

APCN x TSN 2025

23rd Asian Pacific Congress of Nephrology

Gene, Immunology, Vast, M^Etabolism at its Finest!



2025
Dec. 5 Fri. ▶ 7 Sun.
TaiNEX 2, Taipei, Taiwan



 Dept. of Nephrology
Juntendo University

Chairs : Prof. Seung Hyeok Han and Tai-Shuan Lai

Understanding the Pathophysiology in IgA Nephropathy

了解IgA腎病變的病理生理機制

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Department of Nephrology,
Juntendo University Urayasu Hospital, Japan

COI Disclosure

I have the following relationships to disclose any COI for this research presentation within the period of 36 months

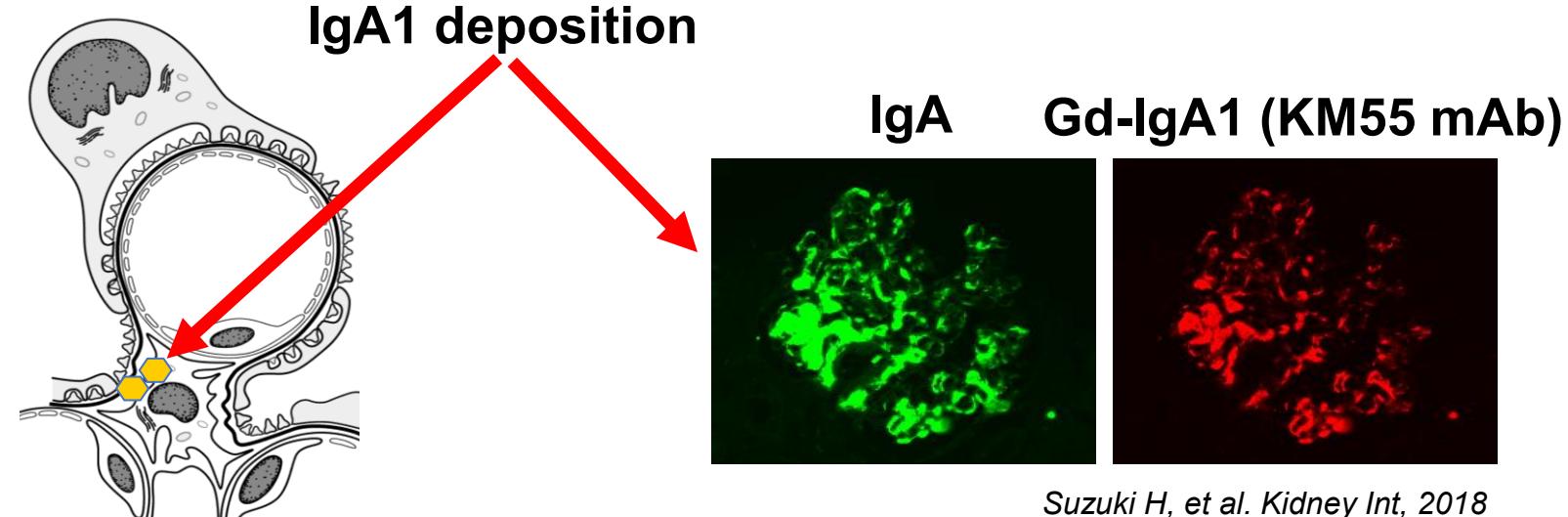
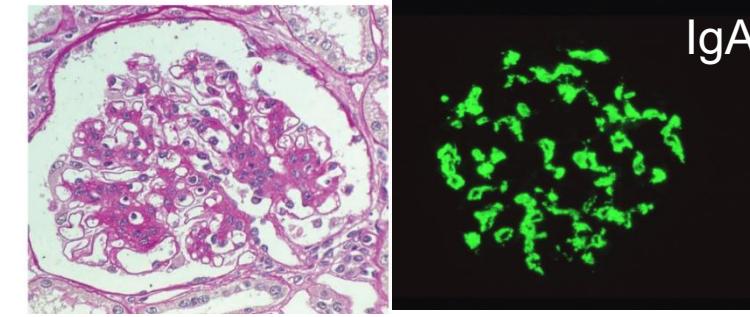
- * Employment/Leadership position/Advisory role: Otsuka Pharmaceutical, Vera therapeutics, Viatris
- * Stock ownership or options: none
- * Patent royalties/licensing fees: none
- * Honoraria: Novartis, Alexion Pharma, Chugai, Viatris
- * Research funding: Chugai Pharmaceutical, Otsuka Pharmaceutical
- * Subsidies or Donations: none
- * Endowed departments by commercial entities: none
- * Travel fees, gifts, and others: none

Outline

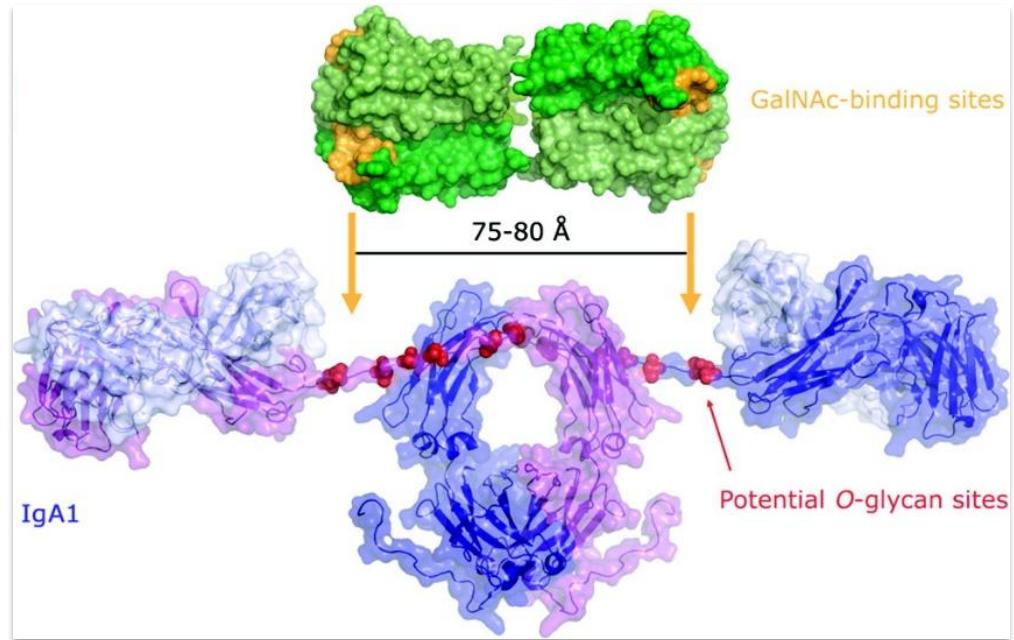
- **Mucosal immunity of IgA nephropathy**
- **Mechanisms of glomerular deposition of IgA**
- **Role of BAFF and APRIL**

