Nasal cells were sampled by curettage on days -5 (baseline), +2 (no vaccine), +6, +9, +27 relative to Spn inoculation. To perform the analysis, subjects were stratified into the groups: TIV Spn-, TIV Spn+, LAIV Spn- and LAIV Spn+.

Spn colonisation of the nasopharynx induce neutrophil activation.

For assessment of monocyte recruitment in nasal mucosa, we compared the median of monocytes to epithelial cell ratio in each timepoint to baseline using extracellular staining and flow cytometry analysis. Contrarily to the Antecedent study, no nasal recruitment of monocytes was observed after influenza vaccination or Spn colonisation (Figure 17A and 17B).

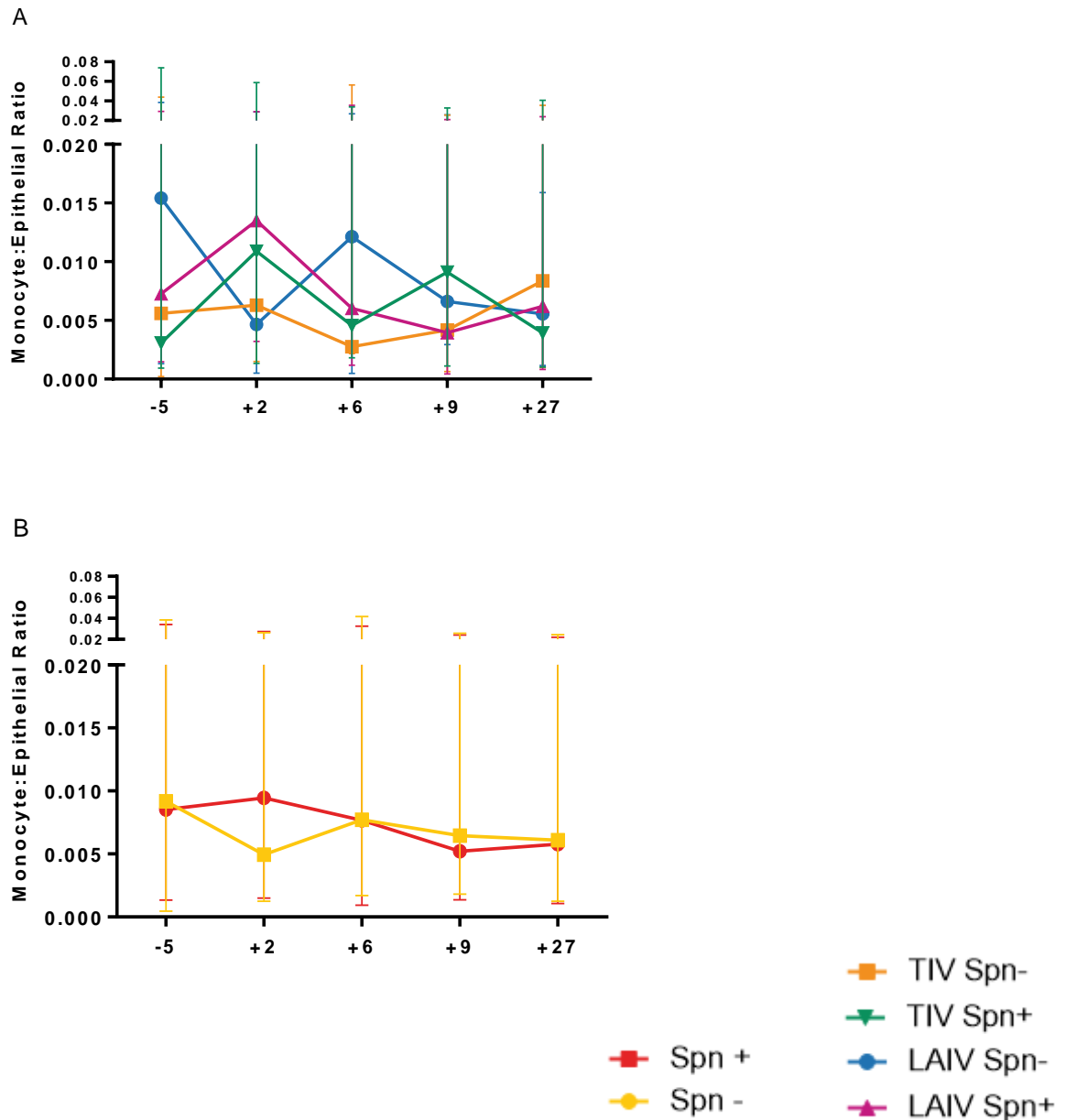


Figure 17. Induction of monocyte recruitment to the nose by Spn colonisation is affected by influenza vaccination.

(A) Recruitment of monocytes was measured in 99 volunteers ($n=24-27$) by comparing the ratio of median monocytes to epithelial cell in each timepoint compared to its baseline (day -5). (B) Median of monocyte to epithelial cell ratio of volunteers stratified by Spn colonisation status (Spn- and Spn+). Comparison within groups was made by Wilcoxon test and between groups was made by Mann-Whitney test.

Neutrophil levels were assessed in the same way by using the ratio of neutrophils to epithelial cells ratio in each timepoint. The concurrent influenza vaccines did not affect significantly the number of neutrophils at the nasal lumen (Figure 18A). However, in non-colonised (Spn-) group, levels of neutrophils were reduced by median 2.5-fold 27 days post Spn challenge when compared to baseline ($p=0.046$, Figure 18B).

In response to Spn colonisation, LAIV Spn+ had a significant increase in neutrophil activation 2 days post-inoculation and before influenza vaccination (median 1.4-fold increase, $p=0.048$, Figure 18C). Although, the same pattern of neutrophil activation was observed in TIV Spn+, this increase did not differ significantly from the baseline. As these 2 groups received the influenza vaccine at Day 3 post pneumococcal inoculation, they can be pooled together up to Day 2. Therefore, when volunteers were stratified by colonisation status, it was shown that indeed Spn induced neutrophils activation 2 days after inoculation (Spn+, median 1.66-fold increase, $p<0.0001$, Figure 18D). The induction was sustained 6 days post-inoculation (median 1.4-fold increase, $p=0.013$), increasing further after 9 days (median 1.8-fold increase, $p=0.022$).

Notably, differences in neutrophils activation were already significant at baseline (day -5), with TIV Spn+ being a median 1.5 and 1.6 times higher when compared to TIV Spn- ($p=0.040$) and LAIV vaccinated groups, respectively (vs LAIV Spn-, $p=0.022$, Figure 18C).

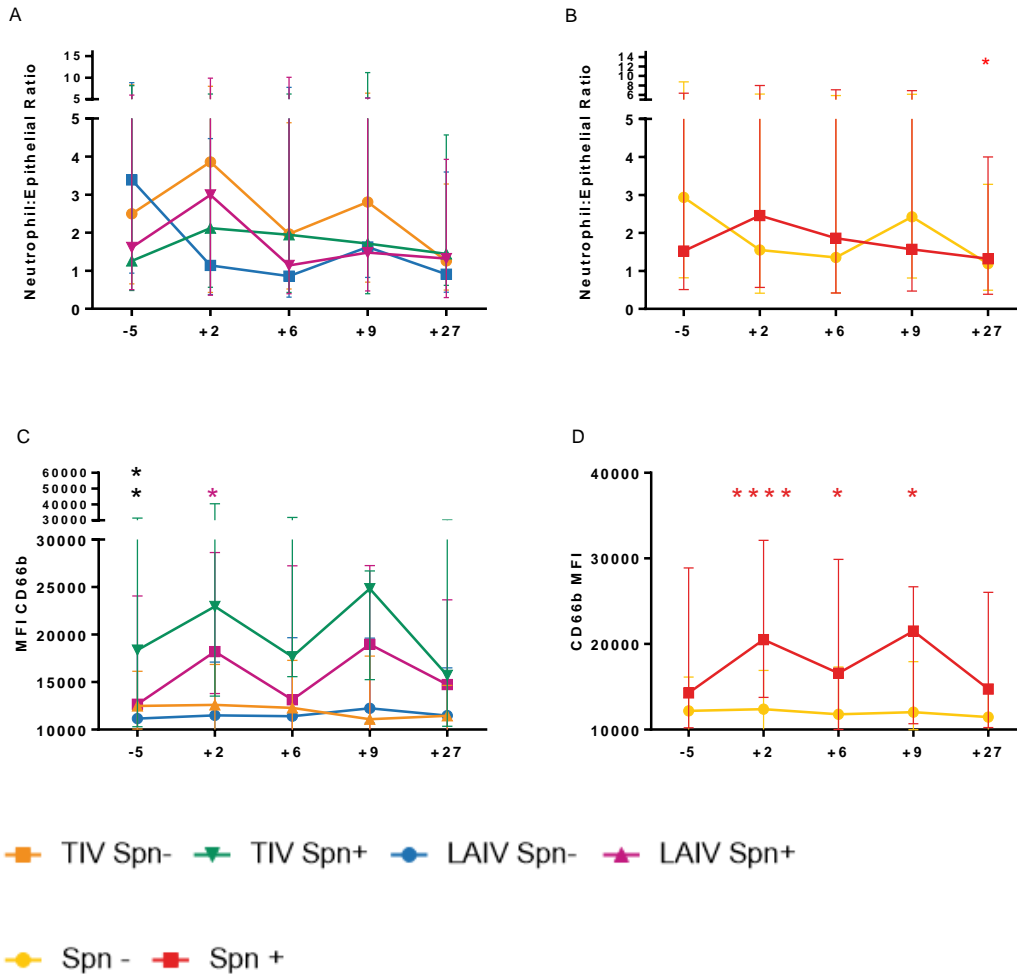


Figure 18. Spn colonisation of the nasopharynx induces neutrophil activation. (A) Recruitment of neutrophils was measured in 99 volunteers (n=24-27) by comparing the median of neutrophils to epithelial cell ratio in each timepoint to baseline (day -5) within groups using Wilcoxon test. (B) Median of neutrophils to epithelial cell ratio was measured in volunteers stratified by Spn colonisation status (Spn- and Spn+). The groups were compared in each timepoint by Mann Whitney test. (C) Activation of neutrophils was measured by comparing the median MFI of CD66b in each timepoint to baseline using Wilcoxon test and between groups using Mann Whitney test, with *p≤0.05. (D) MFI of CD66b stratified by Spn colonisation using Mann Whitney test with ****p<0.0001 and *p≤0.05.

LAIV in Spn colonised alters T-cell subsets induction and T-cell activation.

We investigated CD3⁺ T-cell recruitment to the nose, as well as activation of T- cells using the marker HLA-DR in 99 volunteers divided in groups: TIV Spn- (n=24), TIV Spn+ (n=27), LAIV Spn- (n=24) and LAIV Spn+ (n=24).

Interestingly, concurrent LAIV and Spn colonisation prevented a small median increase of 1.1-fold in T-cells levels 27 days post-inoculation which was significant in TIV Spn- ($p=0.013$, Figure 19A, Figure 19B). Interestingly, at this timepoint, the group TIV Spn- showed higher CD4⁺ T-cells levels, presenting median 1.6-fold increase in levels ($p=0.013$, Figure 20A) as well as a decrease of CD8⁺ T-cells with a small median 1.1-fold reduction ($p=0.007$, Figure 20B).

Importantly, LAIV Spn- showed a significant decrease in T-cell activation 2 days after Spn inoculation which was impaired in Spn colonised (median 1.4-fold decrease, $p=0.025$, Figure 21).

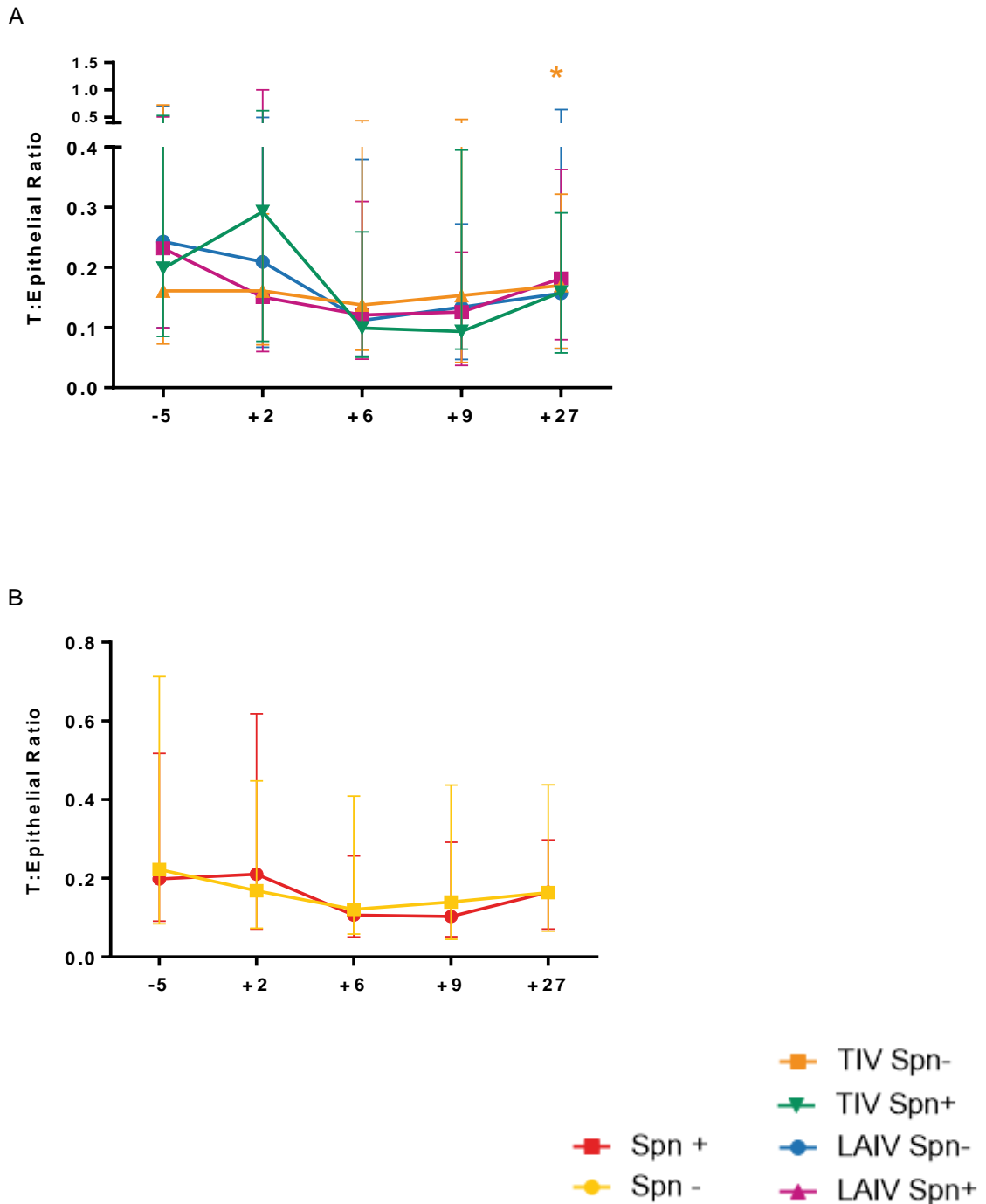


Figure 19. Late increase of T-cells in Spn non-colonised. (A) Nasal recruitment of T-cells was measured in volunteers (n=24-27) by comparing the median of T-cells to epithelial cell ratio in each timeline to baseline (-5) within groups using Wilcoxon test with *p<0.05. (B) Median of T-cells to epithelial cell ratio in volunteers stratified by Spn colonisation status (Spn-, n=60, and Spn+, n=46) using Mann Whitney test for comparison between groups.

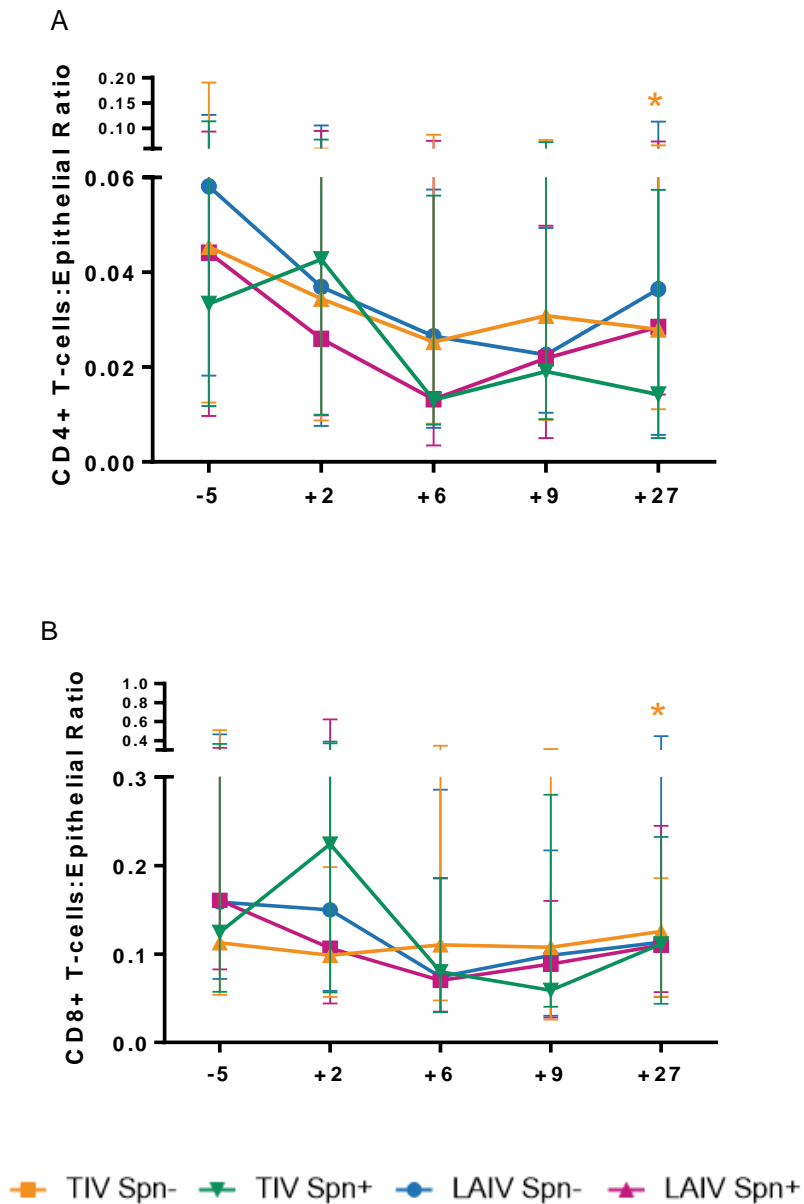


Figure 20. LAIV and Spn colonisation alters late CD4⁺ T-cells decrease and CD8⁺ increase.

(A) Nasal recruitment of T-cells was measured in volunteers (n=24-27) by comparing the median of CD4⁺ T-cells to epithelial cell ratio in each timeline to baseline (-5). (B) Median of CD8⁺ T-cells to epithelial cell ratio. Comparisons were made within groups using Wilcoxon test with * p<0.05.

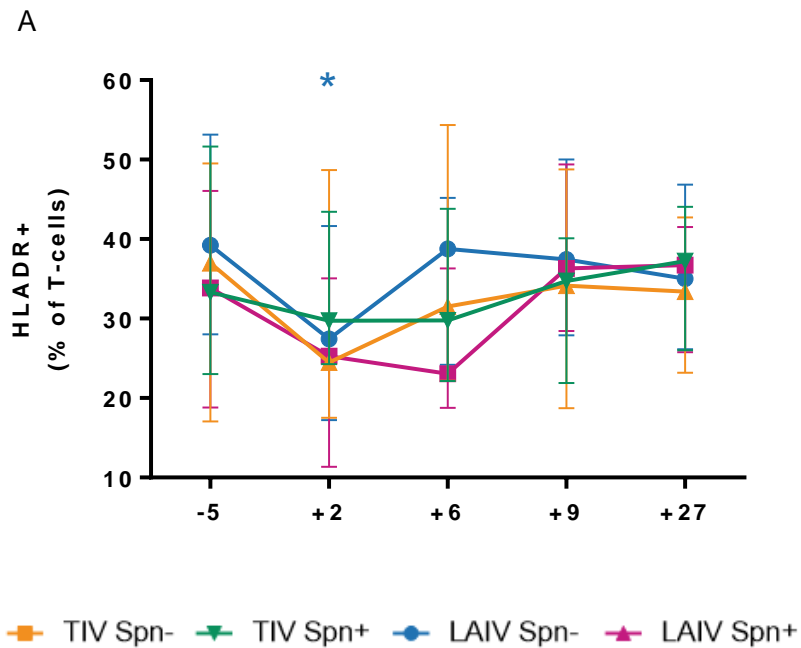


Figure 21. LAIV and Spn colonisation alters T-cell activation. (A) Activation of T-cells was measured by comparing median percentage of HLA-DR positive T-cells using Wilcoxon test for each timepoint to baseline (day -5) with $*p \leq 0.05$. Groups were stratified by vaccination and Spn colonisation status ($n=24-27$). (B) Fold-change of median percentage of HLA-DR positive T-cells using Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$.

We also assessed the recruitment of DCs, using the markers BDCA1 (CD1c) for inflammatory DCs and BDCA-2 (CLEC4C) for plasmacytoid DCs. BDCA-1⁺ DCs is a subset of cells that present dendritic morphology and can induce robust T-cell stimulation ³²¹, whereas BDCA-2⁺ DCs can affect the innate immune responses via TNF- α and IFN- γ production ³²². The median of BDCA-1⁺ and BDCA-2⁺ cells to epithelial cell ratio was measured in each timepoint and compared to baseline demonstrating no significant differences in cell recruitment (Figure 22A and 22B).

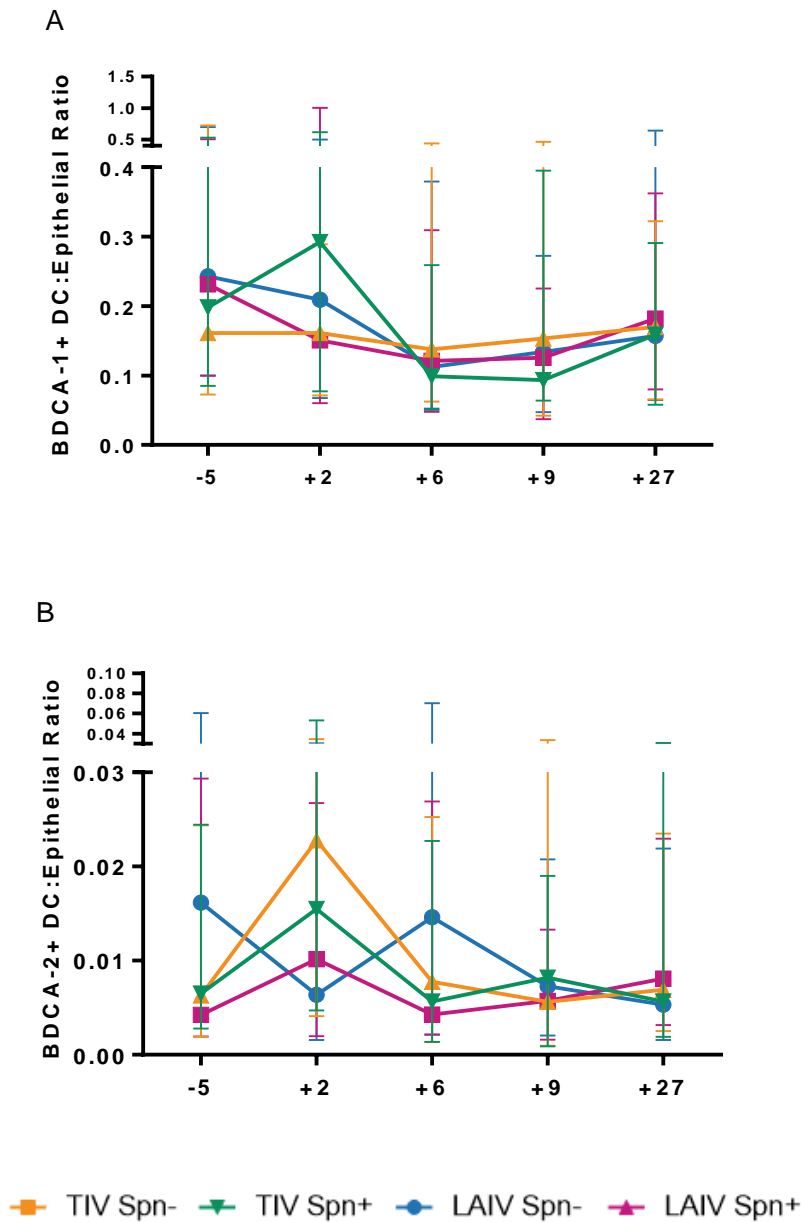


Figure 22. Concurrent influenza vaccines and Spn colonisation do not significantly affect BDCA-1⁺ and BDCA-2⁺ DC levels in the human nasal mucosa. (A) Nasal recruitment of DCs was measured in volunteers (n=24-27) by comparing the (A) median of BDCA1⁺ DC. (B) median of BDCA-2⁺ DC.

4.4 Discussion

The immunological mechanisms that control Spn colonisation and the impact of LAIV vaccination thereon have been studied extensively in mice ^{76,186,323,324} but remain poorly understood in humans. The Antecedent and Concurrent LAIV-EHPC studies allowed us to study the recruitment of immune cells to the human nasopharynx following Spn inoculation and influenza immunisation. We demonstrated that when LAIV precedes Spn colonisation affects cellular responses, such monocytes recruitment in the nasal lumen, as well as activation of neutrophils and T-cells. Additionally, Spn colonisation induced neutrophil activation and impaired T-cells activation and abundance in the nasal mucosa.

The human nasopharynx, the site where pneumococcal colonisation occurs, is equipped with both epithelial and immune cells that mount responses to *S. pneumoniae* ³⁰⁶. In mice, nasal mucosal immune responses to Spn are described by classic activation of macrophages and increase in regulatory T-cells (T-reg) levels ⁹². During a colonisation episode, monocytes together with neutrophils are supposed to contribute to the control of Spn density, as demonstrated by the recruitment of these type of cells in mice deficient for macrophage ^{325,122,326}. In line with the data deriving from mice ³²⁷, in healthy adults monocytes were recruited to the nasal mucosa after Spn colonisation. Monocytes recruitment peaked at Day 9 post the bacterial challenge in the control group. On the other hand, primary infection with LAIV, which leads to a transient influenza virus replication in the nasal mucosa, impaired monocyte recruitment in those colonised with Spn. Moreover, only in the control group Spn density was associated with increased monocyte recruitment, which suggests that the

attenuated influenza viruses contained in the vaccine possibly disrupts host cytokine and chemokine signalling and subsequently impairs monocyte recruitment.

Our finding on the effect of LAIV in Spn colonised individuals corroborate with studies in which LAIV impact monocyte recruitment similarly to the wild-type influenza infection in mice, offering an explanation for the association of LAIV administration with increase in Spn acquisition and bacterial load found in human studies^{318,328}. Monocytes seems to be key cells in controlling nasopharyngeal pneumococcal colonisation^{94 329} and inhibition of their recruitment to the nasal mucosal has been associated with reduced bacterial clearance^{108,330}. Although our results are robust, they may not be translated accurately to young children, as monocyte recruitment to the nasal mucosa is observed during influenza infection³³¹. Interestingly, although concurrent LAIV was shown to increase levels of monocytes, recruitment of these immune cells was not significant. A possible explanation for this discrepancy between the two studies is that baseline levels of resident macrophages were approximately the double in the Antecedent LAIV study when compared to the Concurrent LAIV study. Further, in the presence of Spn or when undergo apoptosis, resident macrophages signal for the recruitment of blood circulating monocytes, which could further explain the increased concentration of monocytes in volunteers who already displayed high levels at baseline. In addition, reduced Spn density and colonisation periods were reported in the Concurrent study when compared to the Antecedent⁵⁰ which can also affect monocyte recruitment.

Unlike monocytes, high levels of neutrophils can be found in healthy individuals³²⁷. During Spn colonisation in murine models, Th17 cells secrete IL-

17A contributing to neutrophil recruitment to the nasal mucosa⁹⁴. In the first 24 hours of Spn colonisation, neutrophils perform essential roles in controlling the infection mainly through serine proteases³³² as well as degranulation, production of reactive oxygen and nitrogen species, and pro-inflammatory cytokines^{92,327}.

Additionally, co-infection studies with antecedent wild-type influenza virus and Spn in mice demonstrate impairment in recruitment of neutrophils due to reduction in KC and chemokine MCP-1 expression, critical for infection control¹⁸⁶, as well as increased expression of anti-inflammatory cytokine IL-10, commonly produced by CD8⁺ T-reg^s after viral clearance^{92,127,188}. In contrast to this mechanism described in murine models of antecedent influenza co-infection, we did not observe neutrophil recruitment to the nose following Spn colonisation. This underlies the importance of confirmation of data with the attenuated virus and human data to elucidate the impact of LAIV.

However, when Spn colonised the nasal mucosa prior to influenza vaccination, it induced activation of neutrophils during 9 days after inoculation, indicating that the co-infection elicits additional immune mechanisms for control of both pathogens. The results corroborate neutrophil studies in mice which have demonstrated that Spn infection within 3 days of influenza infection induce clearance whereas co-infection within 6 to 10 days conferred inefficient bacterial control and colonisation of the nasopharynx¹⁹². Importantly, although neutrophils are present in the nasal lumen of children of 9 to 11 years old³³³, the results may not be transferable to younger ages considering studies in which Spn-induced neutrophils are not detected in the nasal mucosa of naive mice⁹⁴. Additionally, the depletion of these immune cells did not increase susceptibility to pneumococcal invasive disease in a mouse model³³⁴.

When the innate immunity is not enough to allow for effective viral clearance, adaptive responses are also induced in the nasopharynx. Murine models show that in the human upper airways, viral pathogens are recognised through pattern recognition receptors (PRRs) such as TLRs and intracellular viral sensors that in turn induce adaptive responses¹⁹⁶, eliciting secretory antibodies and T-cells with mucosal homing properties, especially influenza-specific CD8⁺ T-cells, common in natural influenza infections¹⁸⁷. Here, we demonstrate that in human adults the presence of the attenuated influenza viruses did not affect T-cell recruitment, although it induced T-cell activation. Increased activation indicates that the attenuated virus is presented to the host as a natural infection by producing intracellular influenza antigens eliciting T-cell responses similar to the wild-type influenza³³⁵.

In conclusion, the results presented in this chapter address important questions about the immune responses that control and clear Spn and how LAIV can alter these immune mechanisms, using for the first time an experimental human challenge model of co-infection with LAIV and Spn (EHPC).

CHAPTER FIVE

EFFECT OF SPN AND LAIV ON THE NASOPHARYNX CYTOKINE PRODUCTION

5.1 Introduction

A stable and asymptomatic Spn colonisation is not uncommon in children and adults, and provide benefits to the host as it develops cellular and adaptive immunity in the nasopharynx and systemically ^{49,62}. The immunising asymptomatic colonisation is maintained by a fine balance between pro- and anti-inflammatory cytokines ⁹².

However, influenza virus has the ability to interact with and modify the host nasal environment ¹⁹⁶, and can leave individuals susceptible to uncontrolled Spn colonisation ²⁶². First shown in a ferret model by McCullers ²⁷³, wild-type influenza virus causes deregulation between immune tolerance and inflammatory responses, which can lead to damage in nasal epithelium ¹⁹⁰ and, in turn, facilitate Spn adhesion to cells and impairment of cellular protection against the bacteria ^{76,92,274}. Spn replicated continuously in the nose, increasing density and bacterial infiltration to the lungs as well as inducing more cytokines, chemokines and antimicrobial peptides ^{132,188,270}. These elicited cytokines are shown to have a wide range of effects during co-infection in mice, acting on both innate and adaptive processes of the immune system ^{76,92,274}. They can affect recruitment of immune cells, including monocytes, neutrophils and T-cells, as well as their activation ^{92,132,186,188,262,270,271}.

Furthermore, influenza vaccination with live attenuated virus – although an effective strategy to prevent infection in children ²¹³ – also influence host immune responses to Spn, affecting Spn acquisition and density, transmission and susceptibility to invasive disease ²⁸¹ due to its mimicry of wild-type influenza natural replication in the nasopharynx, known as viral shedding. Similarly to studies with wild-type influenza, LAIV vaccination in mice colonised with Spn also

induced deregulated cytokine responses in the nasopharynx²⁷⁴, which highlights the necessity of validation of these findings in human. Herein, we used a controlled human LAIV-Spn co-infection model to investigate the cytokine responses elicited to Spn colonisation and how these responses are altered by either a primary or a simultaneous influenza viral infection.

5.2 Material and methods

5.2.1 Volunteer recruitment, vaccination and inoculation

75 adult volunteers were recruited for the Antecedent and Concurrent studies (as described in Section 2.2) and received influenza vaccination (LAIV or TIV as control) and were inoculated with live Spn using EHPC. Individuals were vaccinated 3 days previous to Spn inoculation in the Antecedent study and 3 days after in the Concurrent study (Section 2.3 and 2.5.4).

5.2.2 Nasosorption collection

An adsorptive matrix strip was used in the nasal septum of volunteers for collection of nasal fluid and stored at -80°C (Section 2.5.7).

5.2.3 Luminex and statistical analysis

As described in Section 2.6.7 nasal fluid was washed and prepared for Luminex Human Cytokine 30-plex per manufacturer's instructions. Results obtained were processed and analysed by a LX200 and xPonent 3.1 software. Statistical analysis was made in Prism 6 and 7 (Graphpad) and R software (Section 2.7).

5.3 Results

In the Antecedent study, 75 volunteers were vaccinated with LAIV (n=38) or TIV as control (n=37) and 3 days later inoculated intranasally with live Spn. Volunteers were stratified into groups: TIV Spn- (n=19), TIV Spn+ (n=18), LAIV Spn- (n=19) and LAIV Spn+ (n=19). NS was collected at baseline (day -4), day +0, +2, +7, +9 and +29 relative to Spn inoculation. Levels of 30 cytokines were measured in the nasal lining fluid by Luminex.

In the Concurrent study, 56 volunteers were inoculated with live Spn, following vaccination with LAIV (n=28) or TIV (n=28) 3 days later. NS was collected at baseline (day -5) and at days +6, +9 and +27 relative to inoculation (or 3, 6 and 24 days after vaccination). Levels of 30 cytokines were measured in the nasal lining fluid by Luminex, however, only 6 volunteers became colonised in this subset of volunteers. Therefore, stratification for analysis was done regarding vaccination status with groups: TIV (n=28) and LAIV (n=28).

LAIV induces pro-inflammatory cytokines in nasopharynx, especially in Spn colonised.

Firstly, we investigated the cytokine profile elicited by concurrent influenza vaccines in the human nasal mucosa in volunteers challenged by Spn but not colonised.

Three days after vaccination (day +6), volunteers in the control group induced a median 1.4-fold decrease in levels of pro-inflammatory cytokine IL-1 β ($p=0.033$, Figure 23A) and 6 days after (day +9) a median 2-fold decrease in GM-CSF ($p=0.049$, Figure 23B).

In contrast to TIV, LAIV vaccination elicited increase of IL-1 β levels 3 days after vaccination (day +6) (median 1.2-fold increase) ($p=0.049$, Figure 24A). Moreover, we observed that LAIV induced a high pro-inflammatory cytokine response in the nose, with median 1.6-fold increase of IFN- α and MIP-1 α ($p=0.013$, Figure 24B and Figure 24C), median 1.9-fold increase of MIP-1 β levels ($p=0.009$, Figure 24D) and median 2.5-fold increase of TNF- α levels ($p=0.011$, Figure 24E).

Six days after vaccination (day +9), LAIV group maintained a similar to day +6 induction of IL-1 β , MIP-1 α , TNF- α and MIP-1 β levels (IL-1 β : median 1.3-fold increase, $p=0.021$, Figure 24A; MIP-1 α : median 1.5-fold increase, $p=0.048$, Figure 24C; TNF- α : median 1.5-fold increase, $p=0.026$, Figure 24E; MIP-1 β : median 1.5-fold increase, $p=0.035$, Figure 24D) but not for IFN- α . Additional pro-inflammatory cytokine response was elicited with increases in levels of MCP-1, IL-6 and IL-8 (MCP-1: median 1.8-fold increase, $p=0.010$, Figure 25A; IL-6: median 1.9-fold increase, $p=0.035$, Figure 25B; IL-8: median 1.3-fold increase, $p=0.041$, Figure 25C) with IL-8 sustained until day +29 (median 1.5-fold increase,

$p=0.035$, Figure 25C). Moreover, at day 24 after influenza vaccination (day +29), TNF- α levels were sustained at levels similar to those observed at day +6 and +9 (median 2.3-fold increase, $p=0.018$, Figure 25E) post LAIV.

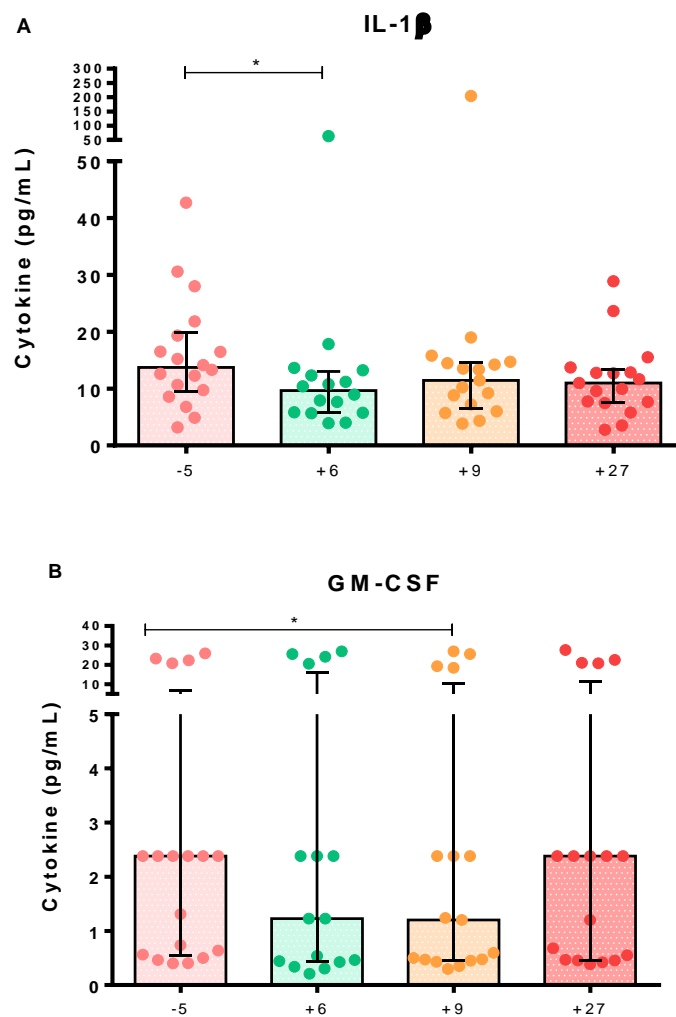


Figure 23. TIV vaccinated group exhibits decrease in pro-inflammatory cytokines IL-1 β and GM-CSF in the nasopharynx. Levels of (A) IL-1 β and (B) GM-CSF measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with TIV (n=28) were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -5) by Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

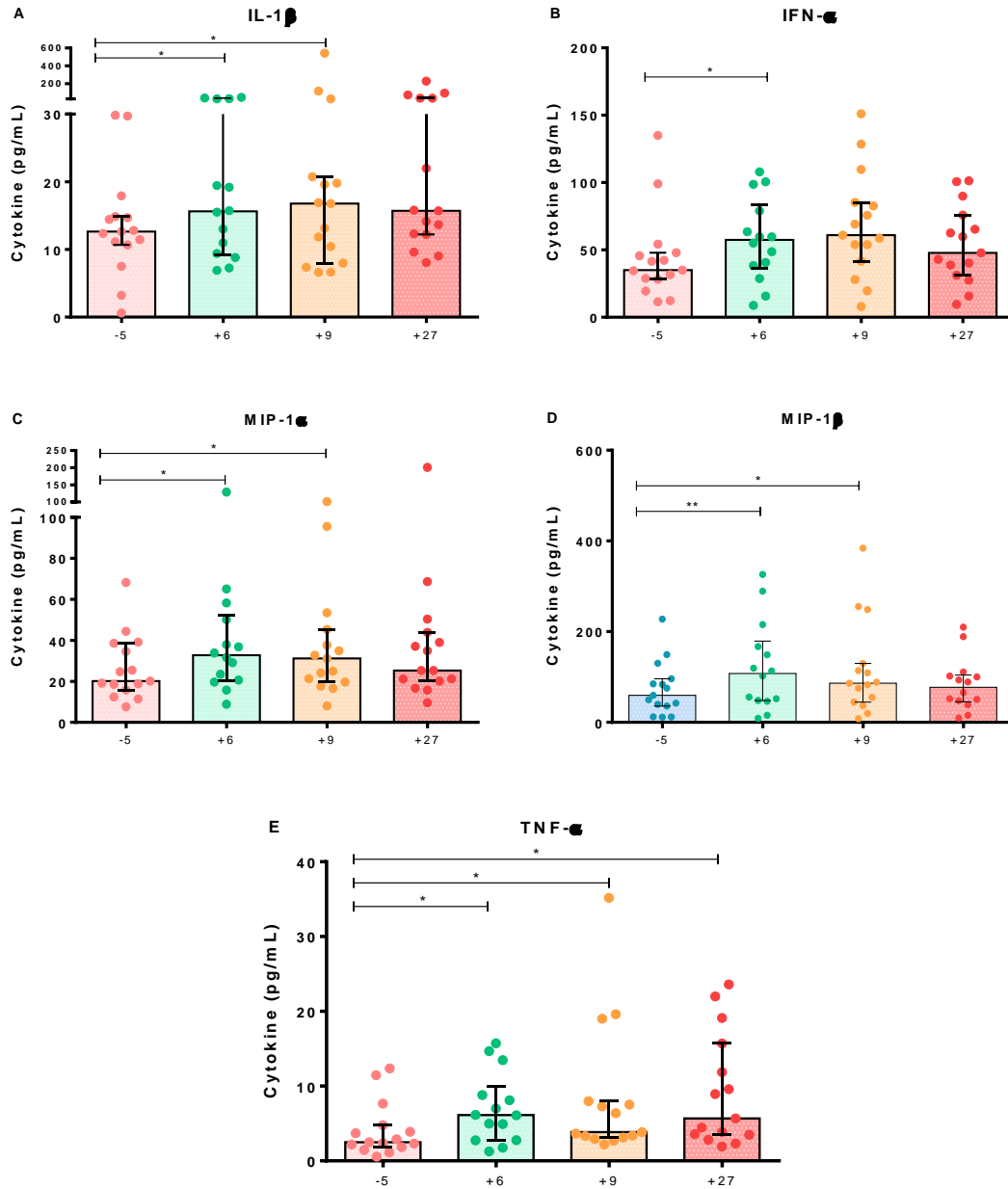


Figure 24. LAIV vaccinated group exhibits increase in pro-inflammatory cytokines in the nasopharynx. Levels of (A) IL-1 β , (B) IFN- α , (C) MIP-1 α , (D) MIP-1 β and (E) TNF- α measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV (n=28) were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -5) by Wilcoxon test with * $p \leq 0.05$ and ** $p < 0.01$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

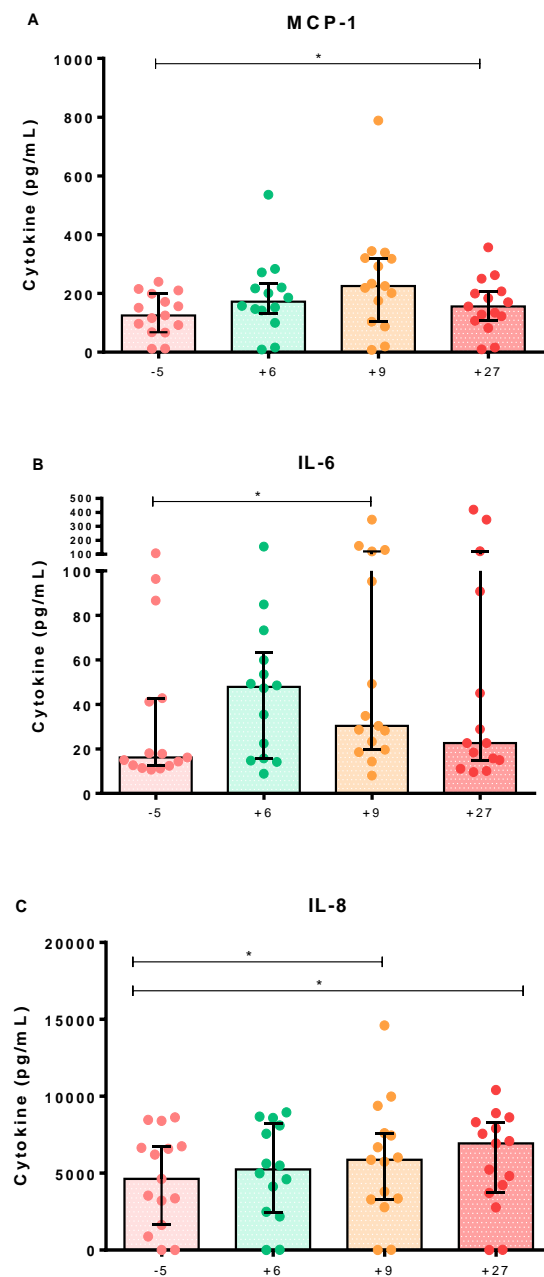


Figure 25. LAIV vaccinated group exhibits increase in pro-inflammatory cytokines in the nasopharynx. Levels of (A) MCP-1, (B) IL-6 and (C) IL-8 measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV (n=28) were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -5) by Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

Next, we examined the cytokine profile elicited in a second set of volunteers by antecedent influenza vaccines followed by Spn inoculation in the nose, with groups stratified by vaccination and colonisation status.

Notably, antecedent LAIV in absence of Spn colonisation (day +0) induced cytokines IL-6 and MIG, as LAIV Spn⁻ presented median 1.4- and 2.5-fold increase of IL-6 and MIG levels, respectively (p=0.021 and p=0.003, Figure 26A and 26B, respectively). Moreover, LAIV induced MCP-1 and TNF- α secretion in the nasopharynx, but only MCP-1 levels were maintained up to Day 9 post inoculation in the LAIV Spn⁻ (MCP-1, median 1.3-fold increase, p=0.029; TNF- α , median 1.9-fold increase, p=0.030, Figure 27A and 27B).

Additionally, in LAIV Spn⁻, Spn challenge also induced the secretion of the pro-inflammatory cytokines MIP-1 α , MIP-1 β , IL-1 β and RANTES 2 days after challenge (MIP-1 α , median 1.3-fold increase, p=0.024; MIP-1 β , median 1.4-fold increase, p=0.036; IL-1 β , median 1.7-fold increase, p=0.004; RANTES, median 2.9-fold increase, p=0.026, Figure 28A, 28B, 28C and 28D respectively).

Seven days after inoculation, volunteers continued to express Spn-induced IL-1 β although no other cytokine increase was demonstrated (median 1.3-fold increase, p=0.020, Figure 28C). On the other hand, 9 days post-inoculation another peak of pro-inflammatory cytokine levels was observed in this group with induction of MIG, MCP-1, IL-1 β and RANTES (MIG, median 1.7-fold increase, p=0.030; MCP-1, median 1.4-fold increase, p=0.010, IL-1 β , median 1.5-fold increase, p=0.044; RANTES, median 2.5-fold increase, p=0.018. Figures 26B, 27A; 28C and 28D respectively).

The inflammation profile observed at day +0 in LAIV Spn⁺ was similar to the non-colonised group for cytokines IL-6 and MIG, presenting a median 1.6-

and 2.2-fold increase, respectively ($p=0.012$ and $p=0.023$, Figure 29A and 29B, respectively). Furthermore, LAIV with the influence of Spn, induced the production of cytokines IFN- α , MIP-1 α , MIP-1 β and IP-10 (median 1.1-, 1.2-, 1.3- and 3.6-fold increase, respectively. IFN- α , $p=0.009$; MIP-1 α , $p=0.023$; MIP-1 β , $p=0.035$; IP-10, $p<0.001$, Figure 30A, 30B, 30C and 30D respectively). Interestingly, LAIV Spn+ LAIV-induced IL-6 cytokine exhibited increased levels 5 days after LAIV administration (median 1.8-fold increase, $p<0.001$, Figure 29A).

Also 5 days after LAIV, in volunteers of the LAIV Spn+ group, Spn colonisation induced a median 1.4-fold increase in IL-1 β ($p=0.003$, Figure 31). These volunteers also demonstrated higher levels of MIP-1 α and MIP-1 β (Figure 30B and 30C), however this induction started before Spn inoculation (MIP-1 α , median 1.4-fold increase, $p=0.038$; MIP-1 β , median 1.6-fold increase, $p=0.017$). Additionally, likewise responses at day +0, 2 days after Spn challenge, LAIV-vaccinated and colonised were still the only group to induce IFN- α (median 1.2-fold increase, $p=0.001$, Figure 30A) and even higher levels of IP-10 (median 4.8-fold increase, Figure 30D).

Opposite to non-colonised, LAIV Spn+ did not show great cytokine level increases after 2 days since colonisation. In this group, we also observed only a moderate increase in IFN- α induction 7 and 9 days post-inoculation (day +7, median 1.1-fold increase, $p=0.028$, day +9, median 1.1-fold increase, $p=0.018$, Figure 30A).