IgA Nephropathy

- Described by Berger, 1968 based on “**intercapillary deposits of IgA-IgG**” (**IgA1**, not IgA2)
- Renal biopsy: IgA1 deposits, activation of mesangial cells: proliferation, ECM expansion
- Outcomes in this large IgA nephropathy cohort are generally poor with few patients expected to avoid kidney failure in their lifetime (*Pitcher D, et al CJASN 2023*).
- Recurrent after transplantation in >50% patients -> **Key molecule is extra-renal origin = circulating immune complexes**



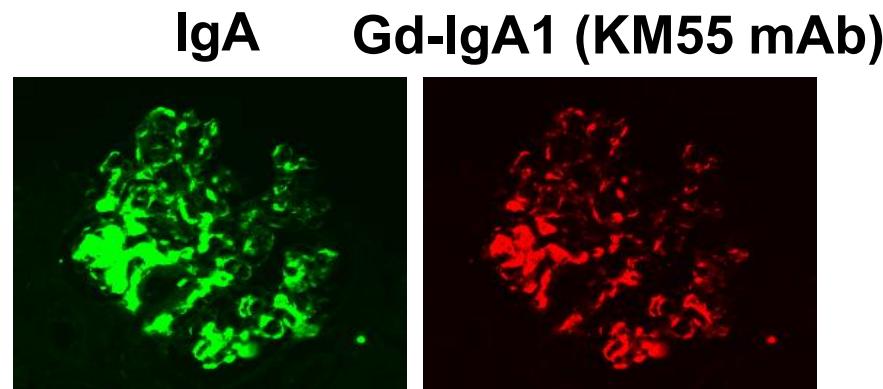
Aberrantly glycosylated IgA1



Gomes MM, Suzuki H, *Biochemistry* 49: 5671-82, 2010

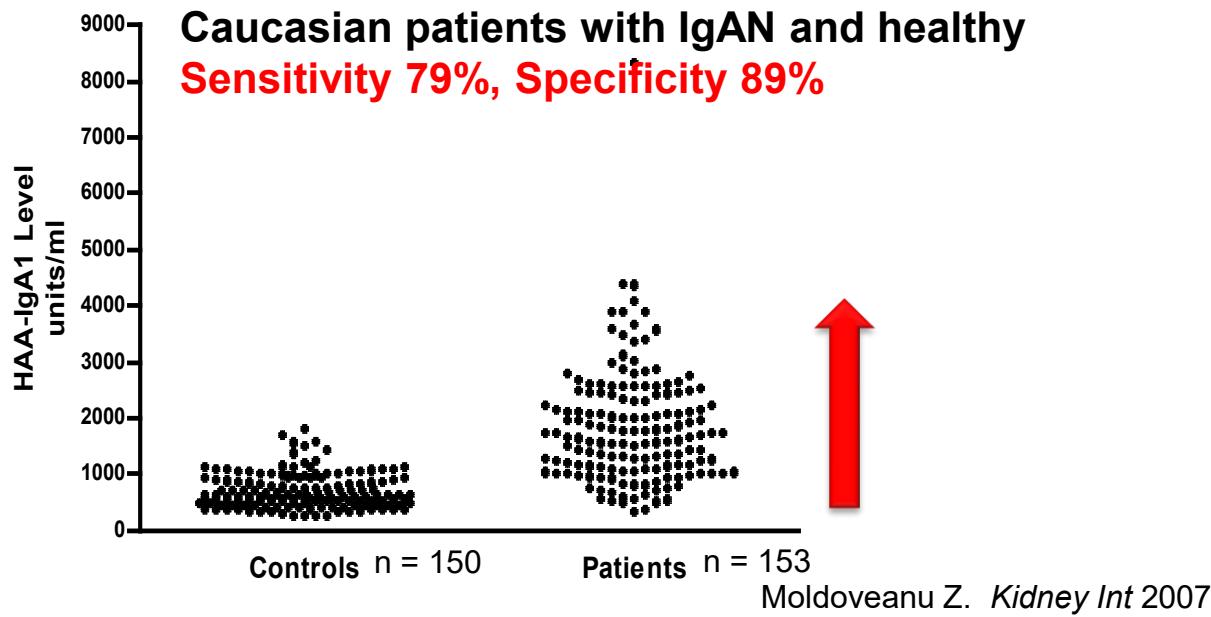
Galactose-deficient IgA1: Gd-IgA1

IgA1 in the circulation and glomerular deposits of IgAN patients is aberrantly glycosylated

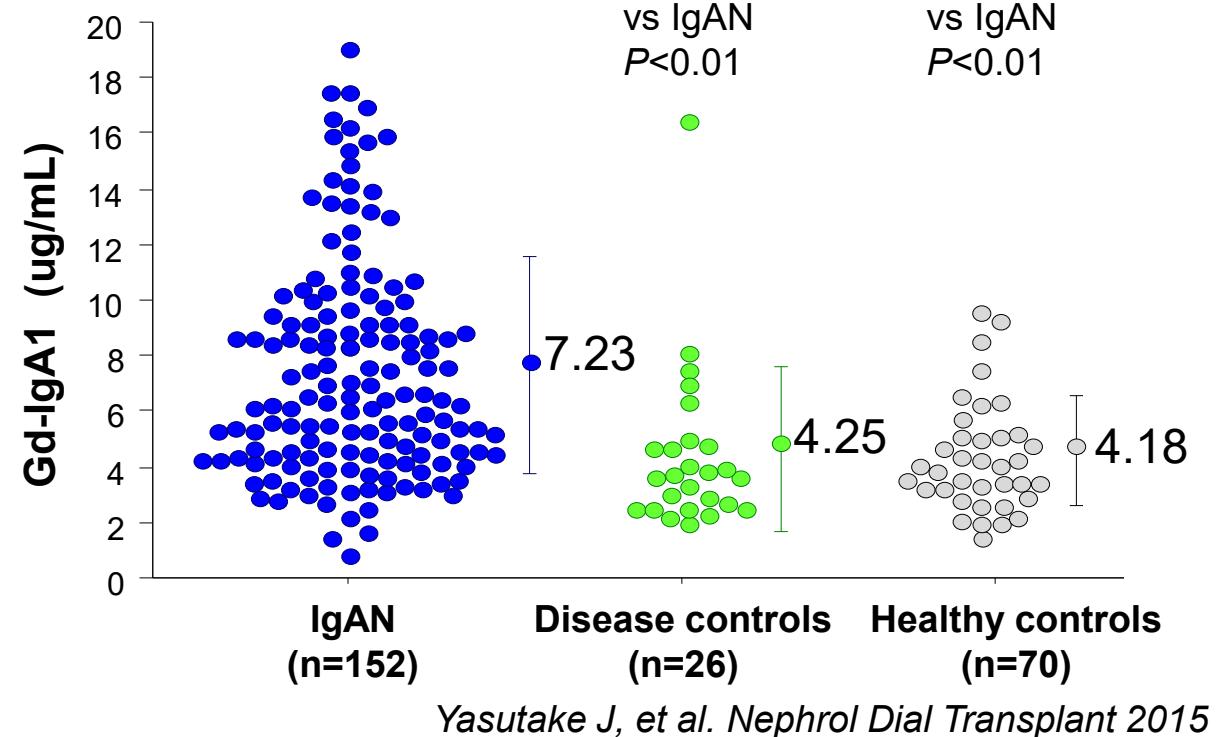
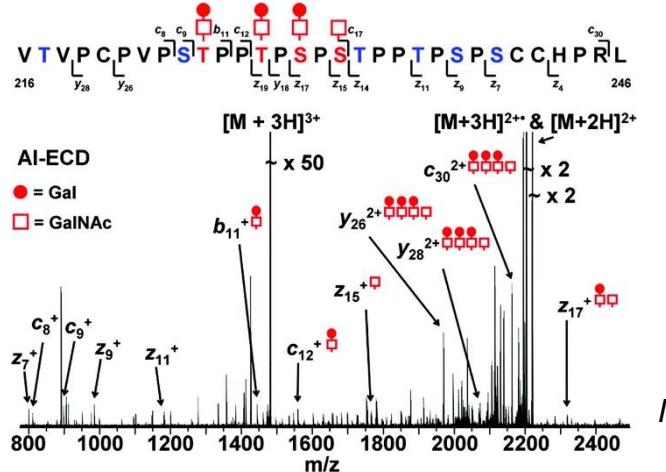