Interestingly, the TIV Spn- exhibited an induction of MIG before (day +0), 7 and 9 days after Spn challenge, which was not observed in the first set of volunteers vaccinated with concurrent TIV (day +7, median 1.4-fold increase,

$p=0.010$; day +9, median 1.9-fold increase, $p=0.026$. Figure 32A) as well as IP-10 at day +9 (median 1.4-fold increase, $p=0.026$, Figure 32B).

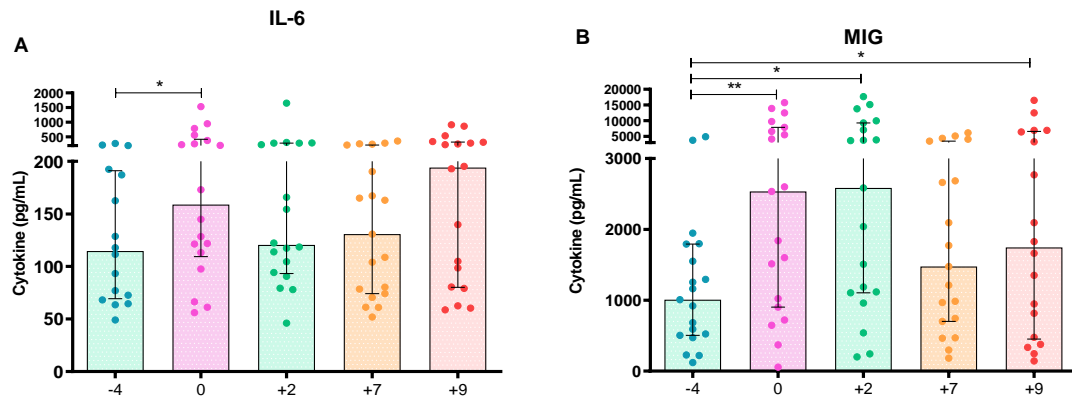


Figure 26. Antecedent LAIV induces pro-inflammatory cytokines IL-6 and MIG in nasopharynx of non-colonised volunteers. Levels of (A) IL-6 and (B) MIG were measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with antecedent LAIV and not colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn-, n=18-19). Results were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$ and $**p < 0.01$ and medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

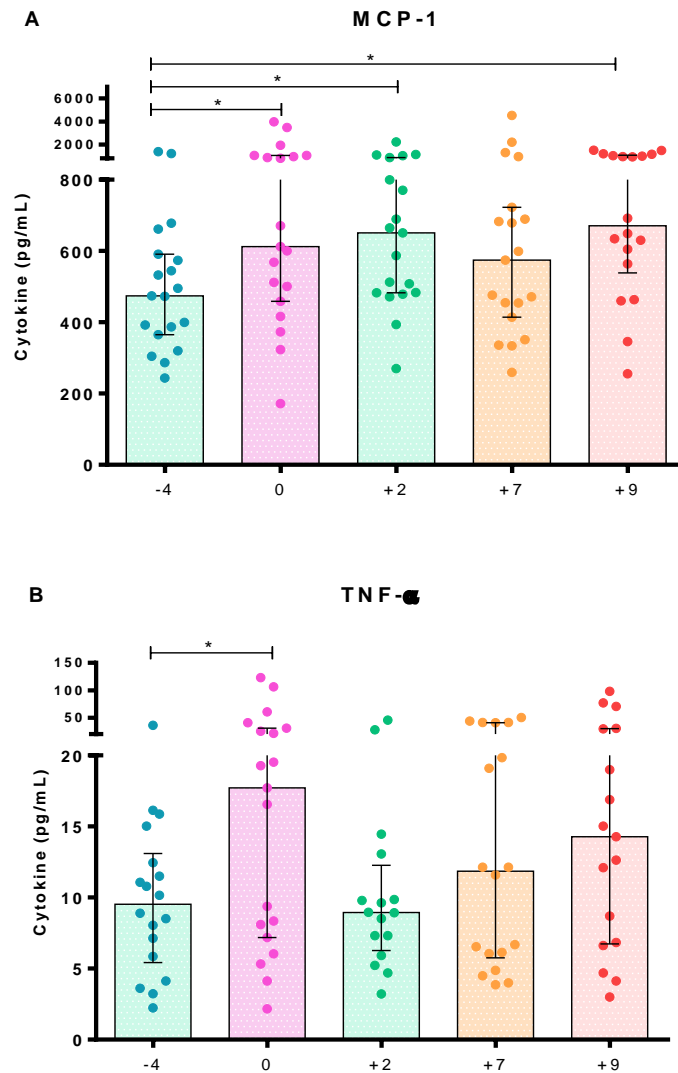


Figure 27. Antecedent LAIV induces pro-inflammatory cytokines MCP-1 and TNF- α in nasopharynx of non-colonised volunteers. Levels of (A) MCP-1 and (B) TNF- α were measured in nasal lining of antecedent LAIV-vaccinated and non-colonised volunteers (LAIV Spn, n=18-19) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

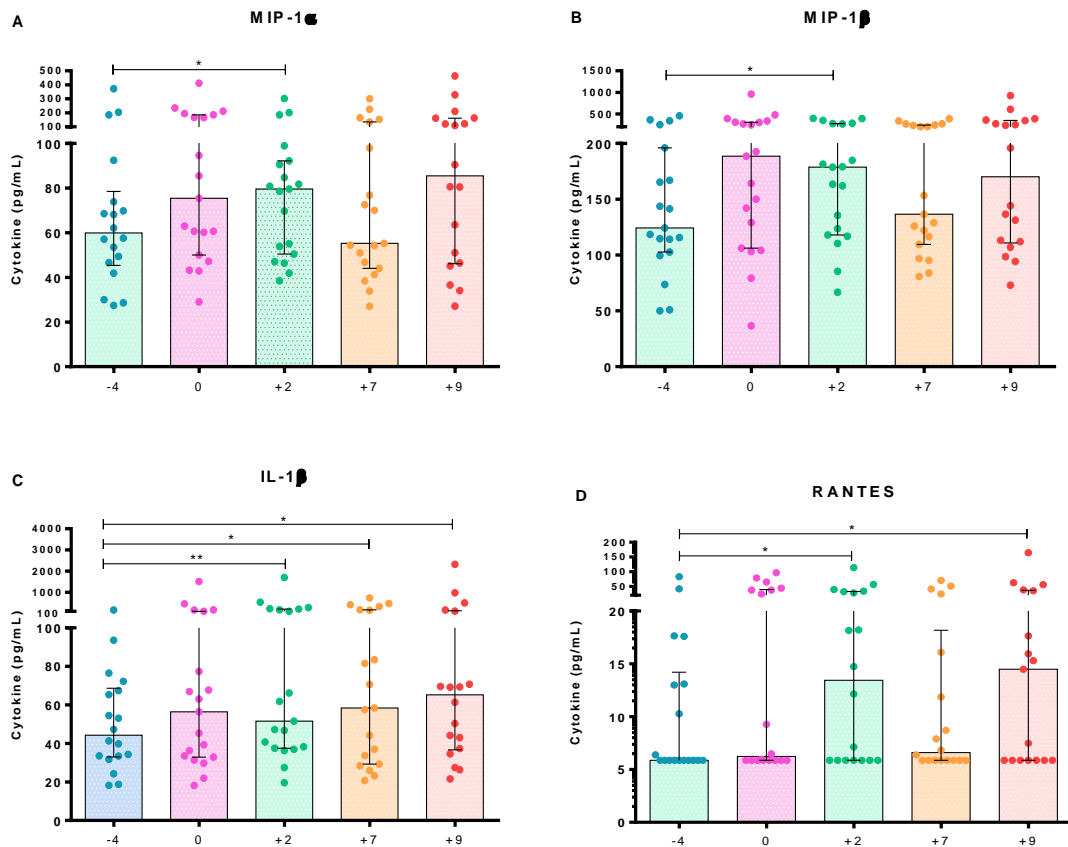


Figure 28. Antecedent LAIV induces additional pro-inflammatory cytokines in nasopharynx of non-colonised volunteers. Levels of (A) MIP-1 α , (B) MIP-1 β , (C) IL-1 β and (D) RANTES were measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with antecedent LAIV and not colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn-, n=18-19). Results were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with * $p \leq 0.05$ and ** $p < 0.01$ and medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

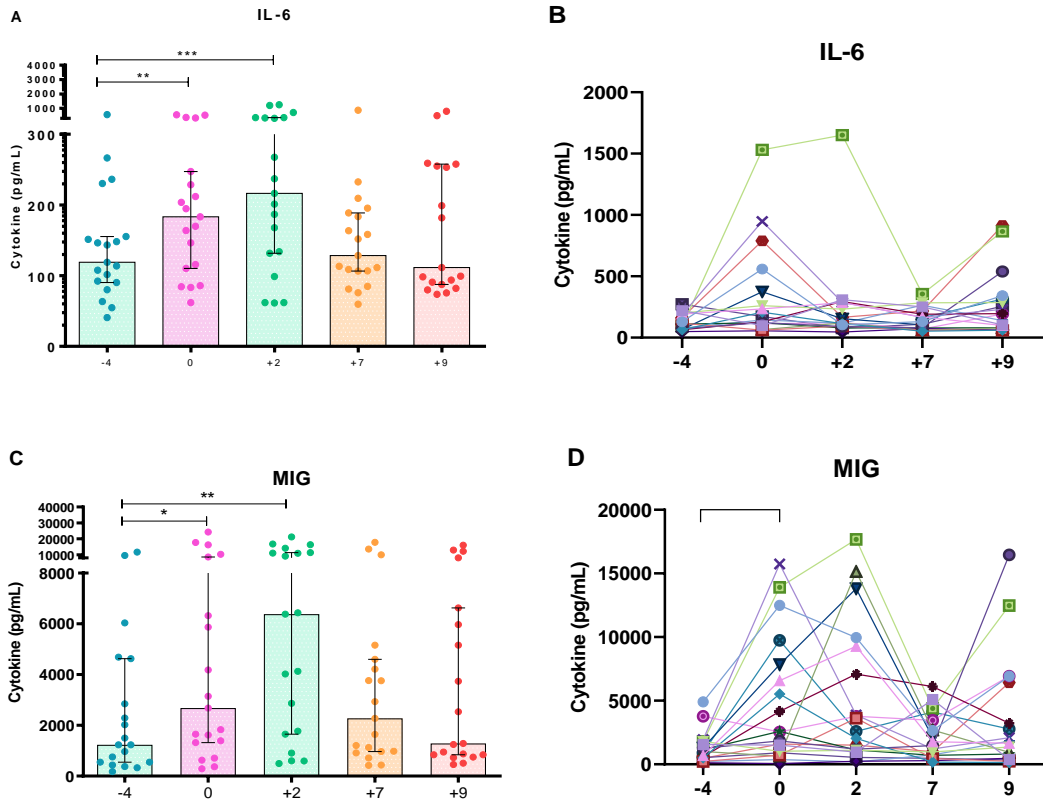


Figure 29. Antecedent LAIV induces pro-inflammatory cytokines IL-6 and MIG in nasopharynx of Spn colonised volunteers. Levels of (A, B) IL-6 and (C, D) MIG were measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with antecedent LAIV and colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn+, n=18-19). Results were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with *p<0.05, **p<0.01 and ***p<0.001. In A and C, medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown. In B and D each line represents one volunteers and each point the result of a single volunteers in a specific timepoint.

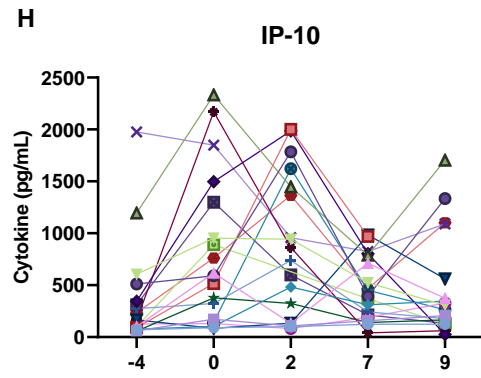
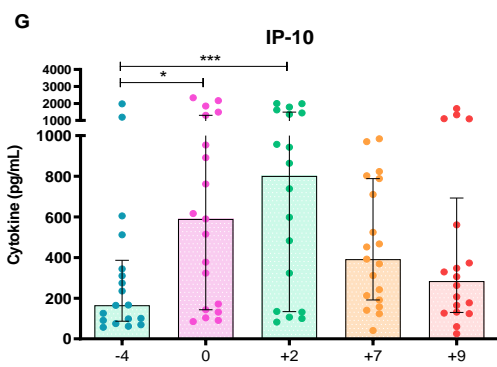
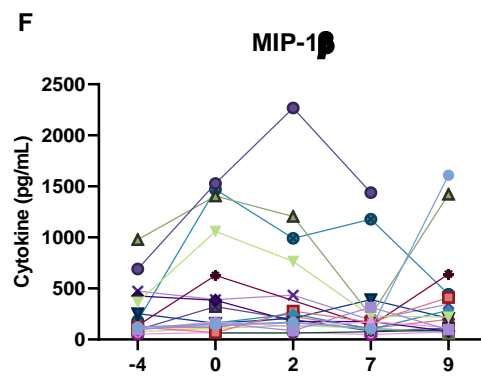
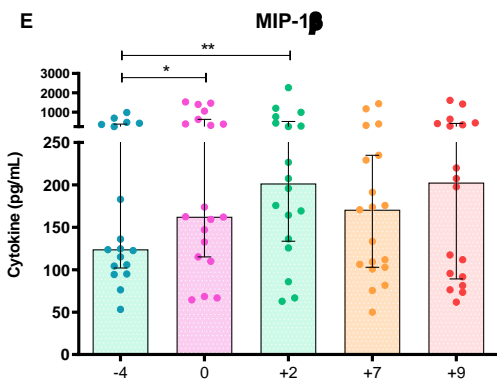
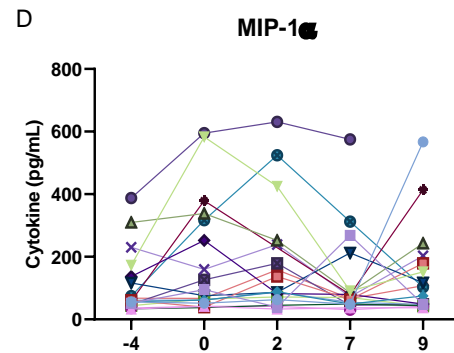
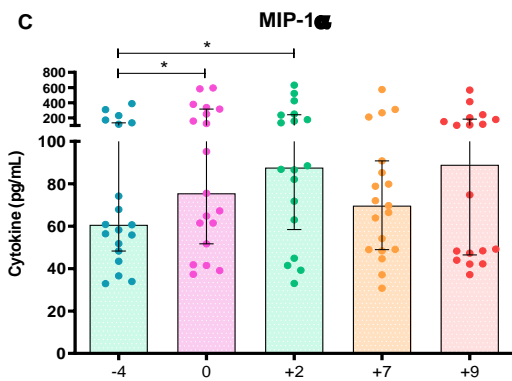
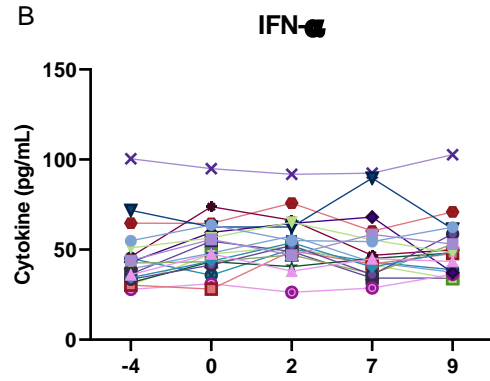
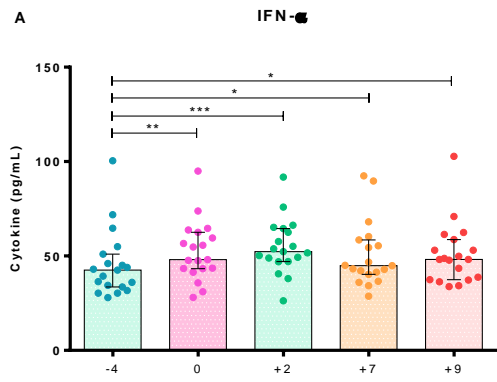


Figure 30. Antecedent LAIV induces additional pro-inflammatory cytokines in nasopharynx of Spn colonised volunteers. Levels of (A, B) IFN- α , (C, D) MIP-1 α , (E, F) MIP-1 β and (G, H) IP-10 were measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with antecedent LAIV and colonised by Spn (n=18-19) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with *p \leq 0.05, **p<0.01 and ***p<0.001. In A, C, E and G medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown. In B, D, F and H each line represents one volunteers and each point the result of a single volunteers in a specific timepoint.

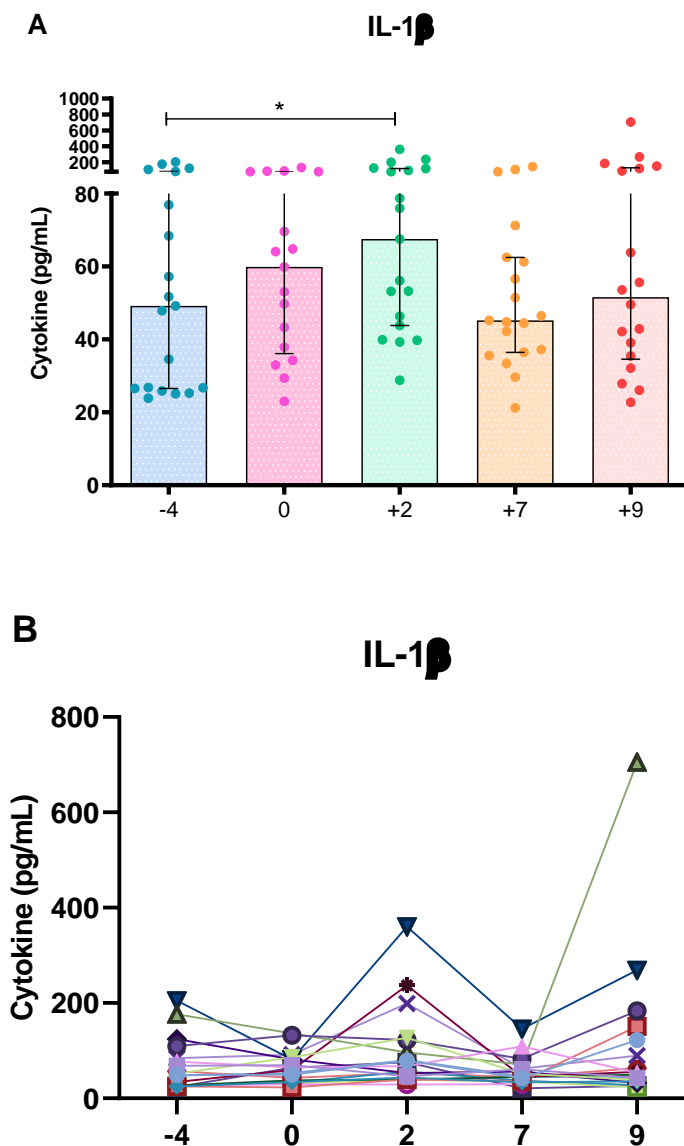


Figure 31. Antecedent LAIV induces pro-inflammatory cytokine IL-1 β in nasopharynx of Spn colonised volunteers. Levels of IL-1 β was measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with antecedent LAIV and colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn+, n=18-19). Results were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with * $p \leq 0.05$ and ** $p < 0.01$. (A) Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown. (B) Each line represents one volunteer and each point the result of a single volunteers in a specific timepoint.

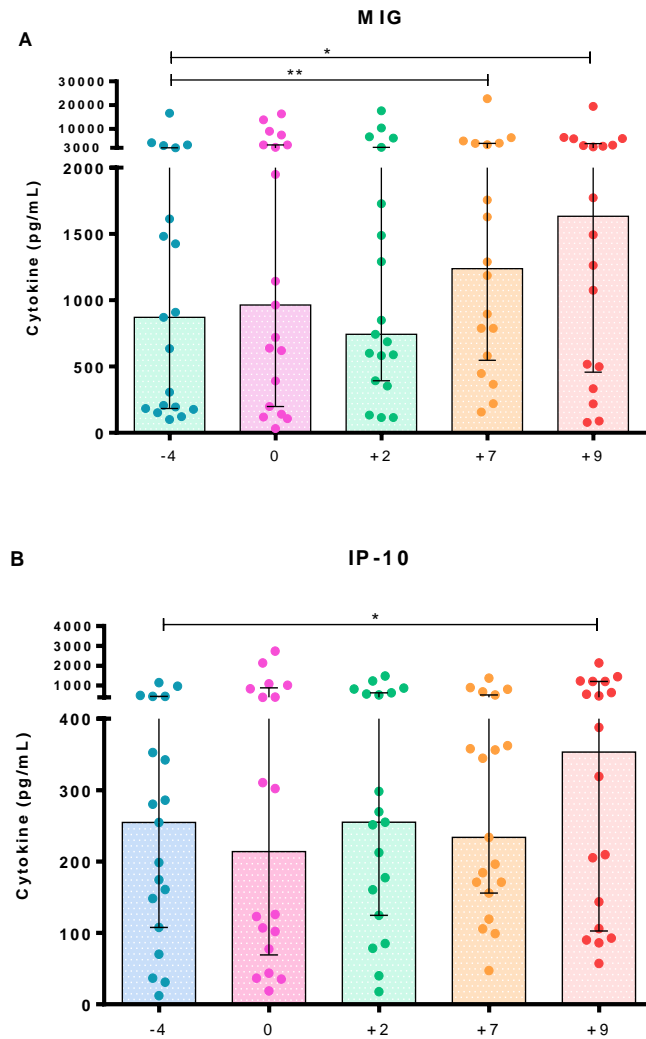


Figure 32. Non-colonised volunteers show induction of pro-inflammatory cytokines MIG and IP-10 in the nose . Levels of (A) MIG and (B) IP-10 were measured in nasal lining of volunteers in the control group that cleared Spn in the nasopharynx (TIV Spn-, n=18-19) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with *p<0.05 and **p<0.01. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

Antecedent LAIV-induction of cytokines that regulate adaptive immunity diverge between Spn colonised and non-colonised volunteers

We assessed the levels of cytokines related to regulation of the adaptive immune responses after concurrent influenza vaccine administration in volunteers previously challenged with Spn, but not colonised.

LAIV-vaccinated volunteers showed increase in cytokines IFN- γ and IL-15 3 days after vaccination (day +6, IFN- γ : median 1.4-fold increase, $p=0.035$, Figure 33A; IL-15: median 1.3-fold increase, $p=0.041$, Figure 33B). Six days after LAIV (day +9), the vaccine induced a moderate increase in IL-2R, IL-2 and IL-12 levels (IL-2R: median 1.1-fold increase, $p=0.018$, Figure 34A; IL-2: median 1.2-fold increase, $p=0.073$, Figure 34B; IL-12: median 1.5-fold increase, $p=0.012$, Figure 34C), as well as for IFN- γ and IL-15 (IFN- γ : median 1.4-fold increase, $p=0.047$, Figure 33A; IL-15: median 1.1-fold increase, $p=0.025$, Figure 33B). Volunteers who received TIV had a slight increase in IL-4 6 days after vaccination (day +9, median 1.1-fold increase, $p=0.018$, Figure 35A). A similar increase of IL-4 was also observed in the LAIV-vaccinated group (median 1.1-fold increase, $p=0.039$, Figure 35B).

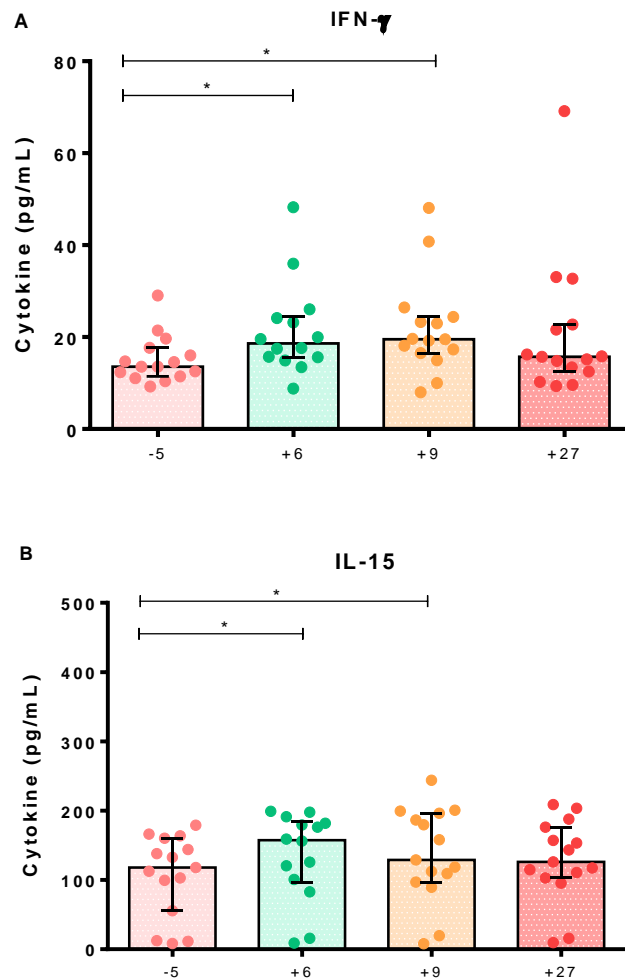


Figure 33. LAIV vaccinated show increase in cytokines IFN- γ and IL-15 in the nasopharynx.