Suzuki H, et al. *Kidney Int*, 2018

Elevated levels of serum galactose-deficient IgA1 (Gd-IgA1) in IgAN



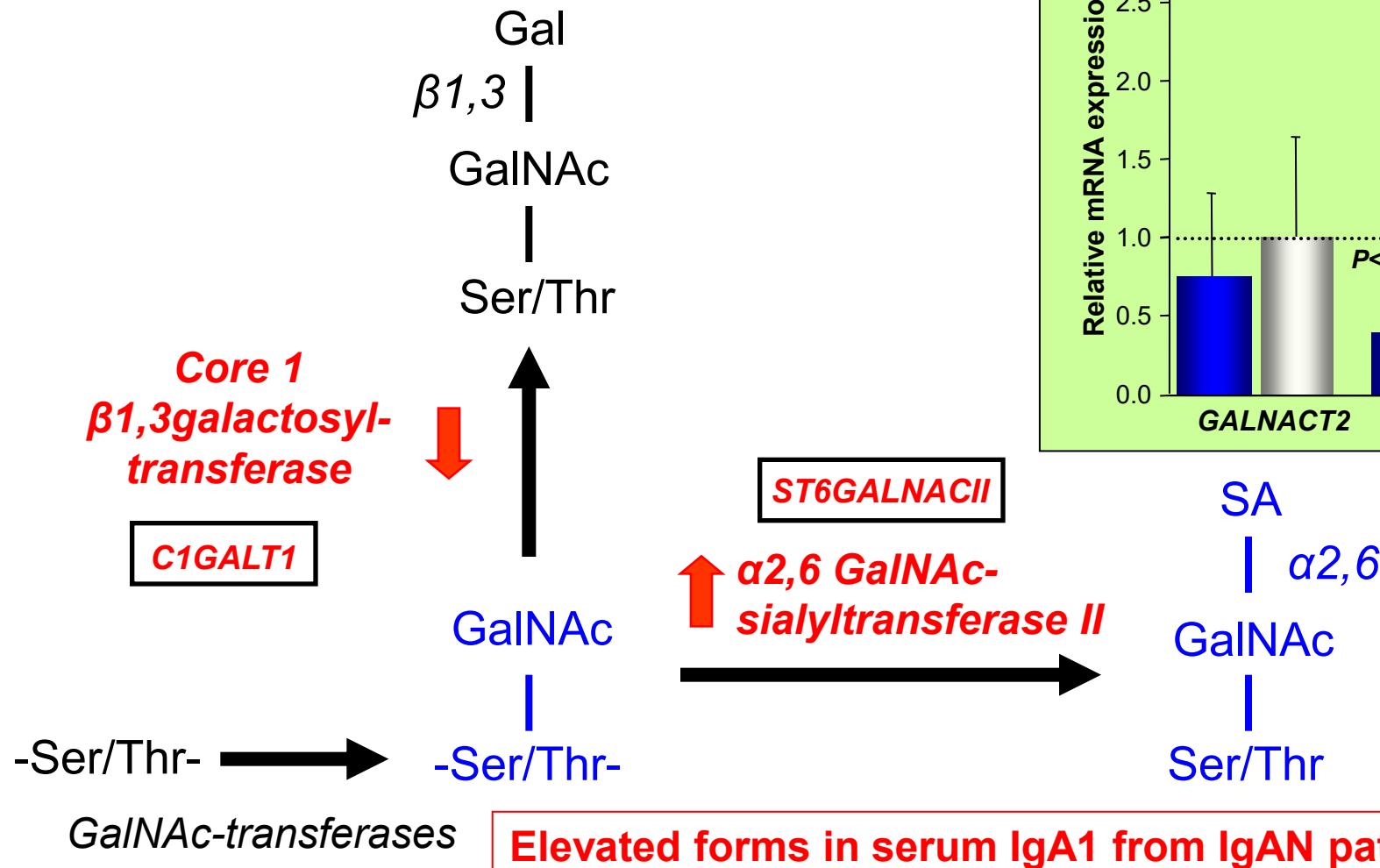
Aberrant O-Glycosylation in the IgA1 hinge region by electron capture dissociation FT-ICR mass spectrometry