Levels of (A) IFN- γ and (B) IL-15 measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV (n=28) were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -5) by Wilcoxon test with *p \leq 0.05.

Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

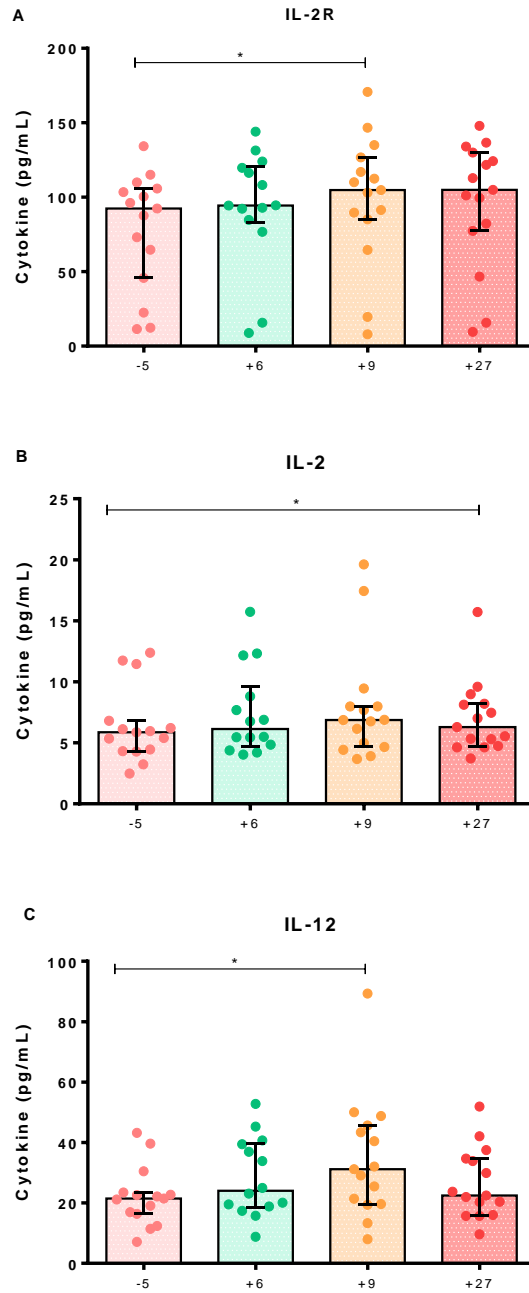


Figure 34. LAIV vaccinated show increase in cytokines that regulate adaptive responses in the nasopharynx. Levels of (A) IL-2R, (B) IL-2 and (C) IL-12 measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV (n=28) were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -5) by Wilcoxon test with * $p \leq 0.05$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

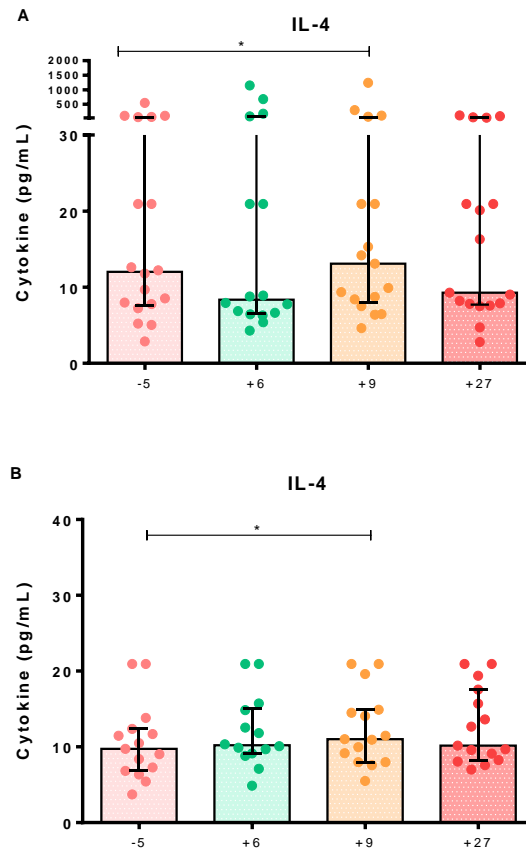


Figure 35. TIV- and LAIV-vaccinated show increase in the cytokine IL-4 in the nasopharynx.

Levels of IL-4 was measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with (A) TIV (n=28) and (B) LAIV (n=28). Results compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$ and medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

Further, we analysed a second set of volunteers, vaccinated with influenza vaccines followed by Spn challenge, and stratified into groups regarding vaccination and colonisation status.

Before Spn inoculation (day +0), both groups of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV demonstrated a moderate induction of IL-4 (LAIV Spn-, median 1.2-fold increase, $p=0.021$, Figure 36A; LAIV Spn+, median 1.4-fold increase, $p=0.008$, Figure 36B), IL-2 (LAIV Spn-, median 1.1-fold increase, $p=0.026$, Figure 36C; LAIV Spn+, median 1.4-fold increase, $p=0.001$, Figure 36D), IFN- γ (LAIV Spn-, median 1.2-fold increase, $p=0.009$, Figure 37A; LAIV Spn+, median 1.3-fold increase, $p<0.001$, Figure 37B) and IL-15 (LAIV Spn-, median 1.3-fold increase, $p=0.001$; Figure 37C; LAIV Spn+, median 1.2-fold increase, $p=0.024$, Figure 37D).

Interestingly, in LAIV Spn- the vaccine also conferred a slight increase in IL-12 (median 1.2-fold increase, $p=0.035$, Figure 38A) and IL-2R levels ($p=0.021$, Figure 38B), which was not observed in LAIV Spn+.

Two days after Spn inoculation, LAIV continued to similarly induce cytokines expressed at day +0 in both non-colonised and Spn colonised. Importantly and similarly to the first set of volunteers vaccinated with antecedent vaccines, we observed that volunteers vaccinated with LAIV showed increase in IL-4 levels (LAIV Spn-: $p=0.003$, Figure 36A; LAIV Spn+: $p=0.025$, Figure 36B). Moreover, TIV Spn- demonstrated instead a median 1.3-fold decrease in IL-4 ($p=0.042$, Figure 39).

Only in the groups vaccinated with LAIV we observed moderate inductions of IL-2, IFN- γ , IL-15 2 days after inoculation (LAIV Spn-: IL-2, median 1.1-fold increase, $p=0.010$, Figure 36C; IFN- γ , median 1.1-fold increase, $p<0.001$, Figure

37A; IL-15, median 1.5-fold increase, $p=0.006$, Figure 37C; LAIV Spn+: IL-2, median 1.3-fold increase, $p=0.004$, Figure 36D; IFN- γ , median 1.3-fold increase, $p=0.002$, Figure 37B; IL-15, median 1.4-fold increase, $p=0.021$, Figure 37D).

In addition, in non-colonised group IL-12 induction by LAIV was similar to this observed before the Spn challenge (day +0) (median 1.5-fold increase, $p=0.035$, Figure 38A). In the LAIV Spn+ group such an induction was observed only early post the challenge (median 1.2-fold increase, $p=0.012$, Figure 40A). Importantly, LAIV Spn+ were the only group to elicit a median increase of 1.5-fold in IL-17A levels ($p=0.018$, Figure 40B).

Nine days after inoculation, LAIV in LAIV Spn blocked an increase in IL-4 (1.2-fold increase, $p=0.021$, Figure 36A), first induced by LAIV in non-colonised even before Spn challenge.

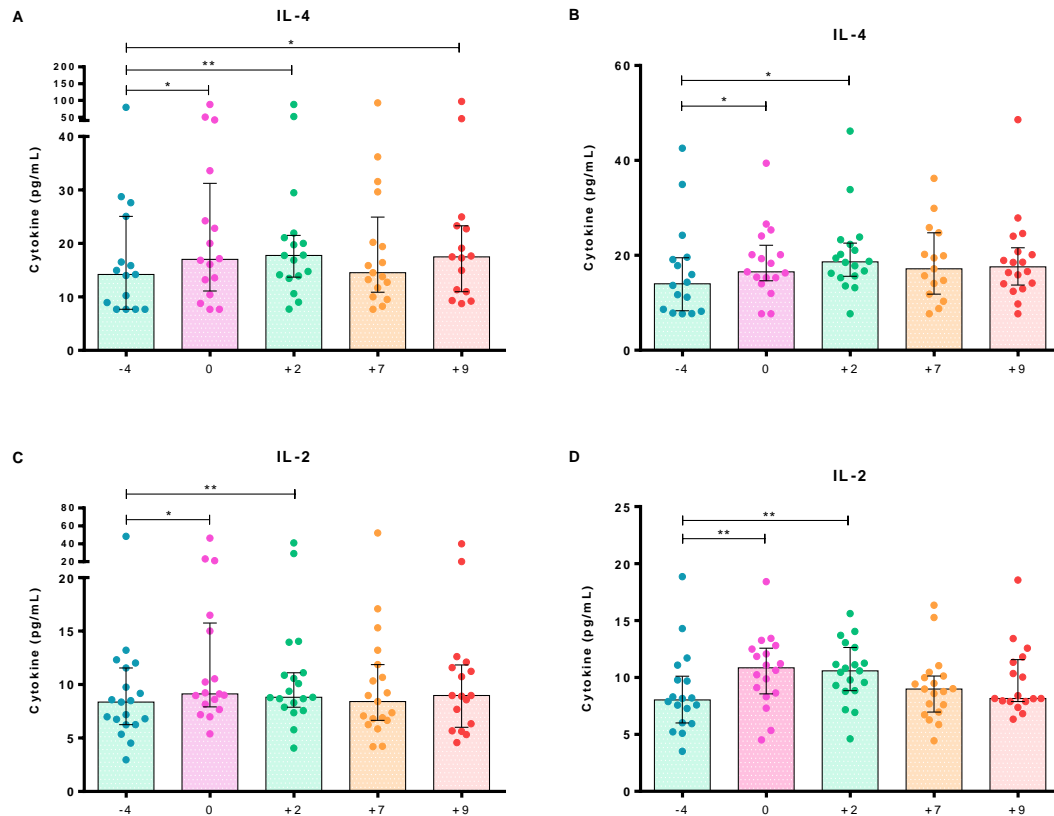


Figure 36. Antecedent LAIV induce cytokines IL-2 and IL-4 in the nose. Levels of cytokines measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV (n=18-19). IL-4 was measured in volunteers (A) not colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn-) and (B) colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn+). Similarly, IL-2 was measured in (C) not colonised and (D) colonised. Results were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with * $p \leq 0.05$ and ** $p < 0.01$ and medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

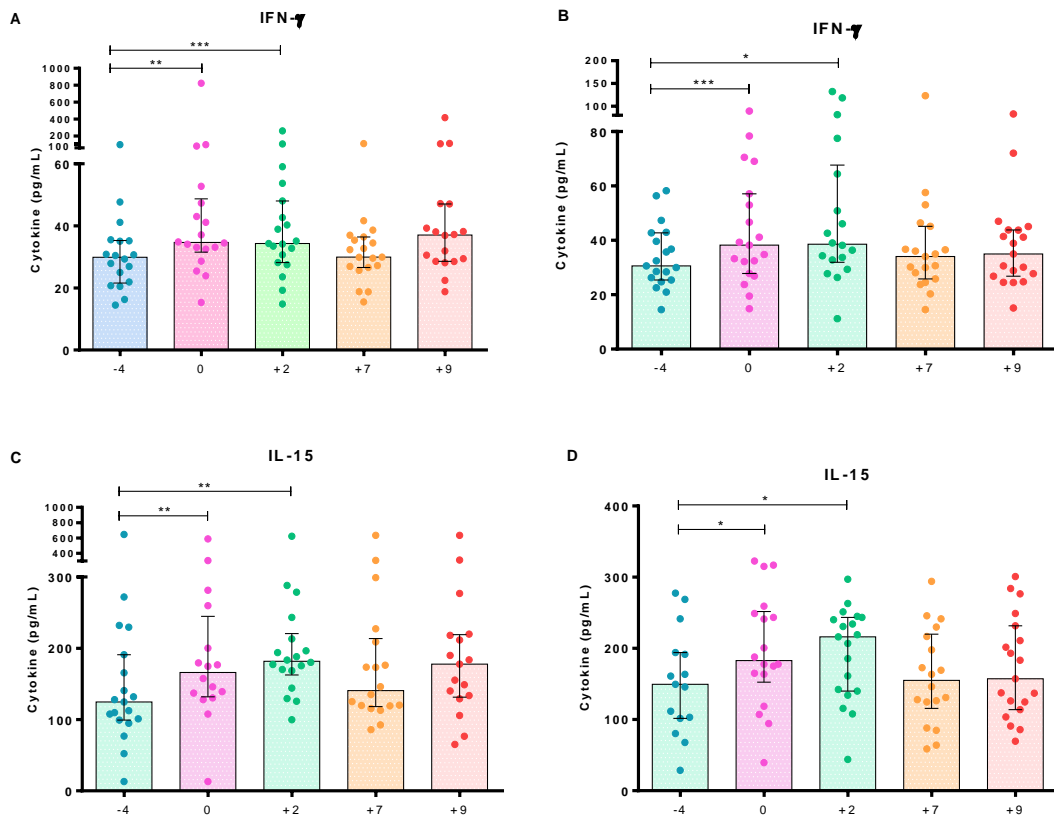


Figure 37. Antecedent LAIV induce cytokines IFN- γ and IL-15 in the nose. Levels of cytokines measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV (n=18-19). IFN- γ was measured in volunteers (A) not colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn-) and (B) colonised by Spn LAIV Spn). IL-15 was measured in (C) not colonised and (D) colonised. Results were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$ and *** $p < 0.001$ and medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

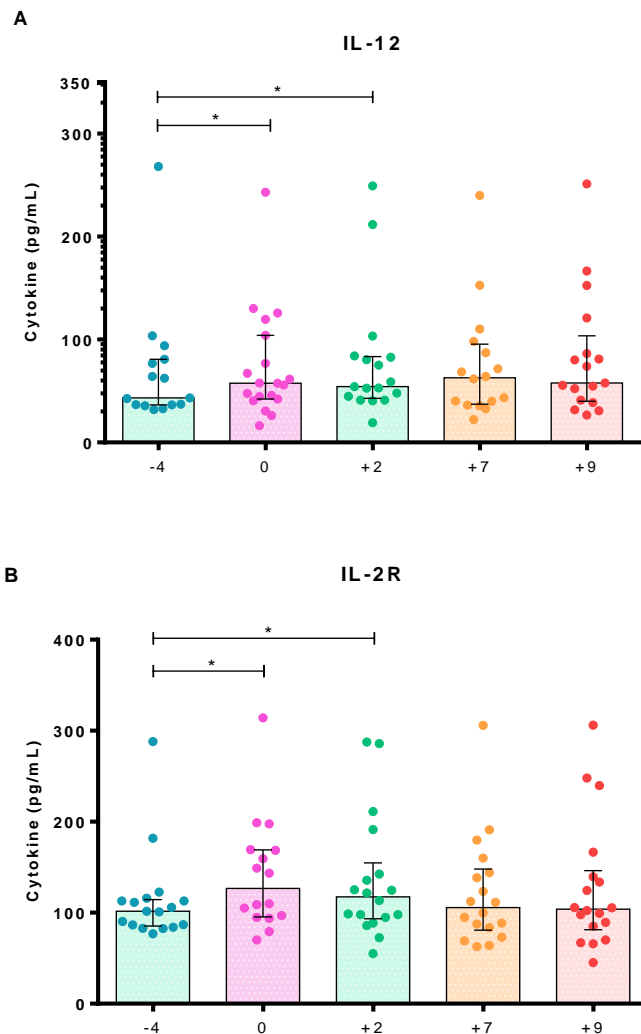


Figure 38. Antecedent LAIV induce cytokines IL-12 and IL-2R in the nose of non-colonised volunteers. Levels of (A) IL-12 and (B) IL-2R were measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV and not colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn-, n=18-19) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

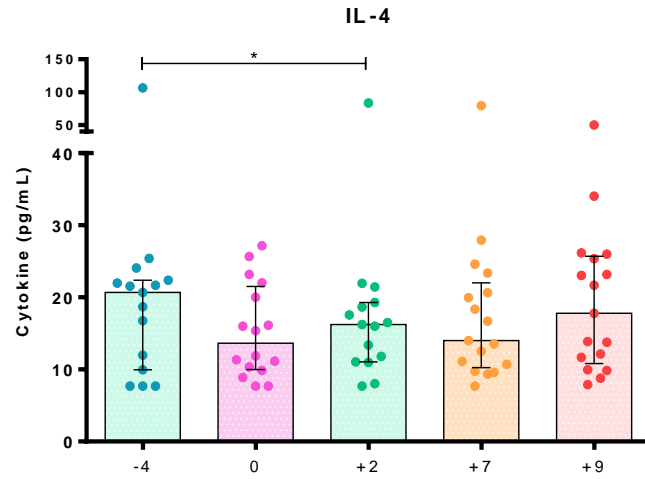


Figure 39. Non-colonised volunteers show induction of IL-4 in the nose . Levels of IL-4 was measured in nasal lining of volunteers in the control group that cleared Spn in the nasopharynx (TIV Spn-, n=18-19) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

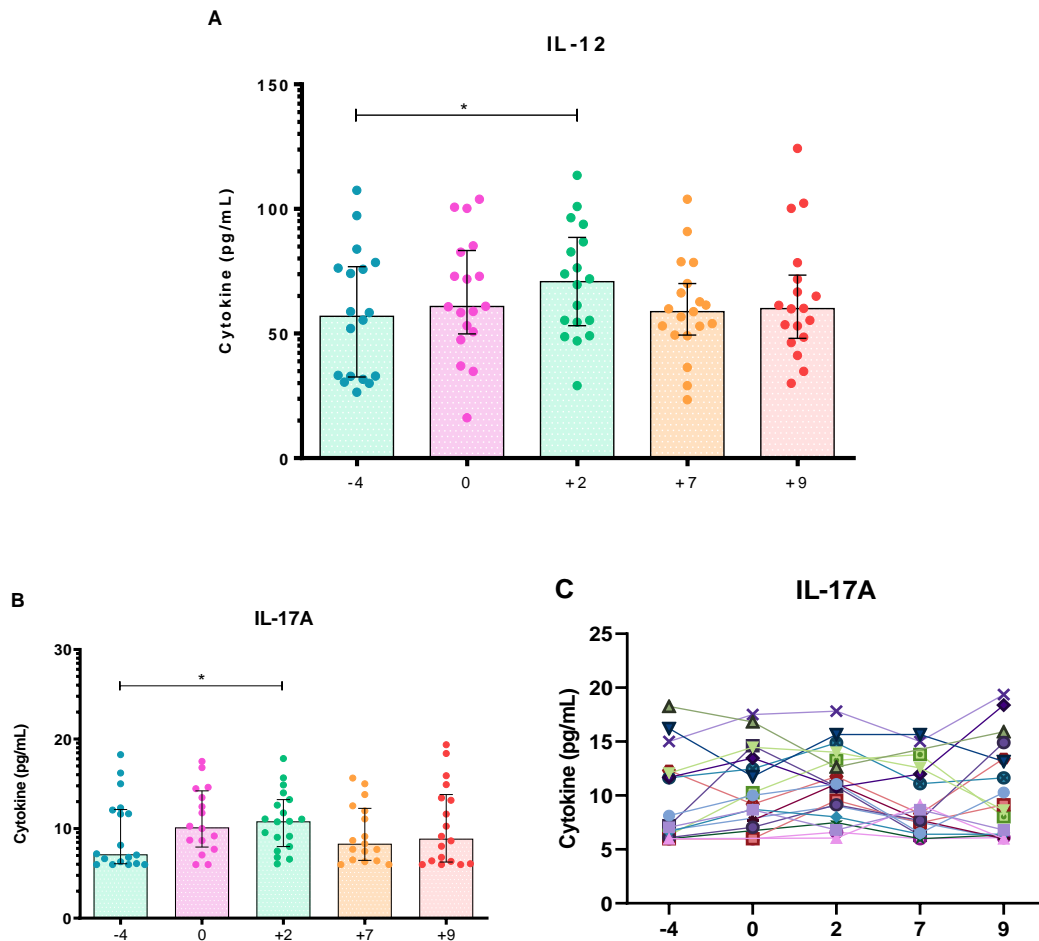


Figure 40. Antecedent LAIV induce cytokine IL-12 and IL-17A in the nose of volunteers colonised by Spn. Levels of (A) IL-12 and (B, C) IL-17A were measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV and colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn+, n=18-19) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$. In A and B, medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown. In C each line represents one volunteer and each point the result of a single volunteers in a specific timepoint.

LAIV induces cytokines that regulate cell growth in the nasopharynx especially in Spn colonised.

Here, we investigated how concurrent LAIV and TIV in volunteers previously challenged with Spn but not colonised affect the production of cytokines that regulate growth of granulocytes, neuronal, epidermal, epithelial B, T-, NK- and hematopoietic stem cells, as well as embryonic development, morphogenesis, tissue repair, angiogenesis.

Three days after vaccination (day +6), LAIV induced a median 2-fold increase in EGF ($p=0.035$, Figure 41A) while TIV-vaccinated showed a median 1.3-fold decrease ($p=0.033$, Figure 41B). In addition, LAIV induced a median 1.4-fold increase in VEGF ($p=0.021$, Figure 42A). Further, at 6 days post-vaccination (day +9) TIV-vaccinated volunteers did not show increased cytokine levels while LAIV continued to induce a median 1.5 and 1.4-fold increase in EGF and VEGF, respectively ($p=0.010$, Figure 41B, and $p=0.047$, Figure 42B). Interestingly, TIV vaccinated showed decrease in levels of FGF-Basic 24 days after vaccination (median 1.3-fold decrease, $p=0.021$, Figure 43).

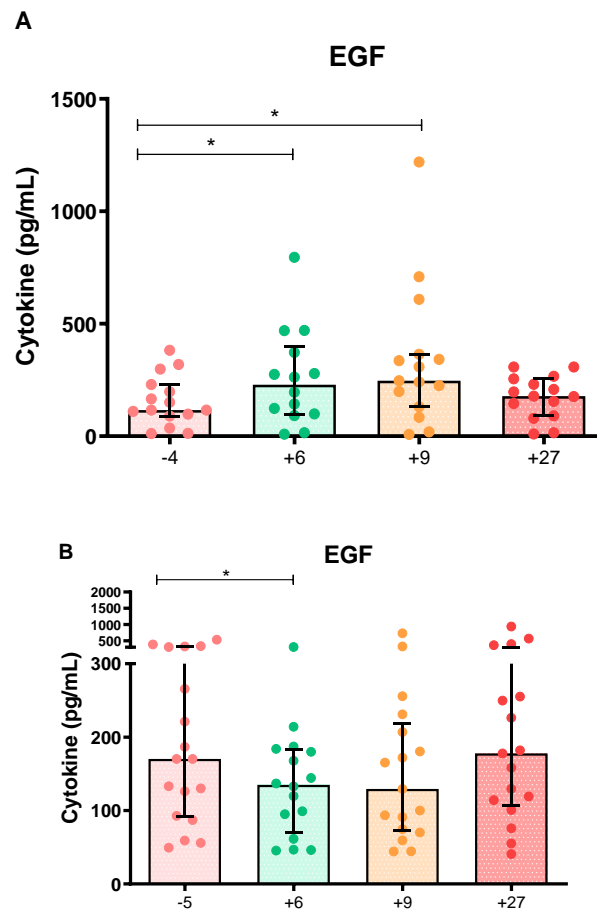


Figure 41. LAIV- and TIV- vaccinated show increase in cytokines EGF in the nasopharynx.

Levels of EGF were measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with (A) LAIV (n=28) and (B) TIV (n=28). Results were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -5) by Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$ and medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown

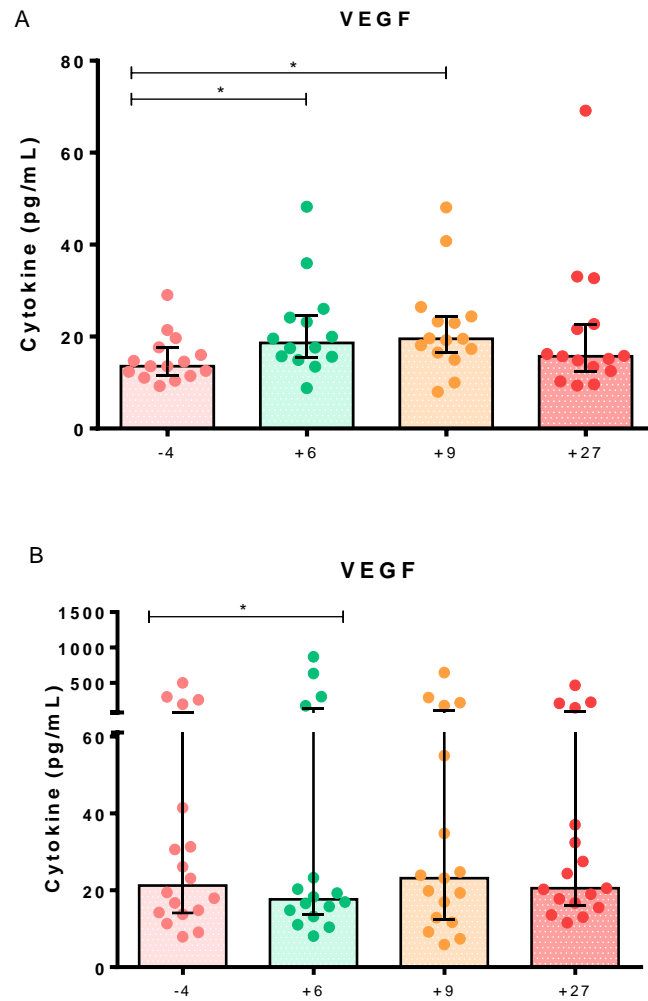


Figure 42. LAIV vaccinated show increase in cytokines VEGF in the nasopharynx. Levels of VEGF were measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with (A) LAIV (n=28) and (B) TIV (n=28) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -5) by Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

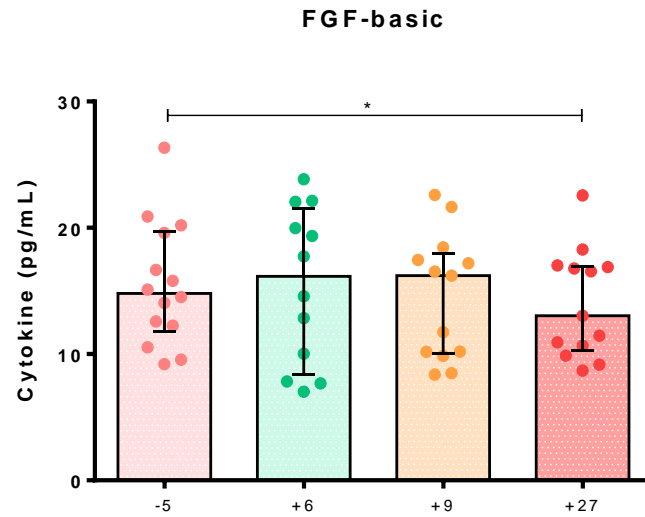


Figure 43. LAIV vaccinated show increase in cytokine FGF-Basic in the nasopharynx.

Levels of FGF-Basic were measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV (n=28).

Results were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -5) by Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$ and

medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

Additionally, we measured cytokine production in a second set of volunteers, vaccinated with antecedent LAIV and TIV followed by Spn challenge, and stratified in vaccination and colonisation status.

Before Spn inoculation (day +0), LAIV induced only a median 1.4-fold increase in G-CSF in those volunteers who would not achieve colonisation post the bacterial challenge ($p=0.001$, Figure 44A). On the other hand, vaccination in LAIV Spn+ induced a median 1.6-fold increase in G-CSF ($p=0.001$, Figure 44B) along with median 1.2-fold increase in FGF-Basic and VEGF ($p=0.010$ and $p=0.044$, Figure 45A and 45B, respectively).

Two days after Spn inoculation, LAIV in LAIV Spn- continued to induce G-CSF (median 1.2-fold increase, $p=0.009$, Figure 44A) and started to express higher levels of FGF-Basic and EGF (FGF-Basic: median 1.8-fold increase, $p=0.023$, Figure 46A; EGF, median 1.7-fold increase, $p=0.010$, Figure 46B). In LAIV colonised volunteers induction of G-CSF, FGF-Basic and VEGF persisted in this timepoint (G-CSF, median 1.4-fold increase, $p=0.009$, Figure 44B; FGF-Basic, median 1.2-fold increase, $p=0.004$, Figure 45A; VEGF, median 1.1-fold increase, $p=0.040$, Figure 45B) with additional induction of IL-7, only elicited in LAIV vaccinated after Spn challenge (median 1.3-fold increase, $p=0.027$, Figure 47).

Importantly, only EGF was elicited exclusively by TIV Spn+ (median 1.7-fold increase, $p=0.005$, Figure 48) showing similar induction in LAIV Spn- (median 1.3-fold increase, $p=0.048$, Figure 46B). Further, at 7 and 9 days post-inoculation, the control group did not show increase in EGF, however, LAIV Spn- demonstrated a LAIV-induced median 2-fold increase ($p=0.020$, Figure 46B). In addition, in both non-colonised and colonised volunteers, LAIV induced a late

increase of a median 1.2-fold of G-CSF (LAIV Spn-: $p=0.026$, Figure 44A, LAIV Spn+: $p=0.026$, Figure 44B). Interestingly, this cytokine was induced by the attenuated influenza viruses since before Spn challenge at day +0.

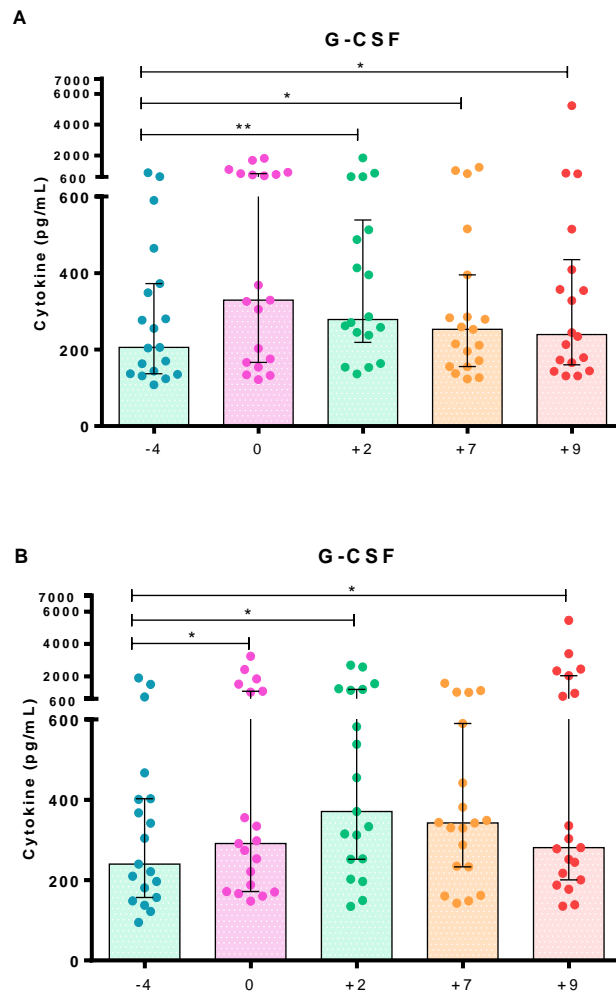


Figure 44. Antecedent LAIV induce cytokine G-CSF in the nose of volunteers. Levels of G-CSF was measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV and (A) not colonised and (B) colonised by Spn ($n=18-19$) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with $*p<0.05$ and $**p<0.01$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

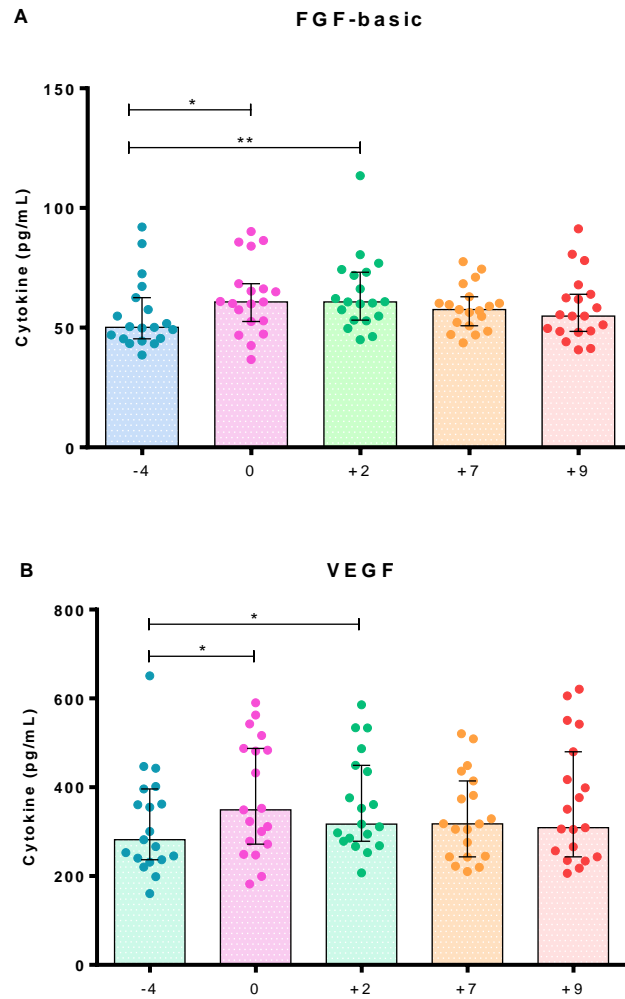


Figure 45. LAIV induces FGF-Basic and VEGF in the nasopharynx of Spn colonised volunteers. Levels of (A) FGF-Basic and (B) VEGF were measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV and colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn+, n=18-19) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with * $p < 0.05$ and ** $p < 0.01$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

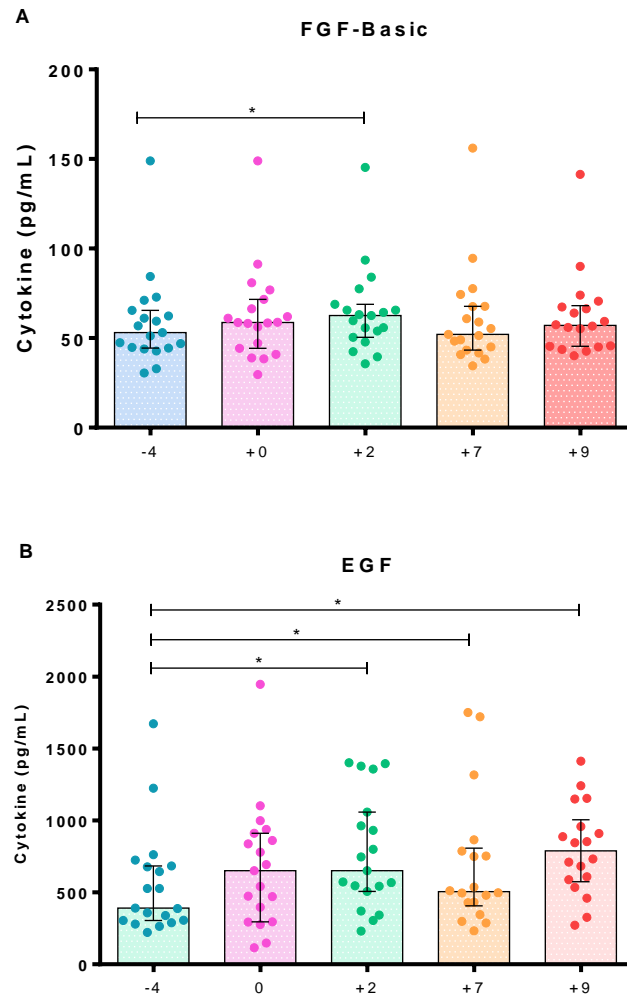


Figure 46. LAIV induces cytokine FGF-Basic and EGF in the nasopharynx of non-colonised volunteers. Levels of (A) FGF-Basic and (B) EGF were measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV and not colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn-, n=18-19) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with $*p < 0.05$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

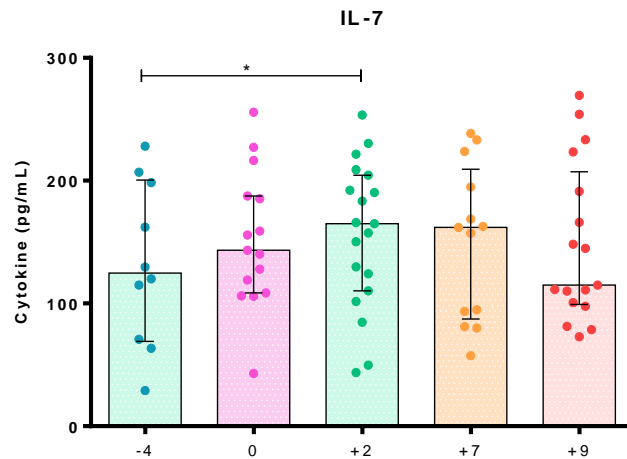


Figure 47. LAIV induces cytokine IL-7 in the nasopharynx of Spn colonised volunteers.

Levels of IL-7 was measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV and colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn+, n=18-19) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with *p<0.05. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

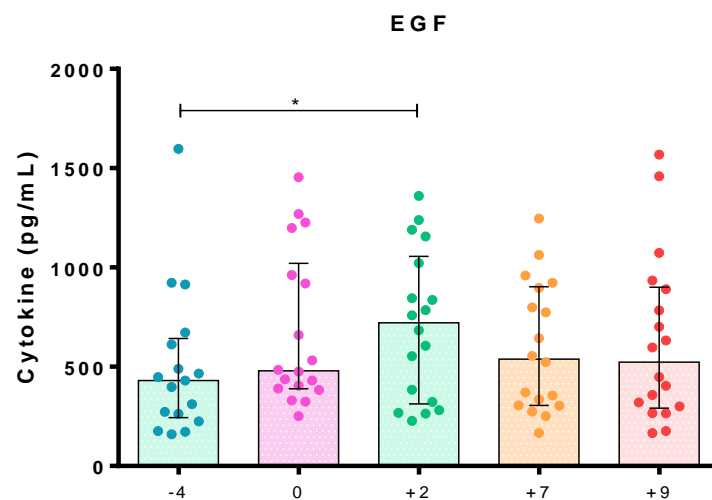


Figure 48. Spn colonised show increased levels of cytokine EGF in the nasopharynx.

Levels of EGF was measured in nasal lining of volunteers in the control group colonised by Spn (TIV Spn+, n=18-19) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with *p<0.05. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

LAIV induction of anti-inflammatory cytokine response is impaired in the Spn colonised nasal mucosa

Firstly, we assessed anti-inflammatory cytokines in the nasopharynx of volunteers challenged with Spn and not colonised, followed with vaccination with concurrent LAIV and TIV. Here, we demonstrated that LAIV induces only HGF, 6 days after vaccination (median 1.3-fold increase, $p=0.030$, Figure 49).

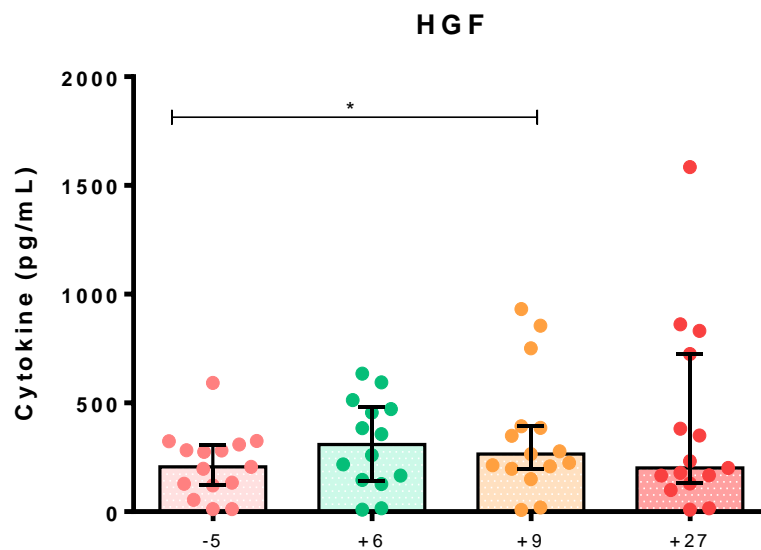


Figure 49. TIV-vaccinated show increase in cytokine HGF in the nasopharynx. Levels of HGF was measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with TIV ($n=28$). Results were compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -5) by Wilcoxon test with $*p\leq 0.05$ and medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

Secondly, another set of volunteers vaccinated with antecedent influenza vaccines followed with Spn challenge, were stratified into groups regarding vaccination and colonisation status.

After vaccination but before inoculation (day +0), LAIV resulted in a considerable increase in IL-10 levels (median 3.7-fold increase, $p=0.006$, Figure 50A) in LAIV Spn-. This induction was unique, as was not observed in any other group. Two days after challenge, a median 2.8-fold increase in IL-10 was still observed ($p=0.002$). Additionally, an induction of HGF (median 1.3-fold increase, $p=0.009$, Figure 50B) was observed in the same group post Spn inoculation.

Interestingly, in the control group, Spn colonisation prevented an increase of anti-inflammatory cytokine IL-10 7 days post-inoculation, observed in TIV Spn- (median 1.4-fold increase, $p=0.026$, Figure 51), but not in the first set of volunteers vaccinated with concurrent vaccines. Further, at 9 days post-inoculation, LAIV Spn- showed an induction of IL-10, similarly demonstrated at day +0 and +2 (median 2.3-fold increase, $p=0.034$, Figure 50A).

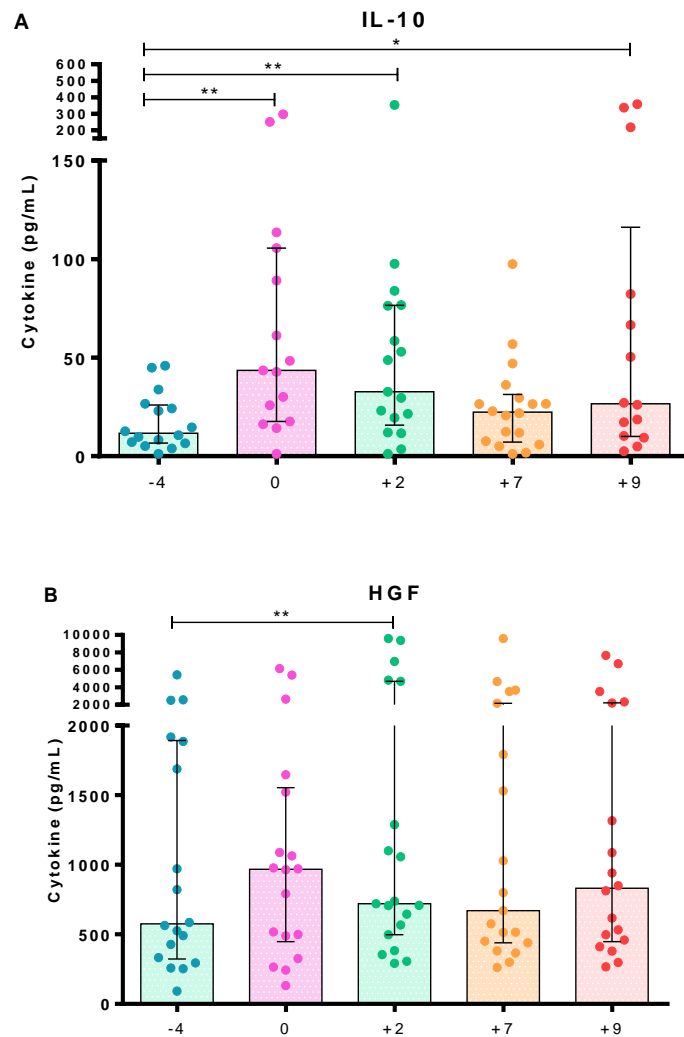


Figure 50. LAIV induces anti-inflammatory cytokines IL-10 and HGF in the nasopharynx of non-colonised volunteers. Levels of (A) IL-10 and (B) HGF were measured in nasal lining of volunteers vaccinated with LAIV and not colonised by Spn (LAIV Spn-, n=18-19) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with * $p < 0.05$ and ** $p < 0.01$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

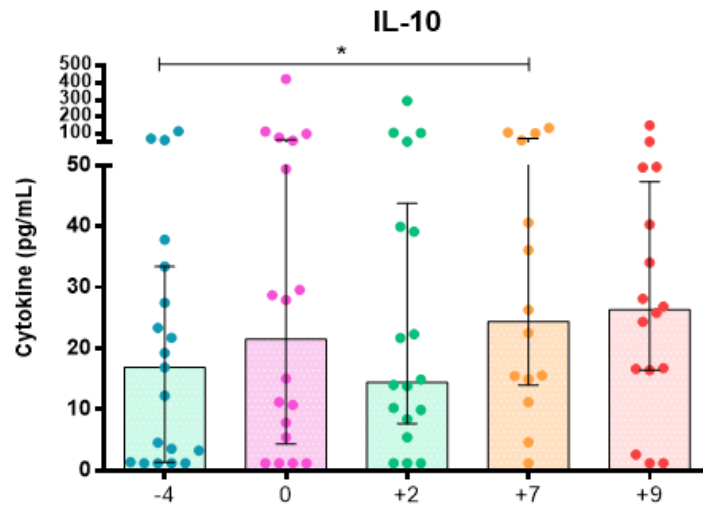


Figure 51. Non-colonised volunteers show increased levels of IL-10 in the nose. Levels of IL-10 was measured in nasal lining of volunteers in the control group that cleared Spn in the nasopharynx (TIV Spn-, n=18-19) and compared at each timepoint to baseline (day -4) by Wilcoxon test with $*p \leq 0.05$. Medians and interquartile range of each timepoint are shown.

5.4 Discussion

Here, we assessed cytokine responses elicited by Spn and/or LAIV in the human nasal mucosa by collecting nasal lining fluid (nasosorption, NS) from volunteers from 2 consecutive randomised controlled clinical trials and measured cytokine levels with 30-plex human cytokine panel. Our results have demonstrated that the control group, vaccinated with TIV and not colonised by Spn, was associated with less general inflammation. The detectable levels of inflammatory cytokines in this group corroborate the view of Spn as a commensal bacterium that can asymptotically be present in the nose of healthy adults ³³⁶.

Conversely, the attenuated influenza viruses contained in the LAIV elicited induction of pro-inflammatory cytokines, as well as cytokines that regulate adaptive immunity and cell growth. However, we observed divergent cytokine profiles promoted by antecedent LAIV vaccination in non-colonised and Spn colonised, which imply that differences in the host responses to Spn after primary influenza infection may affect susceptibility to Spn colonisation. As described in wild-type influenza virus and secondary Spn co-infection ²⁷¹, antecedent LAIV vaccination induces an exacerbated immune response that is regulated by a loop of positive feedback between immune cells and cytokines. In our results this response was characterised mainly by increases in IL-6, IFN- α , IP-10, MIP-1 α , MIP-1 β and IL-17A in the LAIV/Spn+ group.

The cytokine IL-6 is considered one of the major physiological mediators of acute infection and plays an important role on acquired immune response by stimulation of antibody production and of effector T-cell development *in vitro* and *in vivo*. In mice colonised with Spn, antecedent LAIV-induced IL-6 is shown to be increased in the upper respiratory tract ^{186,188}, which is corroborated by our results

in humans. Additionally, LAIV in Spn colonised induced an increase in IL-17A, a cytokine observed in murine models following colonisation and critical for defence against bacterial infections, especially Spn^{327,333,337}. IL-17A is known to induce neutrophil recruitment and enhance macrophage capacity to kill Spn *in vitro*²⁸⁷. The increased IL-17A levels observed in Spn colonised volunteers suggest that proliferation of neutrophils may occur in the nasal mucosa after bacterial challenge, in order to facilitate control and clearance of growing Spn colonisation.

On the other hand, although LAIV induced a high pro-inflammatory profile in Spn colonised, vaccination reduced specific responses to Spn in humans, mainly confined in the chemoattractant cytokines MCP-1, RANTES, MIG, TNF- α , IL-1 β and IL-10. In mice models it has been shown that MIG and TNF- α possess anti-viral activities^{188,199,338,339}, whereas IL-1 β is known for mediate Spn clearance²⁹⁵.

In addition, LAIV-induced anti-inflammatory IL-10 was reduced by Spn colonisation, cytokine that is a central factor for regulating immune responses to virus and bacteria^{340,129}. Here we showed that the attenuated influenza viruses contained in the LAIV do not show similar effect to murine models of antecedent wild-type influenza and Spn co-infection that have associated impact on the nasal epithelium with induction of IL-10^{127,341}.

In this study we addressed important questions about how immune responses are elicited by LAIV as well as how the attenuated influenza viruses contained in the LAIV can alter Spn control in the host. By using for the first time 2 double human infection challenge model with LAIV and Spn, we revealed that Spn colonisation caused minimal alteration in the nasal cytokine milieu, whereas LAIV trigger a robust pro-inflammatory response, which was impaired in Spn

colonised. Our findings are in agreement with studies shown that antecedent LAIV increases susceptibility to Spn acquisition and promotes bacterial growth²⁸⁴. Secondary Spn infection following wild-type viral respiratory tract infection has a large burden of disease worldwide, therefore it is essential to understand how LAIV can affect cytokine immune responses that, in turn, lead to increased bacterial loads and transmission.