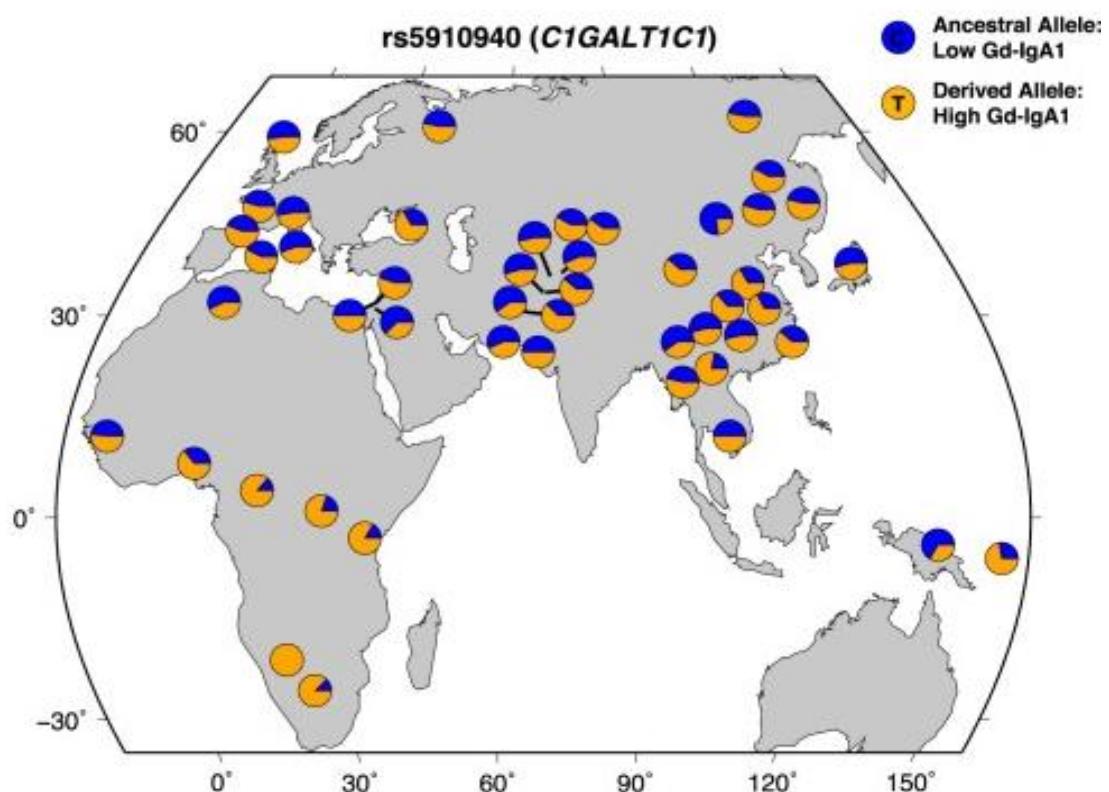
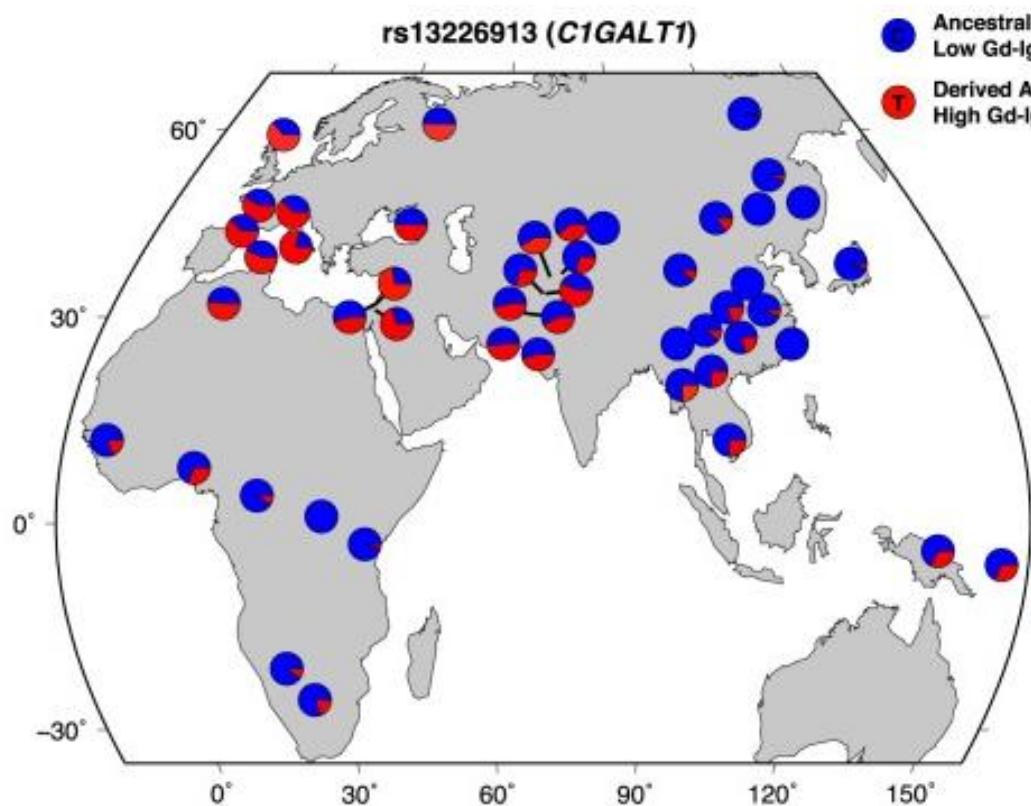
Gd-IgA1:

- ✓ mostly polymeric
- ✓ form immune complexes

Complex Changes in Biosynthetic Pathways of O-linked Glycans in IgA1-producing Cells from IgAN Patients

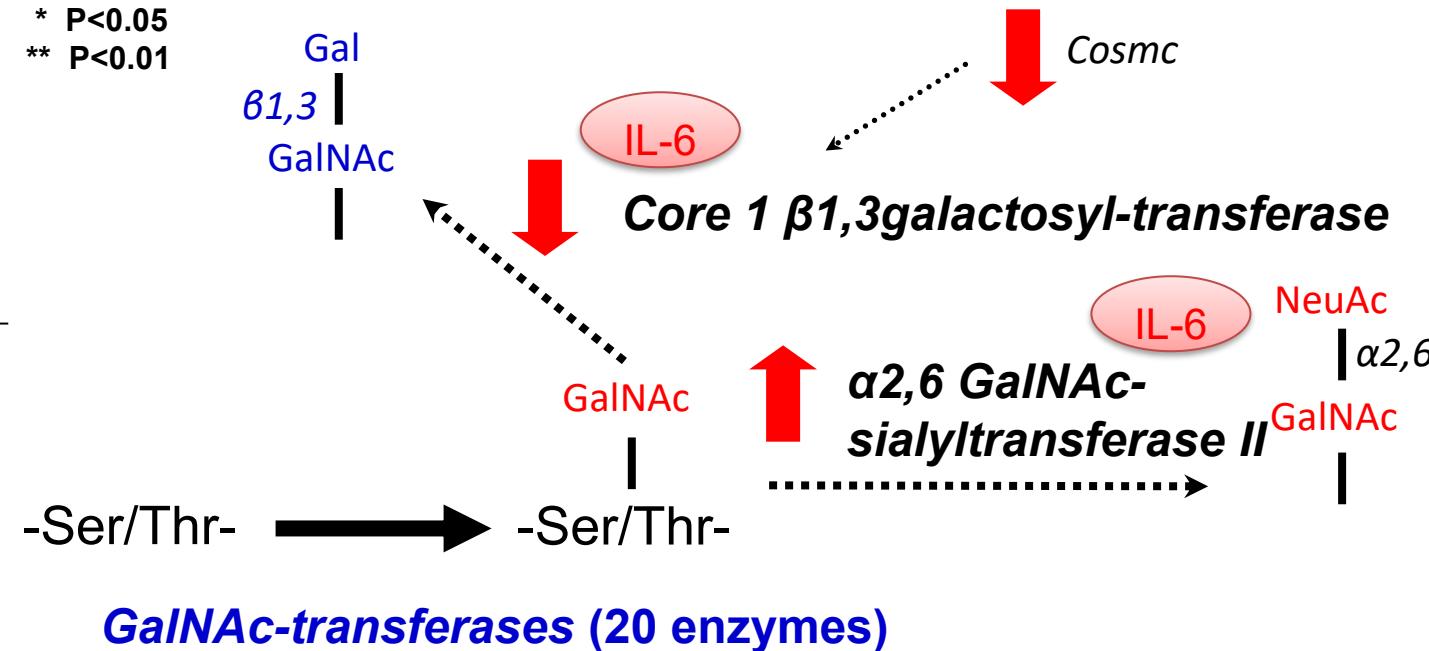
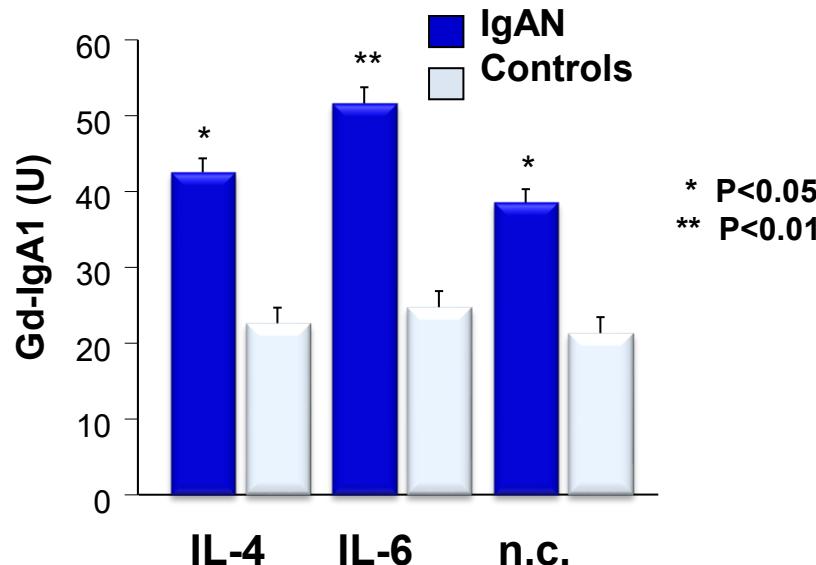