CHAPTER SIX

EFFECT OF SPN AND LAIV ON INNATE AND ADAPTIVE IMMUNITY TO INFLUENZA

6.1 Introduction

Each year, 5–15% of the world's population will suffer from an influenza infection, with up to 5 million cases of severe disease and 5 hundred thousand deaths³⁴². Influenza viruses have the ability to mutate³⁴³ and hence escape immune defence mechanisms of the host³⁴⁴, which require annual vaccine updates. As described before, the current available vaccines are the TIV and LAIV.

The different vaccination routes of TIV and LAIV trigger distinct immune mechanisms and pathways of protection. TIV leads to host protection by inducing neutralising antibodies to strain-specific glycoproteins HA and NA³⁴⁵. LAIV is a cold-adapted vaccine that replicates only in the nasopharynx - mimicking a natural influenza infection³⁴⁶. The nasal replication of the attenuated influenza viruses leads to recognition of its pathogen-associated molecular patterns (PAMPs) by host pattern recognition receptors (PRRs), which initiates a cascade of cellular immune responses³⁴⁴.

In mice, LAIV vaccination increases the frequency of CD4⁺ and CD8⁺ T-cells in the lung and cytokine production upon influenza re-stimulation compared to the inactivated virus vaccination or no vaccine administration^{186,188,347,348}. Moreover, LAIV seeds the murine lung with both CD4⁺ and virus-specific CD8⁺ TRM T-cells. TRM have been shown to provide long-term cross-strain protection to influenza³⁴⁷. In humans, the immune responses elicited by LAIV have been found to provide broader clinical protection in children compared to the inactivated influenza vaccines³⁴⁹. However, the detailed immunological mechanisms of this remain incompletely understood.

Each year influenza vaccines are formulated according to circulating strains, but their effectiveness varies as influenza replication often results in antigenic drift and shift, changing the viral genome ³⁵⁰. Estimates from the World Health Organisation (WHO) suggest that influenza vaccines effectiveness rarely exceeds 60% and has fallen below 30% in some years ^{351,352}. Due to poor effectiveness among 2 to 17 year-olds, during previous seasons, the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunisation Practices (ACIP) suggested the exclusion of LAIV from US national childhood influenza immunisation programme during 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 season ³⁵³, whereas it expressed no preference for the LAIV vaccine over the inactivated one for the 2018-2019 influenza season. Many underlying causes for this variation have been suggested, including poor matching with circulating strains ³⁵⁴, differential ability of some LAIV to induce immunity, in particular against H₁N₁ strains, and interactions with the existing microbiome during LAIV replication in the nose ³⁵⁵.

Despite several reports about the microbiota and its impact on vaccination responses ³⁵⁶⁻³⁵⁹ - including responses to influenza vaccine ^{358,360} - it is still unclear how the microbiome effects LAIV immunogenicity in humans ²⁷⁷. In murine models, Spn colonisation altered the anti-viral B-cell responses during co-infection with wild-type influenza virus, potentially compromising long-term antiviral antibody-mediated immunity ²⁷⁷. As colonisation of the nasopharynx with Spn is very common during childhood, with 50% of infants in resource-rich settings and up to 90% in low and middle income countries colonised at any time ³⁶¹, it is essential to continue the investigation on how Spn could affect immune responses elicited by the currently available influenza vaccines.

Here, we showed that in humans, concurrent LAIV elicits immune responses primarily at mucosal sites- both nose and lung. Interestingly, pre-existing nasal Spn colonisation impacted on LAIV immunogenicity, dampening the LAIV-mediated nasal and lung immune responses

6.2 Methods

6.2.1 Volunteer recruitment, vaccination and inoculation

170 healthy adult volunteers were recruited to the Concurrent study (Section 2.2). In the Concurrent study, subjects were inoculated with Spn using EHPC and 3 days later, vaccinated with either LAIV (n=80) or TIV as control (n=90) (Section 2.5.4 and 2.6.4).

To investigate the immune responses to influenza vaccination, samples of NW and serum were collected at baseline and 24 days after vaccination. For comparisons within the lung datasets, BAL fluid and lung lymphocytes were collected at 1 timepoint, as well as from an unvaccinated subset of volunteers (Spn-, n=10 and Spn+, n=10) which were used as a control since each volunteer was only able to provide a single time point sample.

6.2.2 Nasal wash, BAL and serum collection and processing

NW was collected by washing volunteers' nostrils with saline (Section 2.5.5) while BAL was collected by washing off the lungs with saline (Section 2.5.9). In addition, serum was also collected (Section 2.5.8). NW and serum samples were stored in a -80°C freezer for future analysis (Section 2.6.5), whereas BAL was processed for experiments immediately (Section 2.6.8).

6.2.3 Intracellular cytokine staining of BAL cells

As described in Section 2.6.8.2, non-adherent BAL cells were counted and stimulated with TIV or left unstimulated as negative control, and incubated. Cells were washed and stained with extracellular markers CD3, TCR- $\gamma\delta$, CD4, CD8, CD69, CD25, CD103 and CD49a and intracellular markers FOXP3, IFN- γ , TNF- α , IL-10 and IL-17A for analysis in a flow cytometer.

6.2.4 Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA)

ELISA was used to quantify levels of IgG and IgA antibodies to influenza in the serum, NW and BAL supernatant of volunteers vaccinated with TIV or LAIV as described in Section 2.6.9.5. The average blank corrected value was calculated for each sample and the data analysed using Omega Analysis.

6.2.5 Statistical analysis

The levels of antibodies were analysed by comparing baseline and 24 days after vaccination (D24) by Wilcoxon test. As described in Section 2.7, the number of positive cells were compared between mock and flu-stimulated within groups by Wilcoxon test and between groups by Mann-Whitney test.

6.3 Results

To assess and compare the immune responses elicited by influenza in volunteers inoculated with Spn and vaccinated with concurrent LAIV, we collected a series of samples. Mucosal samples, such as NW and BAL, as well as serum samples, were collected from the groups TIV Spn- (n=21), TIV Spn+ (n=19), LAIV Spn- (n=37) and LAIV Spn+ (n=43). For the assessment of lung immune responses, we included a non-vaccinated cohort (Spn-, n=10 and Spn+, n=10), as we were only able to sample the human lung only post challenge and vaccination.

Concurrent LAIV increases the frequency of influenza-specific TNF- α and IFN- γ producing CD4⁺ and TRM CD4⁺ T-cells in the lung

Data from animal models suggest that concurrent LAIV, but not TIV, elicits protective cellular responses in the lung^{324,362}. To assess if influenza vaccination induced cellular responses in humans, BAL cells were stimulated with influenza antigens. T-cell subsets (CD4⁺, CD8⁺ and TCR- $\gamma\delta$ ⁺) were immunophenotyped and the frequency of positive IFN- γ , IL-17A and TNF- α -producing, influenza-specific T-cells measured. Frequencies of total CD4⁺, CD8⁺ and TCR- $\gamma\delta$ ⁺ T-cells were not affected by vaccination status (Figure 52).

Furthermore, we investigated the presence of TRM T-cell responses to influenza, using the extracellular markers CD69, CD103 and CD49a. As over 1/3 of CD4⁺ CD69⁺ cells, commonly defined as TRM²⁹⁴ did not express the additional resident memory markers CD103 and CD49a, we defined TRM only as CD69⁺. In contrast, nearly all CD8⁺CD69⁺ cells also expressed CD103 and CD49a.

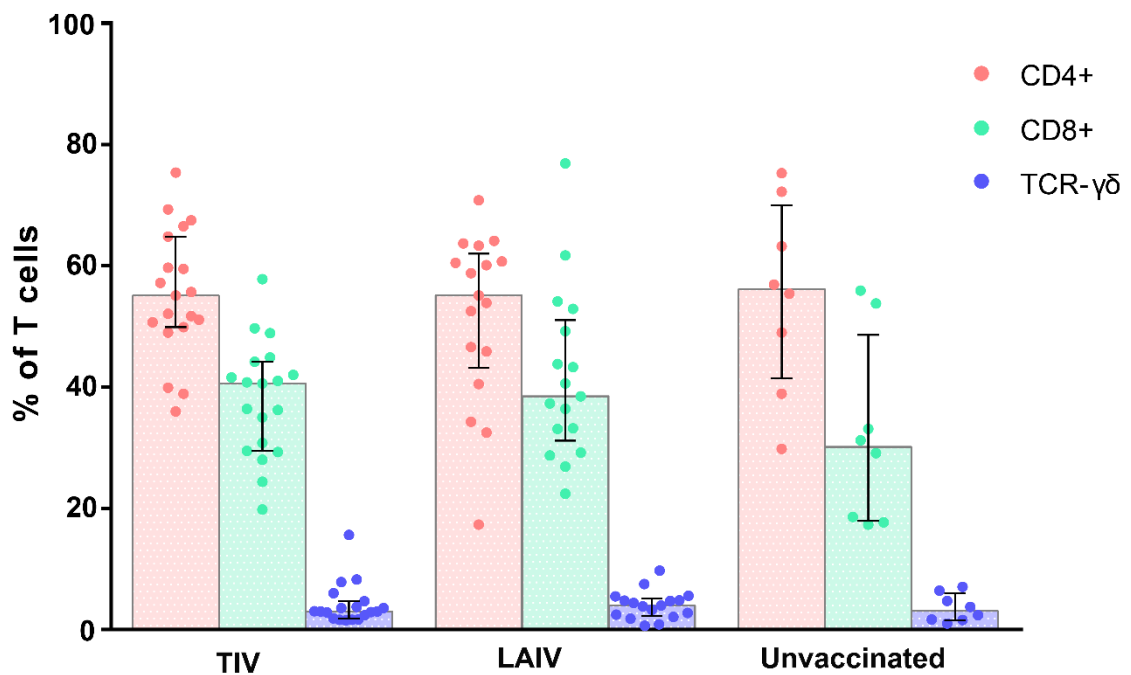


Figure 52. Concurrent LAIV and TIV do not affect frequencies of total CD4⁺, CD8⁺ and TCR $\gamma\delta$ ⁺ T-cell subsets in the lung. Subset frequencies among viable T-cells were measured after an overnight incubation of isolated BAL cells. Bars depict the median proportion of T-cell subsets among total T-cells for TIV Spn- (n=9), TIV Spn+ (n=11), LAIV Spn- (n=11) and LAIV Spn+ (n=9). Also, unvaccinated Spn- (n=3) and unvaccinated Spn+ (n=5).

CD4⁺ TNF- α production upon influenza stimulation was observed in both TIV and LAIV recipients regardless of colonisation status, but not in unvaccinated individuals (Figure 61A and 61B). However, levels of influenza-specific TNF- α were significantly increased in LAIV Spn- when compared to the unvaccinated (mean 2.6-fold increase, $p=0.015$, Figure 61B).

Following stimulation with influenza antigens, CD4⁺ TRM T-cells produced TNF- α in all vaccinated groups but not in the unvaccinated group (Figure 61C). The induction of TNF- α producing CD4⁺ TRM following stimulation did not significantly differ between TIV and LAIV, but was more pronounced in the LAIV-vaccinated, in both Spn colonised and non-colonised individuals (LAIV Spn+: mean 6.5-fold change to unvaccinated, $p=0.004$; LAIV Spn-: mean 7.7-fold change to unvaccinated, $p=0.024$) compared to the unvaccinated group (Figure 61D).

We also assessed IFN- γ production by total CD4⁺ and TRM CD4⁺ T-cells residing in the human lung. IFN- γ production by total CD4⁺ T-cells was observed in all groups upon stimulation, including the unvaccinated group (Figure 61E). The levels of IFN- γ producing CD4⁺ T-cells were not different when comparing vaccinated and unvaccinated groups. However, the induction of IFN- γ producing CD4⁺ TRM T-cells was greater in the LAIV-vaccinated volunteers (Figure 61F). In contrast to total CD4⁺ T-cells, stimulation of TRMs of unvaccinated individuals did not elicit an IFN- γ response (Figure 61F).

Furthermore, the proportion of IL-17A producing CD4⁺ T-cells or CD4⁺ TRM T-cells was not affected by concurrent vaccination with either TIV or LAIV (Figure 62).

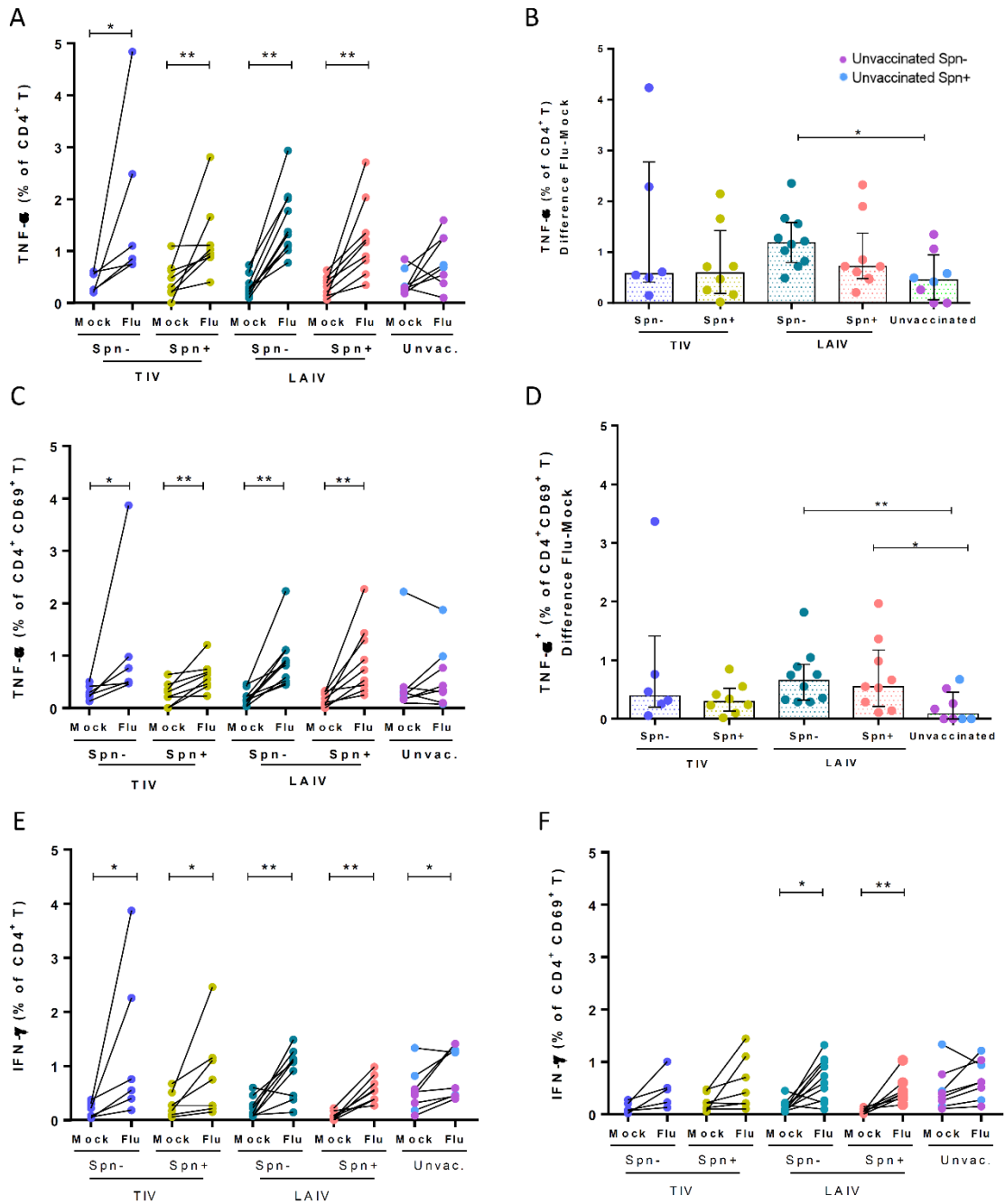


Figure 53. Concurrent LAIV increases frequency of influenza-specific TNF- α and IFN- γ -producing CD4⁺ and TRM CD4⁺ T-cells in the lung. Frequencies of cytokine-producing CD4⁺ and TRM CD4⁺ T-cells were measured in human BAL samples with and without (mock) *in vitro* influenza antigen stimulation. Volunteers were divided by vaccine and colonisation status in TIV Spn- (n=6), TIV Spn+ (n=8), LAIV Spn- (n=10), LAIV Spn+ (n=9), unvaccinated (Spn-, n=3 and Spn+, n=5) group. (A) Production of TNF- α by total CD4⁺ T-cells in each group [paired unstimulated (mock) and stimulated condition (flu)]. (B) influenza-specific production of TNF- α by total CD4⁺ T-cells (Difference between influenza-stimulated and unstimulated) in each group. (C) Production of TNF- α by CD4⁺ CD69⁺ T-cells in each group. (D) Production of influenza-specific TNF- α by CD4⁺ CD69⁺ T-cells in each group. (E) Production of IFN- γ by total CD4⁺ T-cells and (F) CD4⁺ CD69⁺ T-cells in each group. Each individual dot represents a single volunteer and the conditions from one individual are connected. Medians with IQR are depicted for influenza-specific responses, *p<0.05, **p<0.01 by Wilcoxon test for comparisons within the same group and by Mann-Whitney test for between-group comparisons.

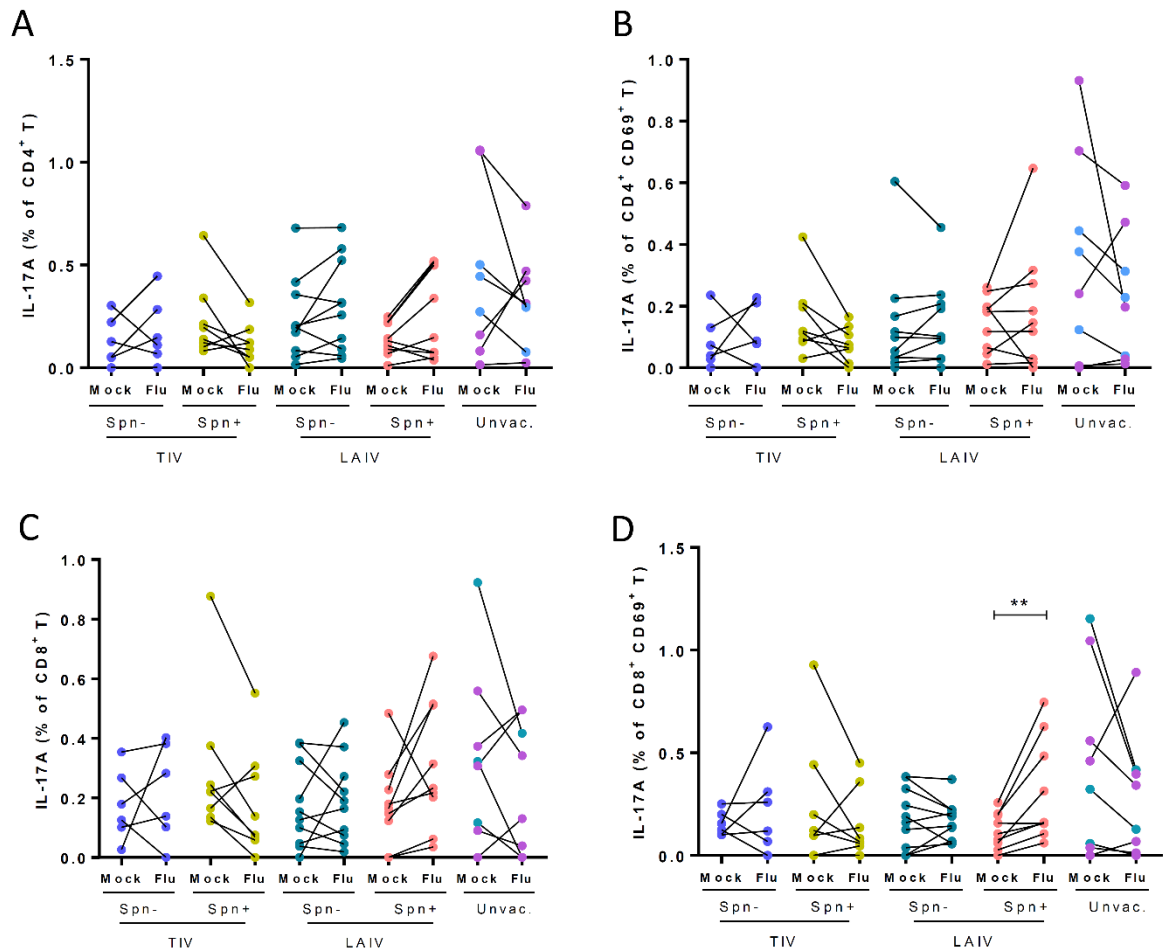


Figure 54. Concurrent LAIV and TIV do not increase the frequency of influenza-specific, IL-17A-producing T-cells in the lung. The frequency of cytokine-producing cells was measured by intracellular staining flow cytometry analysis after stimulation with influenza antigens or unstimulated for TIV Spn- (n=8), TIV Spn+ (n=6), LAIV Spn- (n=10), LAIV Spn+ (n=9), unvaccinated Spn- (n=3), unvaccinated Spn+ (n=5). IL-17A production in (A) total CD4⁺ T-cells, (B) CD4⁺ CD69⁺ T-cells, (C) total CD8⁺ T-cells and (D) CD8⁺ CD69⁺ T-cells. Each individual dot represents a single volunteer and the conditions from one individual are connected. **p<0.01. The unstimulated and influenza antigen-stimulated responses were compared within each group by Wilcoxon test. Influenza-specific responses (influenza-stimulated - unstimulated) were compared between the groups using Mann-Whitney test.

Concurrent LAIV increases the frequency of TNF- α producing influenza-specific CD8⁺ and TRM CD8⁺ T-cells in the lungs

Re-stimulation induced increased production of TNF- α producing CD8⁺ T-cells in LAIV but not TIV or unvaccinated group. LAIV-vaccinated non-colonised had a mean 2.3-fold increase of TNF- α producing CD8⁺T-cells post stimulation compared to the non-stimulated condition ($p=0.030$), whereas the same type of cellular response was less pronounced in the Spn colonised volunteers (mean 1.9-fold increase, $p=0.007$, Figure 63A). Similarly, TNF- α production by TRM CD8⁺ cells was only observed in the LAIV-vaccinated group, increased by median 3.1- ($p=0.006$) and 2.1- ($p=0.004$) fold change in non-colonised and colonised subjects, respectively (Figure 63B).

In contrast to CD4⁺ responses, production of IFN- γ by stimulated CD8⁺ T-cells was only induced in the LAIV-vaccinated colonised by Spn (mean 1.6-fold change with IQR: 1.5x-2.7x, $p=0.007$, Figure 63C). TIV and control group had no significant increase in the proportion of IFN- γ producing CD8⁺ T-cell post stimulation with influenza antigens. In addition, IFN- γ production by lung TRM CD8⁺ T-cells not significantly altered post stimulation in any of the groups (Figure 63D).

Stimulation did not elicit production of IL-17A producing CD8⁺ T-cells, except for IL-17A production by TRM CD8⁺ T-cells in the Spn colonised group (mean 2.6-fold increase, $p=0.008$, Figure 64).