Genotypic effects and worldwide allelic frequency of glycosytransferases differ between ethnicities

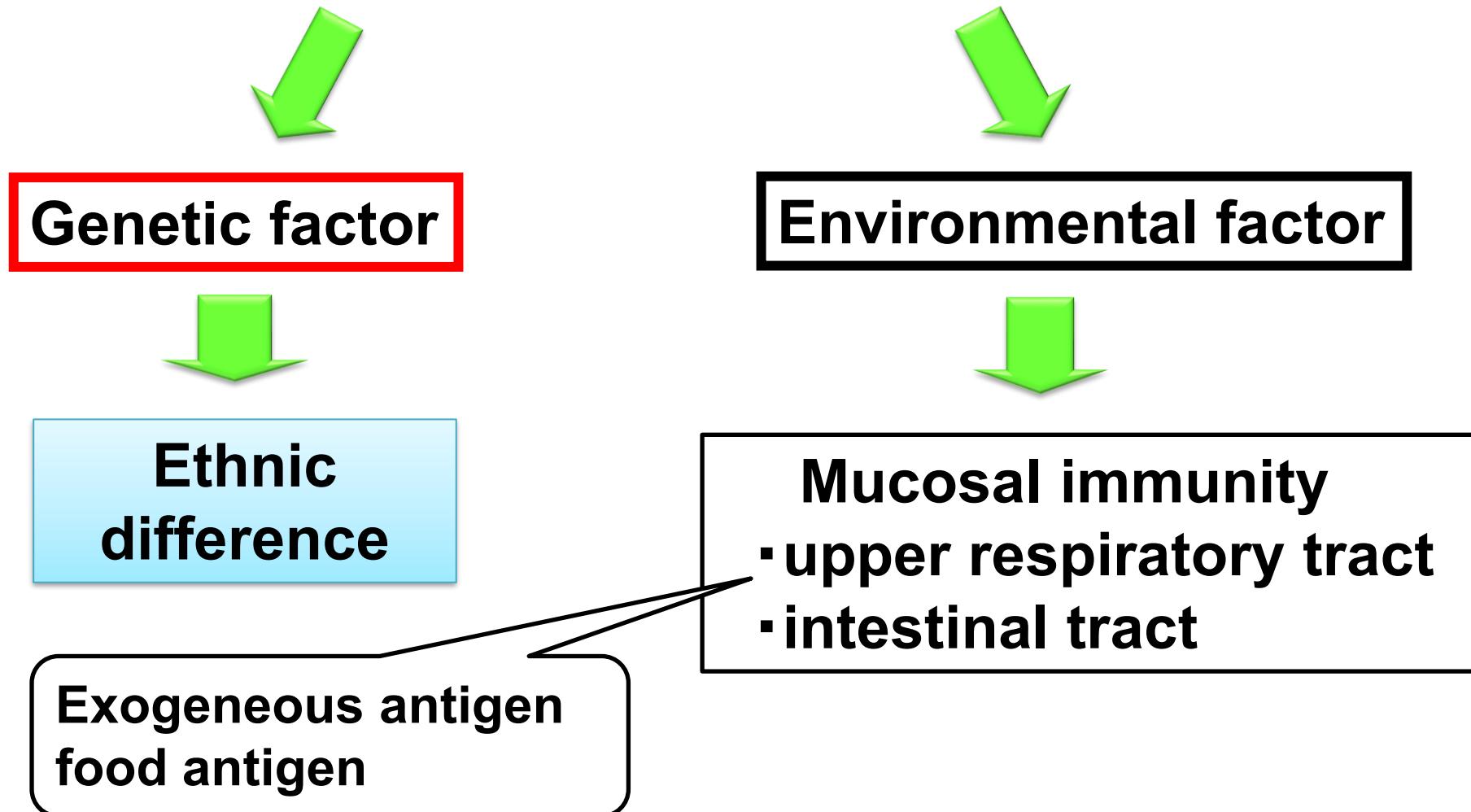


IL-6 accentuated galactose deficiency of IgA1 via coordinated modulation of key glycosyltransferases

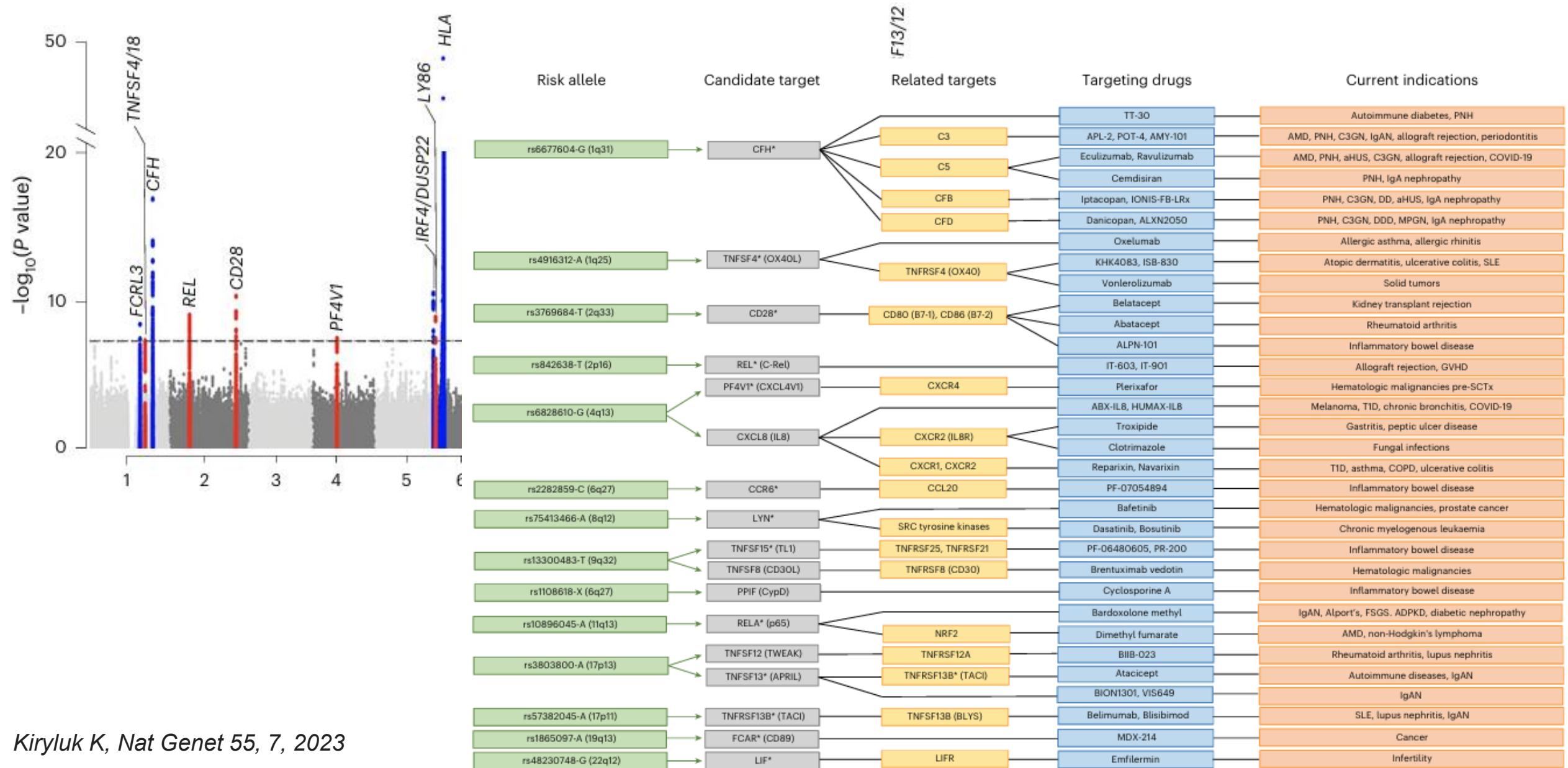
~Infection or inflammation may trigger overproduction of Gd-IgA1~



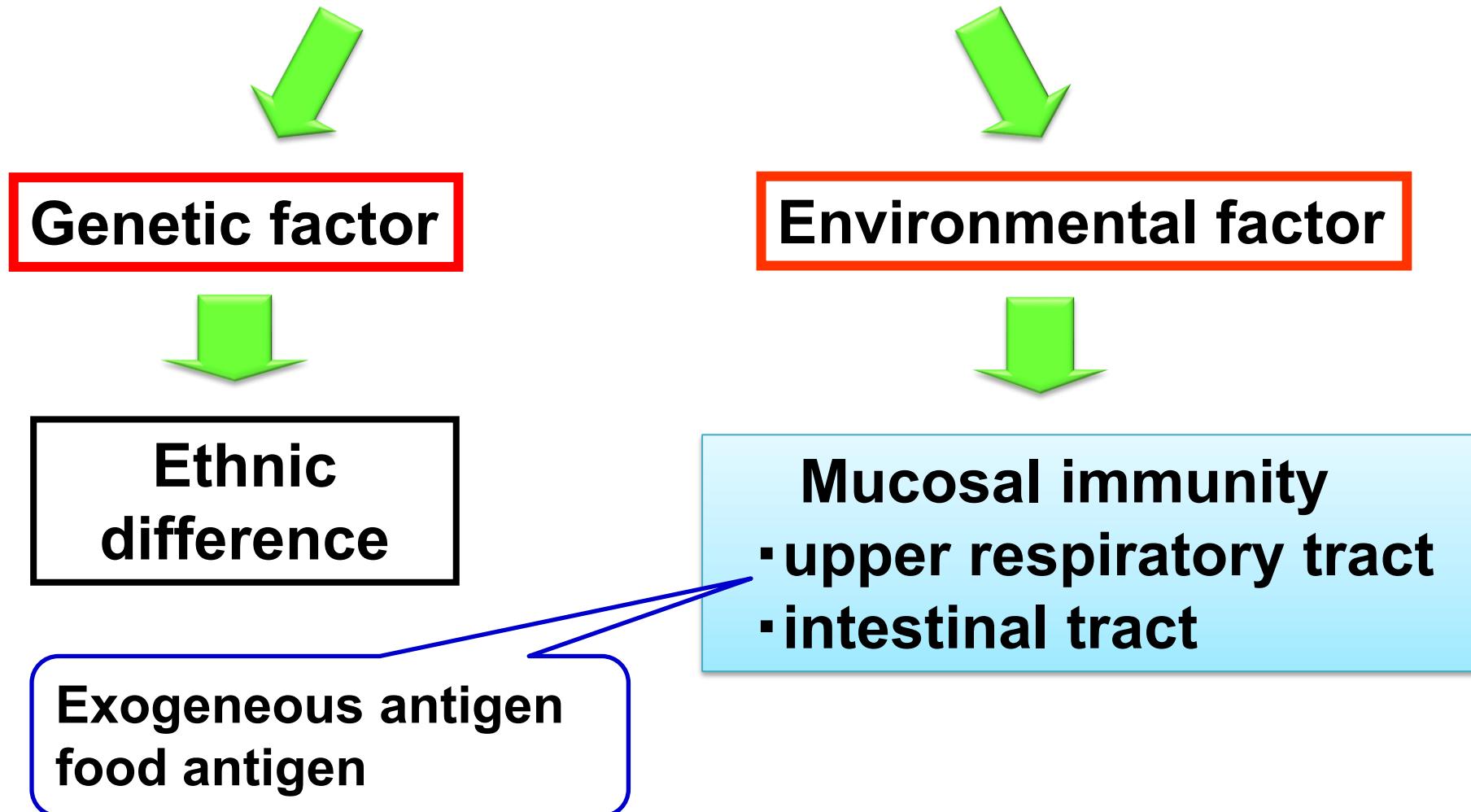
Pathogenesis of IgAN



GWAS reveals signaling pathways related to pathogenesis, enabling the identification of drug targets