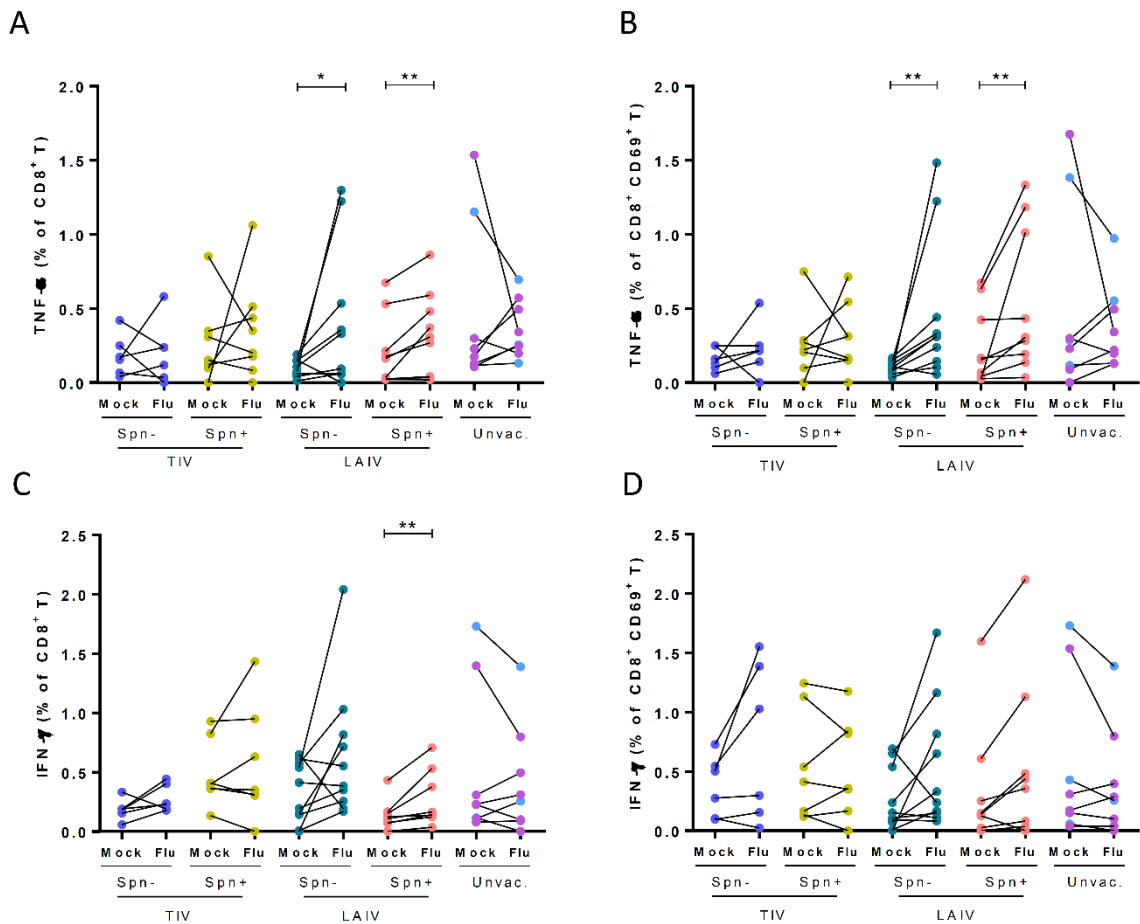


Figure 55. Concurrent LAIV increases frequency of TNF- α producing influenza-specific CD8⁺ and TRM CD8⁺ T-cells in the lungs. Frequencies of cytokine-producing CD8⁺ T-cells were measured in human BAL samples by intracellular staining flow cytometry analysis following stimulation with influenza antigens or non-stimulation (mock) in each group. Volunteers were divided by vaccine and colonisation status in TIV Spn- (n=6), TIV Spn+ (n=8), LAIV Spn- (n=10), LAIV Spn+ (n=9) and unvaccinated (Spn-, n=3 and Spn+, n=5) group. Production of TNF- α by (A) total CD8⁺ T-cells and (B) TRM CD8⁺ T-cells in each group (paired unstimulated [mock] and stimulated condition [Flu]). Production of IFN- γ production by (C) total CD8⁺ T-cells and (D) TRM CD8⁺ T-cells in each group. Each individual dot represents a single volunteer and the conditions per individual are connected. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$ by Wilcoxon test.

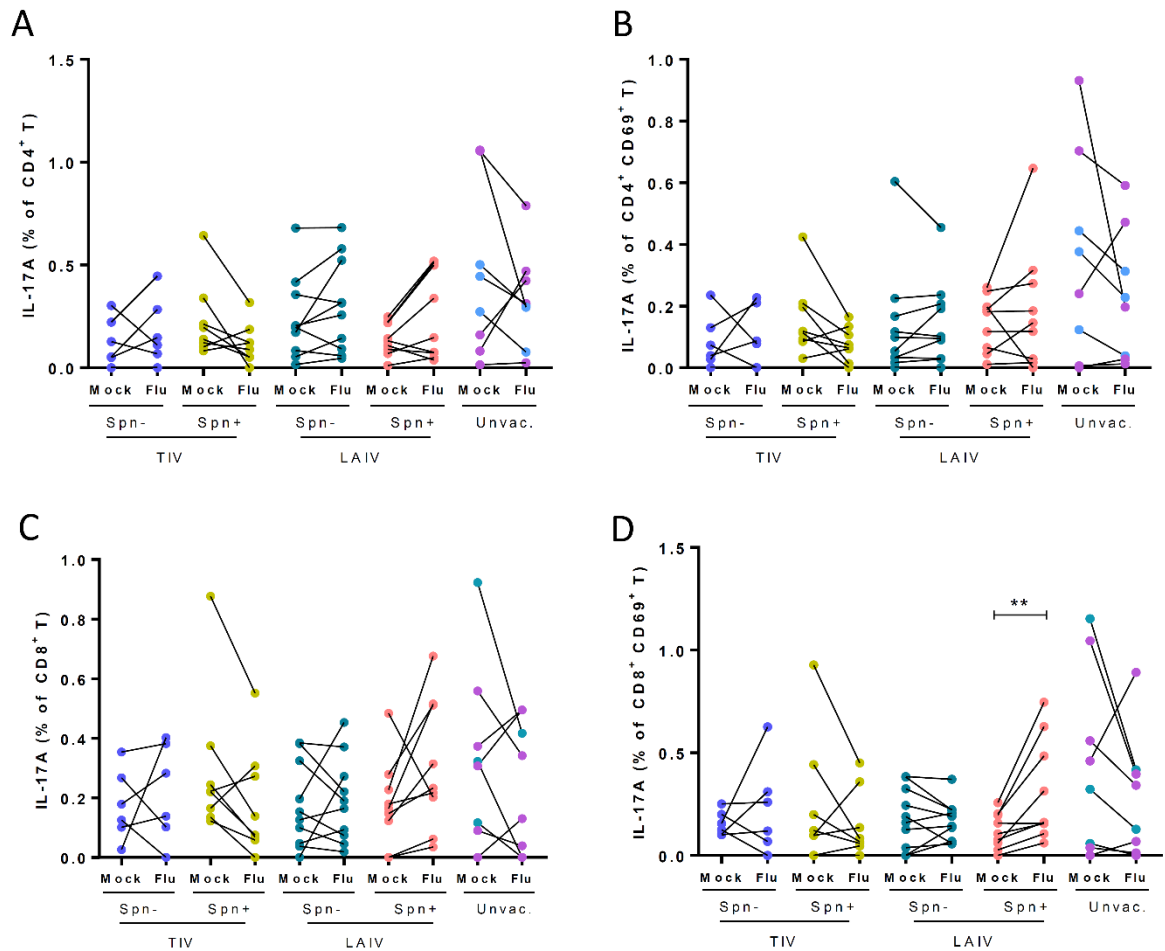


Figure 56 Concurrent LAIV and TIV do not increase the frequency of influenza-specific, IL-17A-producing T-cells in the lung. The frequency of cytokine-producing cells was measured by intracellular staining flow cytometry analysis after stimulation with influenza antigens or unstimulated for TIV Spn- (n=8), TIV Spn+ (n=6), LAIV Spn- (n=10), LAIV Spn+ (n=9), unvaccinated Spn- (n=3), unvaccinated Spn+ (n=5). IL-17A production in (A) total CD4⁺ T-cells, (B) CD4⁺ CD69⁺ T-cells, (C) total CD8⁺ T-cells and (D) CD8⁺ CD69⁺ T-cells. Each individual dot represents a single volunteer and the conditions from one individual are connected. **p<0.01. The unstimulated and influenza antigen-stimulated responses were compared within each group by Wilcoxon test. Influenza-specific responses (influenza-stimulated - unstimulated) were compared between the groups using Mann-Whitney test.

Concurrent LAIV increases frequency of influenza-responding IFN- γ producing TCR- $\gamma\delta^+$ in the lungs of non-colonised individuals

TCR- $\gamma\delta^+$ cells, a subset of specialised innate-like T-cells that can exert effector functions immediately upon activation, play an important role in pulmonary infection^{363,364}. Therefore, we assessed whether TCR- $\gamma\delta^+$ T-cell responses to influenza antigens were induced following vaccination. No significant increase in TNF- α producing TCR- $\gamma\delta^+$ was observed after stimulation in any of the groups (Figure 65A). However, the proportion of IFN- γ producing TCR- $\gamma\delta^+$ was significantly greater in LAIV vaccinated non-colonised (median 2.9-fold increase upon stimulation compared to the unstimulated condition, ($p=0.002$, Figure 65B). None of the other vaccinated or unvaccinated groups showed a significant induction of IFN- γ production. Similar to the other T-cell subsets, IL-17A producing TCR- $\gamma\delta^+$ cells did not significantly increase after stimulation with influenza antigens (Figure 65C).

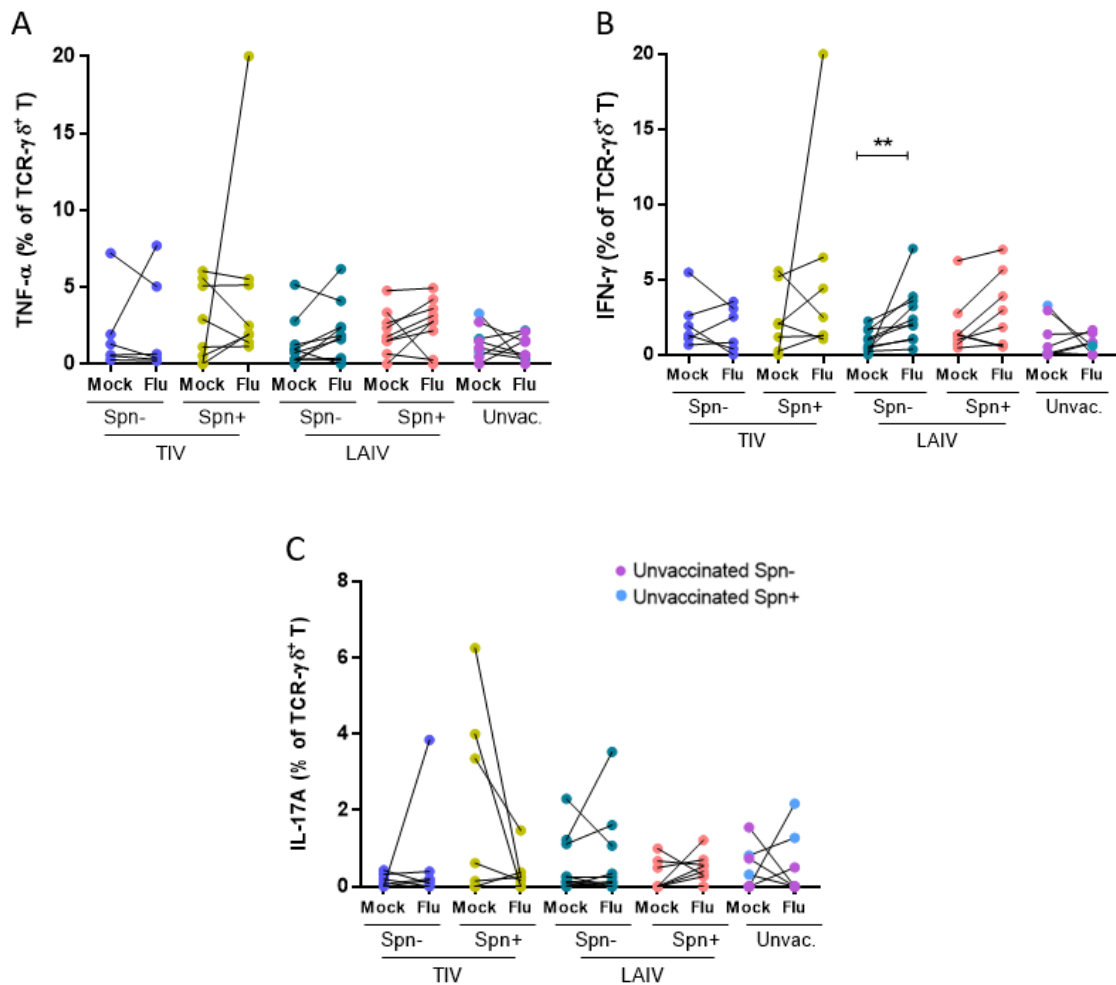


Figure 57. Concurrent LAIV increases frequency of IFN- γ producing influenza-specific TCR- $\gamma\delta^+$ in the lungs of Spn non-colonised individuals. Frequency of cytokine-producing TCR- $\gamma\delta^+$ T-cells was measured in human BAL samples by intracellular staining flow cytometry analysis after *in vitro* stimulation with influenza antigens or non-stimulation (mock). Volunteers were divided by vaccine and colonisation status in TIV Spn- (n=6), TIV Spn+ (n=8), LAIV Spn- (n=10), LAIV Spn+ (n=9) and unvaccinated (Spn-, n=3 and Spn+, n=5) group. Production of (A) TNF- α , (B) IFN- γ and (C) IL-17A by lung TCR- $\gamma\delta^+$ T-cells. Individual dot represents a single volunteer and the conditions per individual are connected. **p<0.01 by Wilcoxon test.

Concurrent LAIV increases frequency of CD4⁺ regulatory T-cells in the lung of non-colonised individuals

A balanced immune response in the lung has been demonstrated to be important in preventing pneumonia ¹³². To investigate whether concurrent LAIV could alter frequency of T-regs in the lung, we measured the frequency of CD25^{hi} FOXP3⁺ T-regs among CD4⁺ T-cells using intracellular staining. Increased levels of CD4⁺ T-regs were only significantly different in BAL samples of LAIV non-colonised when compared to unvaccinated individuals (mean 1.5-fold increase, $p=0.039$, Figure 66).

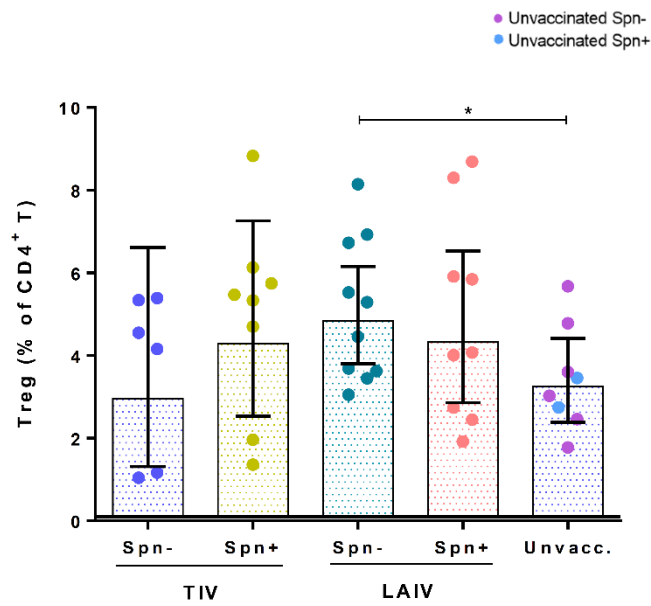


Figure 58. Concurrent LAIV increases frequency of CD4⁺ regulatory T-cells in the lung of Spn non-colonised individuals. Frequency of unstimulated CD4⁺ T-regs (CD3⁺ CD4⁺ CD25⁺ FOXP3⁺) was measured by flow cytometry in human BAL samples from TIV Spn- (n=6), TIV Spn- (n=8), LAIV Spn- (n=10), LAIV Spn+ (n=9) and unvaccinated (Spn-, n=3 and Spn+, n=5). Each individual dot represents a single volunteer and geometric means with 95% CI are shown. *p<0.05 by unpaired t test.

TIV but not concurrent LAIV vaccination increases levels of IgG to influenza in serum

In addition to cellular responses, we sought to assess humoral responses elicited by TIV and concurrent LAIV vaccination both systemically and at the mucosal sites (nasal and lung). In serum samples, IgG levels against influenza antigens were measured at baseline (prior to bacterial challenge and influenza immunisation) and at 24 days post vaccination. TIV induced a median 5.9-fold increase ($p < 0.0001$) of influenza-specific IgG, while LAIV intranasal administration did not confer increase of sera IgG levels (Figure 59A). Prior colonisation of the nasopharynx with Spn did not alter influenza-specific IgG levels induced in response to either vaccine. (Figure 59B).

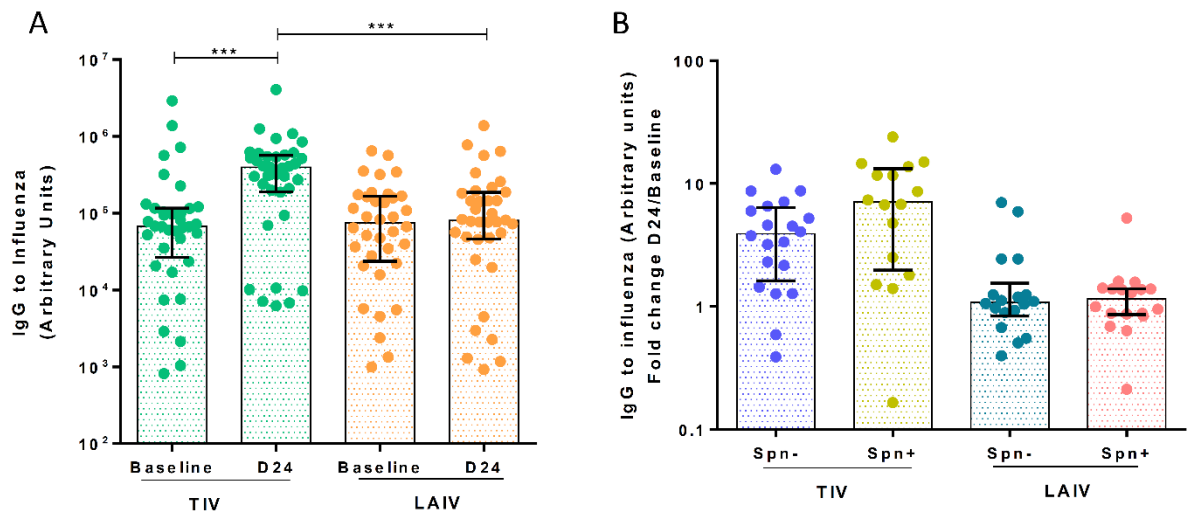


Figure 59. TIV but not concurrent LAIV vaccination increases levels of IgG to influenza in serum. (A) Geometric mean of IgG levels to influenza, measured by ELISA, in serum of LAIV (n=36) and TIV (n=36) vaccinated subjects at baseline (8 days pre-vaccination) and D24 (24 days post-vaccination). (B) Fold change (D24/Baseline) of paired IgG titres to influenza in serum following TIV or LAIV vaccination. TIV Spn- (n=20), TIV Spn+ (n=16), LAIV Spn- (n=18); LAIV Spn+ (n=18). Medians with IQR are shown. ****p<0.0001 by Wilcoxon test for comparisons within the same group, and ***p<0.001 by Mann-Whitney test for comparisons between groups.

IgG but not IgA is induced by influenza vaccines in the lung, with concurrent LAIV mediated-responses being impaired by Spn colonisation

Humoral responses in the lung following TIV or concurrent LAIV vaccination were assessed in BAL samples collected between 26 to 46 days post influenza vaccination. Due to the single timepoint sampling of the lung, 20 unvaccinated subjects (10 Spn-colonised and 10 non-colonised) were used as a control group.

Levels of IgA to influenza in the lung did not differ between TIV, LAIV and control groups (Figure 60A). In terms of IgG levels, TIV was associated with a high IgG response (median 5.8-fold increase compared to control, $p < 0.0001$), whereas LAIV conferred a modest IgG induction (median 1.6-fold change compared to control, $p = 0.028$, Figure 60B). TIV elicited influenza-specific IgG levels were 3.7x greater than LAIV-induced responses in the pulmonary mucosa (Figure 60B).

IgA levels were not significantly increased in the lung by vaccination and were not affected by Spn colonisation (Figure 61C). Spn colonisation affected IgG titres in the LAIV vaccinated group, but not in the TIV group. IgG to influenza was higher in LAIV Spn- compared to colonised (LAIV Spn+, median 1.35-fold increase, $p = 0.010$), however the colonised group was not different from the control group ($p = 0.006$, Figure 60D).

Spn colonisation impairs nasal IgA induction following LAIV but does not alter responses to TIV

To assess antibody responses at the nasal mucosa, we measured influenza-specific IgA and IgG levels in NW samples at baseline and 24 days following influenza immunisation. TIV induced a median 2.2- and a 5.2-fold increase in influenza virus-specific IgA and IgG levels, respectively, 24 days post-vaccination (Figure 61A and 61B). On the other hand, LAIV-induced IgG antibody responses were weakened compared to those induced by TIV. LAIV nasal administration resulted to increase of IgA titres to influenza (median 1.3-fold increase, IQR: 0.7x-2.1x, Figure 61A), whereas the induction of IgG levels (median 1.4-fold increase) was moderated if seen alongside the corresponding induction resulted by TIV. (Figure 61B).

Reduced LAIV-mediated immunogenicity, as observed for lung cellular responses, was also observed for humoral responses at the nasal mucosa of Spn colonised volunteers. Concurrent colonisation of the nasopharynx with Spn affected IgA titres, but not IgG, in the LAIV-vaccinated (Figure 61C and 61D). At day 24 post-vaccination, LAIV-vaccinated non-colonised had significantly greater levels of IgA to influenza circulating in the nasal lumen, compared to the colonised group (LAIV Spn- median=1.69, IQR: 0.98-2.65 vs LAIV Spn+ median=1.24, IQR: 0.66-1.81, $p=0.020$, Figure 60C). Concurrent Spn colonisation did not alter antibody responses to influenza in the TIV-vaccinated individuals (Figure 61C and 61D).

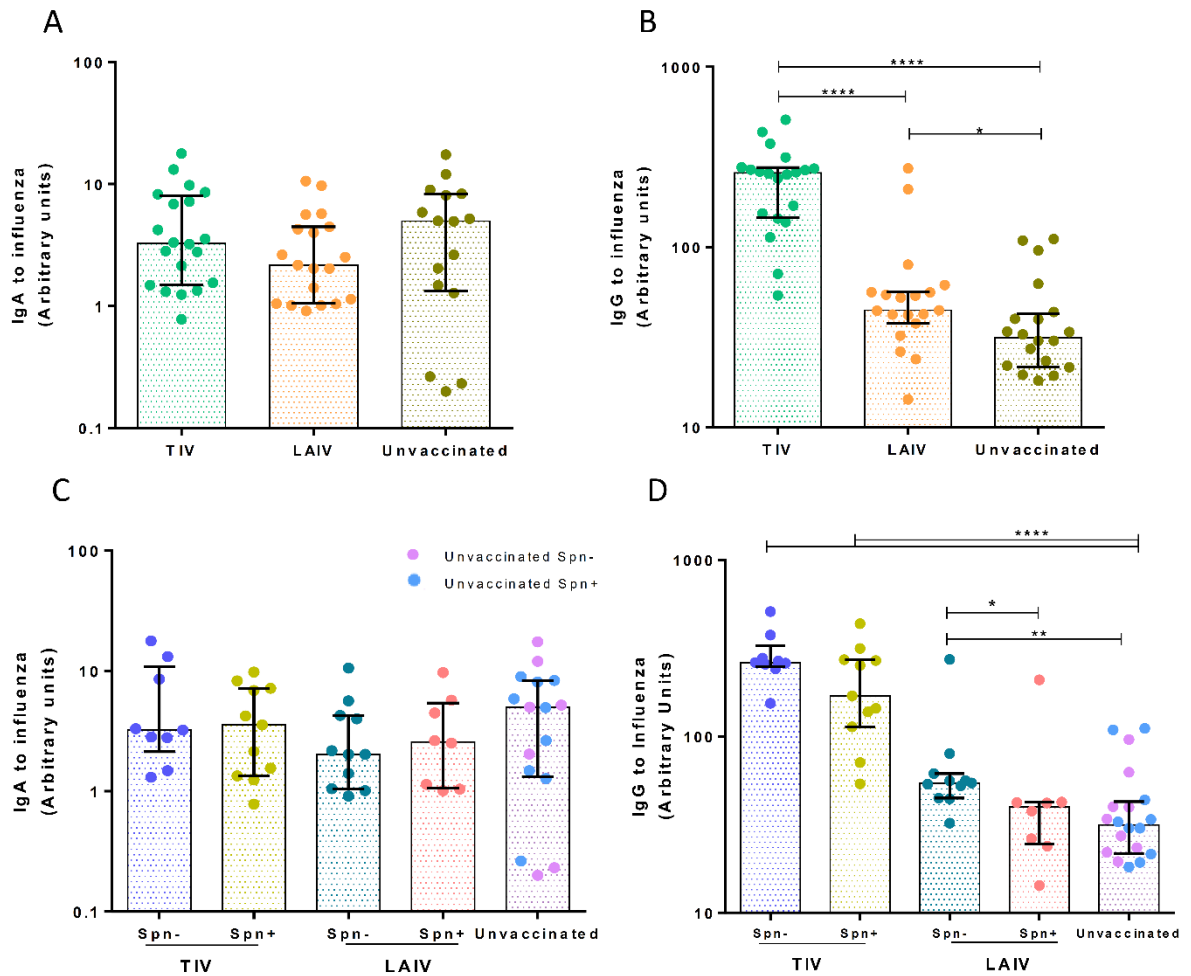


Figure 60. IgG but not IgA is induced by influenza vaccines in the lung, with concurrent LAIV responses being reduced during Spn colonisation. (A)-(B) Geometric mean of IgA and IgG titres to influenza for TIV (n=20), LAIV (n=19) vaccinated subjects and unvaccinated (n=20) was measured by ELISA in BAL fluid. (C)-(D) Geometric mean of IgA and IgG titres grouped based on vaccination and colonisation status, as TIV Spn- (n=9), TIV Spn+ (n=11), LAIV Spn- (n=11), LAIV Spn+ (n=8), unvaccinated (n=20). *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ****p<0.0001 by Wilcoxon test for comparisons within the same group and by Mann-Whitney test for comparisons between groups.