Pathogenesis of IgAN



Postinfectious gross hematuria in patients with IgAN

Pharyngitis,
Tonsillitis,
Intestinal infections



1~3 days later



Gross



Dysregulation of mucosal immune system in IgAN

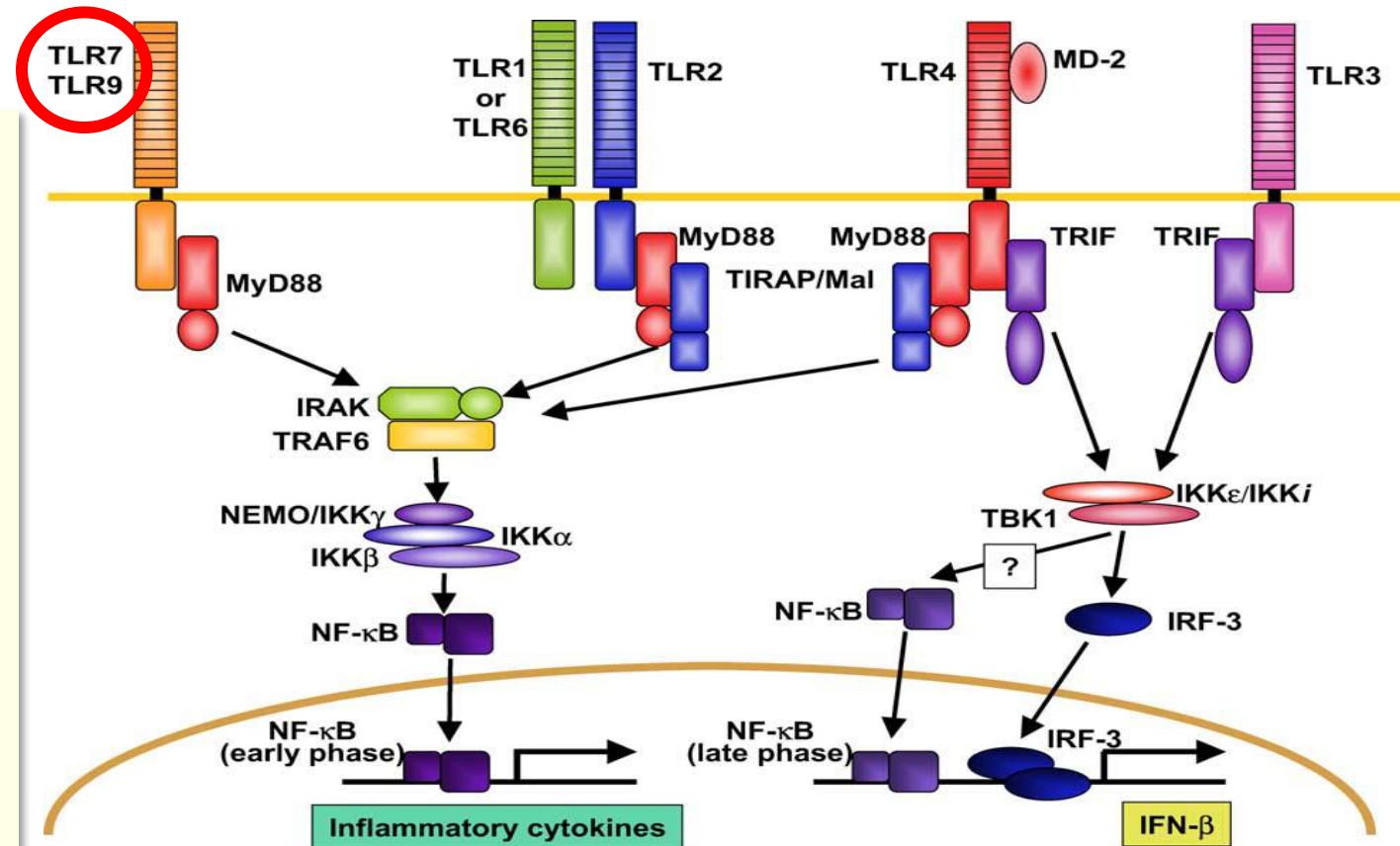
Clinical observation of episodes of gross hematuria with infections of upper respiratory tract or intestine associated with the mucosal immunity

Toll Like Receptors (TLRs)

Pattern-recognition receptors (PRR) are essential components of the innate immune response.

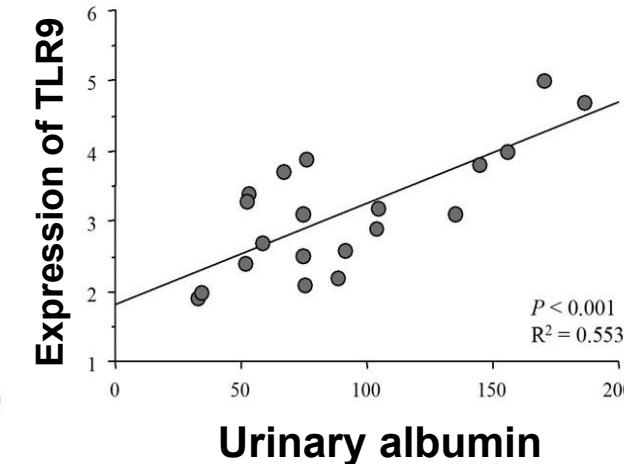
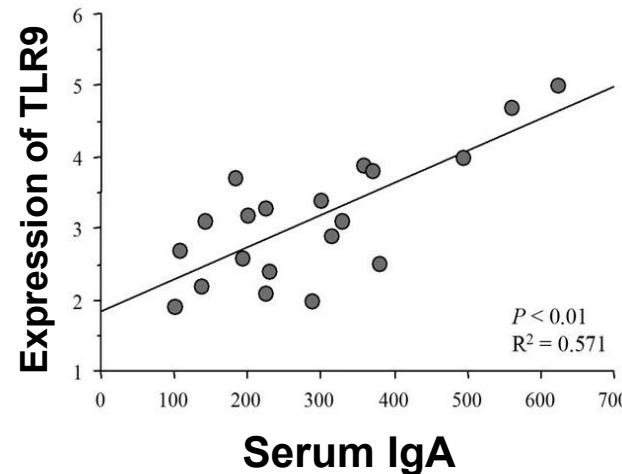
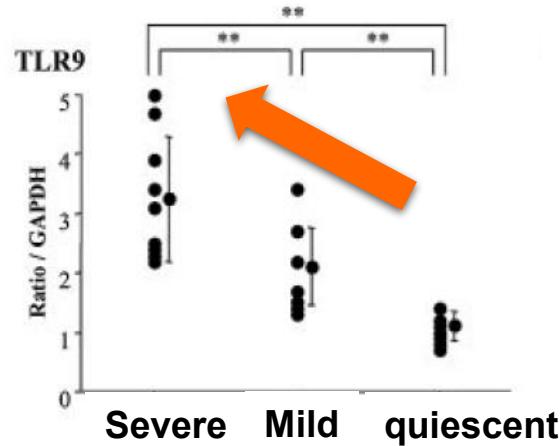
TLRs play a critical role in the early innate and mucosal immune responses to the invading pathogens.