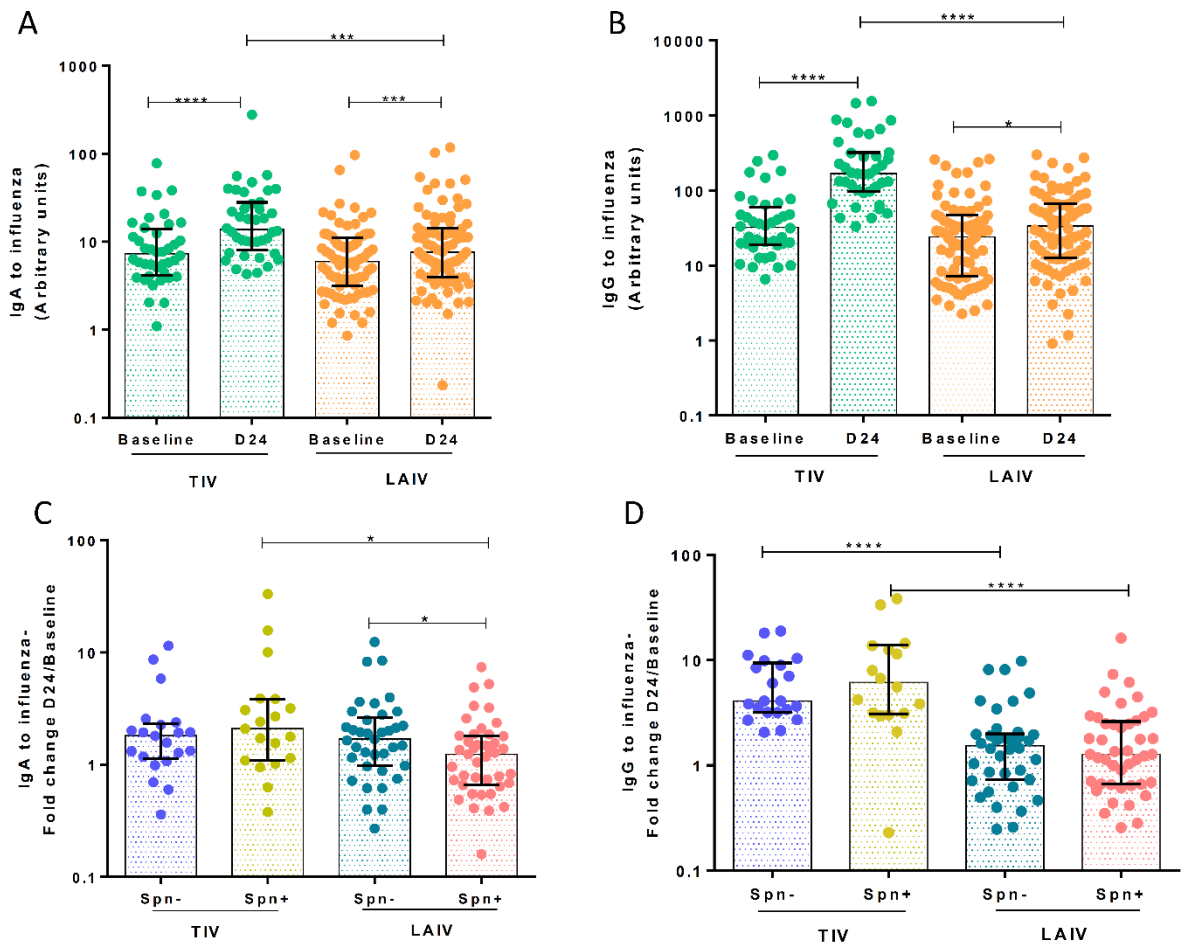


Figure 61. Spn colonisation impairs nasal IgA induction following concurrent LAIV but does not alter responses to TIV. (A) Geometric mean of IgA and (B) IgG titres to influenza measured by ELISA in NW of TIV (n=40) and LAIV (n=80) vaccinated subjects at baseline (8 days pre-vaccination) and D24 (24 days post-vaccination). (C) Fold change (D24/Baseline) of paired IgA and (D) IgG titres to influenza in NW following vaccination with TIV Spn- (n=21), TIV Spn+ (n=19), LAIV Spn- (n=37), LAIV Spn+ (n=43). Medians with IQR are shown. * $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.001$, **** $p < 0.0001$ by Wilcoxon test for comparisons within the same group and by Mann-Whitney test for comparisons between groups.

6.4 Discussion

As we demonstrated here, the 2 available influenza vaccines (TIV and LAIV), induce immune responses in the host via the innate and adaptive pathways ³⁶⁵. However, there is a lack of detailed understanding of the immunological mechanisms induced by these vaccines and how this induction affects Spn colonisation.

In this study, we sought to investigate the cellular and humoral immune responses elicited by TIV and concurrent LAIV, focusing on respiratory tract mucosal sites, in addition to assessing whether colonisation of the nasopharynx with Spn influences vaccine immunogenicity. The results indicate that TIV and LAIV confer differential immunity to adults. TIV mainly induces high levels of influenza-specific antibodies in the serum and mucosal sites, while LAIV combines less pronounced mucosal humoral responses with enhanced cellular immunity in the lung. Importantly, LAIV immunogenicity is diminished by the nasal presence of Spn and this important confounder should be considered when assessing LAIV efficacy.

TIV, as well as other inactivated influenza vaccines ^{366,367}, is known to induce higher titres of serum hemagglutination-inhibiting IgG and IgA antibodies when compared to LAIV ^{366–368}. On the other hand, LAIV was demonstrated to induce higher levels of nasal mucosa IgA to influenza when compared to TIV ¹⁴, which mainly elicits IgG antibodies in the nasal mucosa ²²².

Mucosal lymphocytes are considered the dominant source of IgA ²⁹ and IgG ³⁶⁹ in the nose, with IgG also originated by transudation or diffusion from plasma ³⁶⁹. It is important to be mentioned that IgA is the most abundant immunoglobulin in the upper respiratory tract and both bacteria and viruses

express signals that play immunomodulatory role in these mucosal surfaces ²⁹. In the nose, IgA performs critical functions such as neutralisation of antigens ³⁷⁰, modulation of B-cell responses ^{188,270,277}. While IgA is the predominant immunoglobulin found in the upper airways, IgG titers increase progressively in the lower respiratory tract - being the predominant immunoglobulin in the lung ²⁹ – and IgG deficiency is associated with susceptibility to pneumonia and respiratory tract infections ²⁹.

In agreement with previous studies²¹³, TIV vaccination induced high systemic and mucosal antibody responses, whereas LAIV elicited both mucosal (mainly IgA) influenza virus-specific antibodies and cell-mediated immune responses. Interestingly, pre-existing Spn colonisation of the nasopharynx reduced these LAIV-mediated immune responses but left TIV-induced responses unaltered which is corroborated by studies that show that Spn can impact LAIV-induced responses in the human nasal microbiome as it develops cellular and adaptive immunity to the bacteria in the site of the attenuated influenza viruses replication ^{49,62}.

We also showed that – in contrary to published results of immune responses 10 days ³⁷¹ and 6 weeks after vaccination in mice ³⁷²– the numbers of CD3⁺, CD4⁺ and CD8⁺ T-cells in the lung were similar between TIV and LAIV vaccinated subjects.

In the lungs, LAIV prevailed over TIV on cellular induced responses. LAIV nasal administration led to increased lung levels of TNF- α and IFN- γ producing CD4⁺ T-cells, including TRMs, as well TNF- α producing CD8⁺ T-cells, upon in vitro stimulation. Interestingly, we observed that influenza-specific CD4⁺ T-cell lung responses were more pronounced in individuals not colonised with Spn at

the time of vaccination. Similarly, there was a higher proportion of IFN- γ producing TCR- $\gamma\delta^+$ T-cells in the non-colonised LAIV recipients. Moreover, LAIV was associated with increased frequencies of lung regulatory T-cells only in the absence of nasal Spn colonisation. On the other hand, LAIV-vaccinated individuals who were colonised by Spn elicited IL-17A-producing CD8⁺ T-cells which is consistent with findings in previous studies with humans ²⁸⁷ and mice in which this cytokine was essential for bacterial control and clearance during wild-type influenza and Spn co-infection ²⁵⁶.

Humoral responses were highly induced by TIV, whereas LAIV conferred an overall modest antibody induction. Systemically, TIV elicited influenza virus-specific IgG responses, which were not observed in the LAIV vaccinated arm. In the nose, TIV conferred predominantly IgG induction, while LAIV was mainly associated with high levels of IgA. Colonisation of the nasopharynx with Spn at the time of LAIV administration impaired the induction of mucosal IgA to influenza in the nose, but not in the lung.

LAIV in adults, unlike children, does not confer superior protection compared to TIV ¹⁴. This is probably related to the life-long accumulation of influenza immunity through natural exposure and previous vaccinations, which can prevent the nasal replication of the attenuated virus and shorten the viral replication cycle ³⁷³. Consequently, LAIV may elicit less potent responses in adults compared to children, thus any extrapolation from findings in adults to children, the target population for this vaccine, must be done with caution.

Our finding that concurrent Spn colonisation could inhibit LAIV-induced immune responses is a variable that should be taken into account when evaluating LAIV efficacy, as children display high rates of Spn colonisation ^{374,375}.

This finding would potentially explain why one study in Senegal showed no efficacy of vaccination with LAIV ³⁷⁶, as Spn colonisation rates are higher in low-income countries (up to 93% of children colonised by Spn) ³⁷⁷. The impaired LAIV-induced immunity during established Spn colonisation was associated with a lack of a pro-inflammatory response in the nasal lumen following LAIV vaccination. A possible explanation for this is that Spn colonisation affects local immune and epithelial cell responses upon LAIV vaccination, which could diminish immune cells infiltration and antigen presenting cells (APC) activation, impacting on the downstream memory responses ^{282,378}. Alternatively, it is possible that Spn colonisation interferes with the viral replication cycle ^{256,379}.

Ideally, an effective and broadly protective influenza vaccine should induce both humoral and cellular immunity. Whereas antibody responses to influenza show some degree of strain cross-reactivity ^{380,381} they are insufficient to provide heterosubtypic, cross-strain influenza protection ^{382,383}. Recent data from natural history cohort studies have focused on the potential of T-cells as key players in mediating heterosubtypic immunity in humans ^{124,384}. We observed that even in the absence of vaccination, healthy adults showed CD4⁺ T-cell responses to influenza stimulation, which likely reflects their lifelong exposure to influenza viruses. The use of purified influenza antigens included adjuvant, to measure cellular responses, would possibly lead to greater T-cells responses. Our results demonstrated that LAIV induced influenza-specific cytokine-producing CD8⁺ and CD4⁺ T-cells, including TRM in the lung. As part of T-cell immune response to influenza, recent studies have elucidated the importance of TRM in protection of mucosal barrier tissues against pathogen challenge by producing chemokines for cell recruitment ³⁸⁵. It has been shown that TRM T-cells provide superior

protection to influenza infection when compared with circulating T-cells³⁸⁶. By seeding the lungs with these cells, it is possible to establish long-term heterosubtypic protection to influenza ^{387,388}.

We have also demonstrated that, in volunteers not colonised by Spn, LAIV increased levels of T-regs in the lung compared to unvaccinated individuals. CD4⁺ T-regs contribute to homeostasis of the immune system, controlling infection by respiratory viruses and avoiding tissue damage⁹² and secondary bacterial infection ³⁸⁹. As a result of recurrent exposure to virus and bacteria, CD4⁺ T-regs increase in frequency with age ³⁹⁰. For this reason, our findings in adults might underestimate the effect of LAIV on frequency of T-regs in the lung of children.

In conclusion, using a controlled human infection model at a known time relative to vaccination, this study was able to highlight differences in immunogenicity between LAIV and TIV at relevant mucosal sites. Moreover, we identified Spn colonisation as an important variable in LAIV-induced immunity.

CHAPTER SEVEN

GENERAL DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

The investigation of host immune responses to pathogens during attenuated influenza virus (LAIV) and Spn co-infection in the nasopharynx is essential for deeper understanding of interactions between host, attenuated virus and bacteria. These insights clarify effects of co-infection on viral and bacterial clearance, acquisition, replication, transmission as well as efficacy of the attenuated influenza vaccine to ultimately to promote better immunisation approaches to the population. In humans, wild-type influenza virus can predispose to secondary Spn colonisation and, likewise, the bacteria can induce viral shedding³⁹¹ which, in turn, deregulates inflammatory responses and leads to loss of control of Spn density³⁹². Interestingly, in murine models of co-infection, sialic acid cleaved from host's epithelium by the influenza virus is consumed by Spn promoting growth⁷⁵ which indicates the need for further research in humans in order to corroborate the hypothesis.

In this study, LAIV-induced influenza-specific immune responses were compared to TIV using nasal wash, nasosorption, nasal cells, BAL and serum of healthy adult volunteers. In addition, by inoculating individuals with live Spn (EHPC), we assessed how responses to LAIV affect Spn colonisation as well as how the bacteria affects vaccine immunogenicity. The primary underlying mechanisms of cell recruitment, cytokine and antibody production were also investigated. Altogether, this thesis is part of the largest conducted vaccine testing studies using a controlled human infection model as well as the first controlled challenge studies in humans using two live pathogens to directly assess the impact of a vaccine on microbiota. In short, we observed that different profiles of responses are observed in TIV- and LAIV-vaccinated as well as LAIV-

vaccinated volunteers who became colonised by Spn when compared to non-colonised.

7.2 Summary and discussion of findings

To gather knowledge about LAIV and how the attenuated influenza virus vaccination affects Spn colonisation is essential for accurate assessment of vaccine immunogenicity in humans and its effect on the nasopharyngeal microbiota and host immunity. This work was based on previous studies with wild-type influenza virus and Spn co-infection that show it to be associated with increased bacterial nasal load in mice ^{275,281,393} and humans ^{256,266}. Importantly, LAIV administration has also been correlated with increase in Spn density in mice ^{75,76} and humans ^{318,394}, however the underlying mechanisms were still not elucidated.

Here, we showed that LAIV in healthy adults induces inflammatory responses in the nasopharynx, including cytokines that regulate adaptive immunity as previously described in other studies ³⁹⁵. Importantly, our results confirm that the attenuated virus elicits many of the same immune responses as the wild-type influenza, such as induction of cytokines IL-6 ²⁶² and IL-1 β ³⁹⁶.

In addition, in the lung LAIV alone still induced moderate antibody levels against influenza after 30 days post-vaccination. Moreover, T-cell responses were increased with higher percentages of CD4⁺ T-cells producing IFN- γ as well as CD4⁺ and CD8⁺ T-cells producing TNF- α , two cytokines also induced in the murine lung by LAIV administration ³⁷². Additionally, TRM T-cells, which persist in the lung for long periods after infection ³⁸⁸ - were shown to have an important role for lung cytokine response against the attenuated influenza virus, similar to results from studies with the wild type virus ^{386,397}.

Models of co-infection with the attenuated influenza virus and Spn show induction of adaptive immune responses in the nose and lung to achieve viral and bacterial clearance to be necessary during co-infection ¹⁸⁸. In this thesis, we showed that LAIV induces a state of inflammation in the nasopharynx independent of Spn that predisposes the host to colonisation. In addition, it is possible that vaccination also causes epithelial damage, dysfunction or denudation in the colonised nose as indicated by increases in cytokines that regulate cell growth and that corroborates results in murine models with wild-type influenza and Spn co-infection ^{193,271,398}. Furthermore, we have shown that in the lung co-infection of attenuated influenza virus and Spn does not elicit IL-17A-producing CD8⁺ T-cells, which opposes previous studies with wild-type influenza ^{256,287}.

However, when compared to non-colonised volunteers, our results show that some of the host immune responses were affected by LAIV which corroborated murine models of wild-type influenza virus and Spn co-infection that, likewise, demonstrate impaired induction of anti-inflammatory cytokines ^{127,399}, of monocyte recruitment ¹⁸⁶, of influenza specific antibodies ¹⁸⁸ and of neutrophils activation ¹⁹². Notably, we demonstrated for the first time that LAIV vaccination in Spn colonised volunteers impaired activation of T-cells in the nasopharynx.

Additionally, LAIV impaired the induction of chemoattractant to monocytes such as MCP-1 ⁴⁰⁰ and RANTES ^{401,402} in the Spn colonised nasopharynx, possibly limiting monocyte recruitment to the nose as observed in our results. These results confirm the hypothesis that unbalanced cytokines affect recruitment of immune cells during Spn co-infection with the attenuated influenza

virus similarly to the wild-type virus ⁴⁰³. Furthermore, the impairment of MCP-1 can also explain decreased induction in levels of IL-1 β whereas the impairment of RANTES can clarify reduced T-cell activation ⁴⁰⁴ demonstrated in our results.

It is important to notice that previous studies have demonstrated that Spn colonisation induces cytokines TNF- α ¹²² in the nasopharynx, however our results show that LAIV affects Spn-induced TNF- α , possibly affecting control of the infection. Moreover, here we confirmed that LAIV induces specific antibody responses against influenza characterised by IgG and particularly IgA in nasal wash ²⁴⁰, however, we showed for the first time that LAIV-induced IgA production was reduced in the Spn colonised nasopharynx which adds to the uncontrolled bacterial growth ³⁷⁰ by neither neutralising antigens or preventing the attenuated influenza virus and Spn adherence to epithelial cells ²⁹

Importantly, the detected LAIV impact in the lung of colonised volunteers corroborate wild-type influenza virus and Spn co-infection animal models in which influenza-specific IgG and CD4⁺ T-cells were impaired when compared to non-colonised individuals ²⁷⁰. However, our results in adults do not confirm murine studies in which CD4⁺ T-reg are increased in co-infected animals ¹⁸⁸.

In summary, we demonstrated that LAIV induces an inflammatory state in the nasopharynx of healthy adults. On one hand, the immune deregulation caused by LAIV vaccination in Spn colonised individuals caused substantial inflammation but, on the other hand, impaired responses that control viral and bacterial clearance.

7.3 Limitations of LAIV research in humans

Despite its proven success in preventing infectious diseases, the vast majority of vaccines used today for human immunisation have been developed empirically, at first often with little understanding of the immune mechanisms by which they induce protective immunity. This work has uncovered some limitations in the assessment of immunogenicity and research of LAIV-induced responses which will contribute to more accurate understanding of the vaccine as well as to shed a light on the impact of vaccination on other pathogens, specifically Spn.

Importantly, LAIV vaccination in adults induces different immune responses compared to children¹⁴ - the target population for this vaccine - as a result of induced neutralising antibodies due to previous exposure to influenza virus during their lives. Continuous exposure to influenza virus can prevent the nasal replication of the attenuated virus contained in the LAIV³⁷³ as well as elicit natural immunity against influenza antigens. Consequently, extrapolation of these results to the paediatric population must be done with caution especially regarding T-regs, recruitment of monocytes and activation of neutrophils, already proven to not be analogous to adults.

In addition, the relationship between LAIV and Spn colonisation rates presented in this thesis uses nasal wash and classical microbiology. Other techniques or devices for assessment of colonisation rates such as nasosorption⁴⁰⁵, nasal curettage⁴⁰⁶ and bronchoabsorption⁴⁰⁷ were not validated and should be compared to this thesis results with caution.

7.4 Future research directions and questions derived from this thesis

Most studies on co-infection of LAIV and Spn have been done in animal models. Here we have shown discrepancies in results when comparing LAIV or wild-type influenza virus and Spn co-infection results from murine models with human models. The extrapolation of immune responses between murine models and humans can be problematic since mice doesn't represent the complexity of microbiome and immunity of the human host ⁴⁰⁸. As noted by Ferreira, Jambo and Gordon ⁵³, humans are natural hosts of Spn and each individual has been in contact and colonised numerous times throughout their life while mice models are pathogen-free and only susceptible to the bacteria in laboratorial conditions, skewing the results. In addition, chinchillas and ferrets are also used as co-infection models but likewise present great difficulties to confirm similar results in humans ²⁶⁰.

Moreover, to study co-infection of the attenuated influenza virus and Spn, we have used only one Spn serotype 6B isolate, which limits the scope of our results. Future studies using other isolates with variable invasive phenotypes could answer how generalizable these findings are across serotypes.

In addition, further studies into mucosal immunology using different techniques for sample collection can validate the results found in this thesis and enable further discoveries on patient groups who are unable to undergo the procedures proposed. Importantly, methods for collection of nasal lavage, nasal cells and lung lavage used in this thesis (NW, nasal curettage, nasosorption and BAL) can be compared to alternative techniques such as nasosorption with different synthetic absorptive matrix, bronchial brush and bronchoabsorption.

Moreover, serial nasosorption can be performed for assessment of nasal cytokines, antibodies and viral load kinetics. For instance, studies of early hours kinetics can be done with this technique as well as NW and saliva 409 for further understanding mucosal events since many cytokine responses are concentrated in the first 48 hours of immunological response.

Notably, it is critical to continue the assessment of the best sampling device and site to measure Spn colonisation and bacterial density. This can be done by comparison of sampling and analysis methods, for instance nasosorption results against NW, nasal transcriptomics of nasal curettage results against flow cytometry as well as bronchoabsorption results against BAL.

It is important to notice that methodologies such as nasal curettage can take into consideration the rate of ciliated respiratory epithelial cells to squamous stratified epithelial cells as to assure the results accuracy of cell recruitment to the mucosa.

Continuous development of the EHPC method as well as other multiple pathogens challenge models are essential to elucidate the potential for viral pandemics, secondary infections and interactions between bacteria, virus and human host as well as identification of health indicators and therapies for prevention of high morbidity scenarios. Furthermore, studies focused on analysis of the 4 specific virus strains contained in the LAIV can validate novel combinations of viruses to be added in the annual influenza vaccine.

Table 9. Suggestions for future studies, method validation and development of challenge models.

Field of research	Suggested studies	Specific suggestions
Alternative methods for sample collection	Development of alternative sampling methods for different patient groups (smokers, elderly, asthmatics, children).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bronchial brush. • Bronchoabsorption; • Serial nasosorption;
Challenge models for vaccine testing	Development of a human nasal challenge model with LAIV and viral vaccines to measure responses to nasal strain-specific viruses with more detailed mucosal kinetics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on collection of serial nasosorption, nasal scrape and bronchoabsorption; • LAIV and novel viral vaccines studies; • Topical nasal vaccines.
Pneumococcal serotypes	Validation of results in this thesis using different serotypes of Spn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serotypes 1, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 9V, 14, 18C, 19A, 19F, and 23F.
Point-of-care assays	Development of antibody, cytokines, viral and bacterial load indicators of healthy and unhealthy patients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cytokines and chemokines; • Nasal mucosal antibodies (IgG and IgA);

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spn, bacteria and microbiome; • Viral infections.
Secondary viral infections	<p>Study of the relationship between respiratory and gastrointestinal pathogens and human microbiome in diseases in which virus are the main cause of hospitalising exacerbations and mortality. In addition, studies on the propensity of different viruses to alter innate respiratory mucosal immunity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asthma; • Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; • Cystic fibrosis. • Idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis;
Spn density assessment	<p>Validation of novel sampling and measurement methods of Spn colonisation and density.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BAL; • Bronchial brushing; • Nasal curettage; • Nasal curettage followed by transcriptomics.
Validation of results	<p>Validation of this thesis results using different sampling techniques.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bronchoabsorption; ▪ Cough plates;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nasal curettage assessed by transcriptomics; ▪ Nasal swabs; ▪ Nasopharyngeal aspirates; ▪ Nasosorption for measurement of Spn density; ▪ Nasosorption with different synthetic absorptive matrix; ▪ Other methods of nasal lavage; ▪ Collection of saliva.
Viral challenge models	Development of experimental challenge models using virus besides influenza.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRV; • RSV.

7.5 Conclusion

LAIV vaccination remains efficient in the long term as it protects children and elderly from flu with subclinical side effects that usually only affects hosts that

lack preformed virus antibodies ³⁹⁵. Importantly, LAIV vaccination protects the host from future virus infections thus preventing a secondary Spn colonisation ²⁷⁴.

Our finding that Spn colonisation could inhibit LAIV-induced immune responses is a variable that should be taken into account when evaluating LAIV efficacy, as children display high rates of Spn colonisation ^{374,375}. As colonisation rates are higher in low-income countries (up to 93% of children colonised by Spn) ³⁷⁷, these results could potentially explain one study in Senegal that showed no efficacy of vaccination with LAIV ³⁷⁶, although mismatch of circulating influenza virus strains with the vaccine was a limitation to accurate assessment.

In short, this thesis provides new topics for continuity of human research into LAIV and its relationship with the microbiota, which is necessary to further elucidate the impacts of mass immunisation with live attenuated virus vaccines especially regarding its impact on Spn density and transmission.

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