*different TLRs are located in different membranes

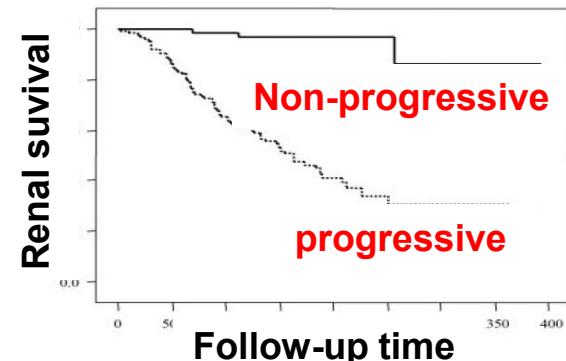


TLR9 plays a critical role in the pathogenesis of IgAN

In IgAN onset model mice, transcript levels of TLR9 were associated with the **severity of glomerulonephritis, levels of serum IgA, and urinary albumin**

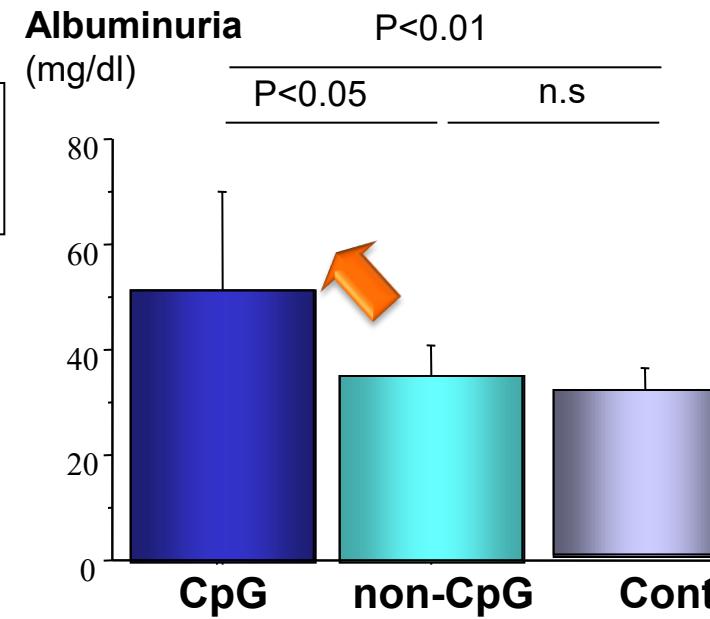
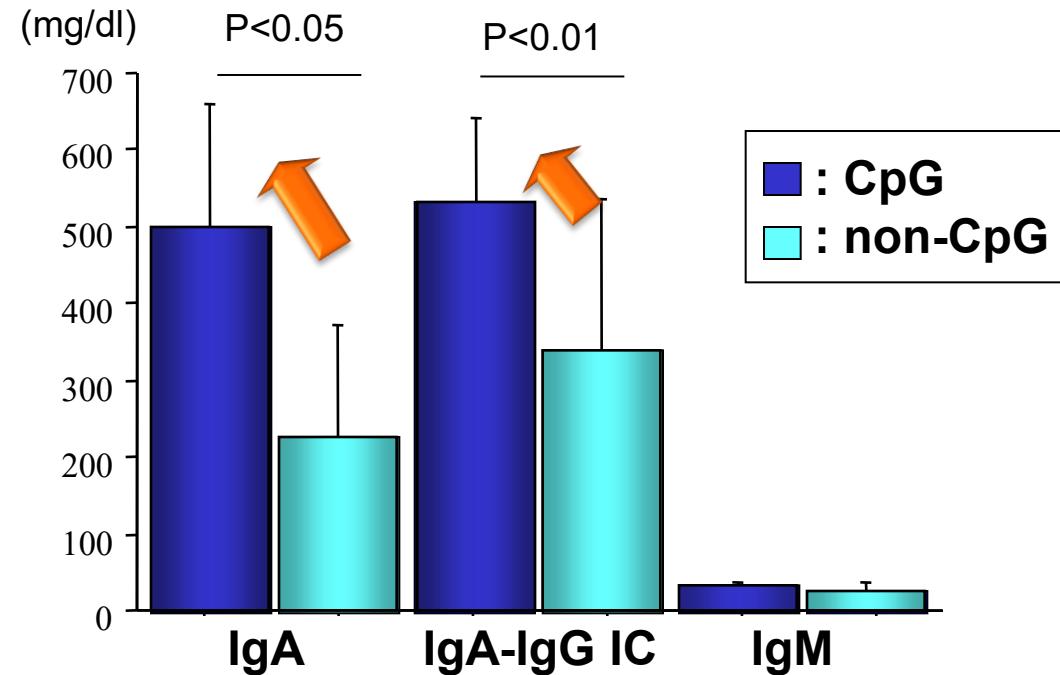
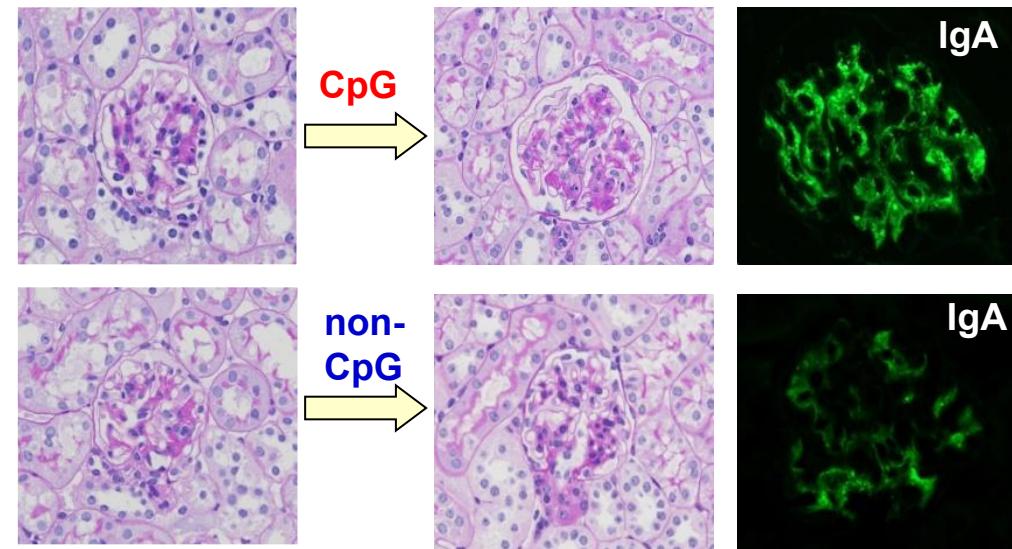


Polymorphisms of the TLR9 gene are associated with **histological severity** of patients with IgAN



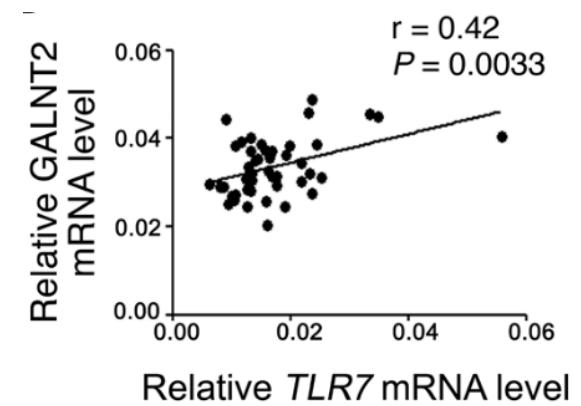
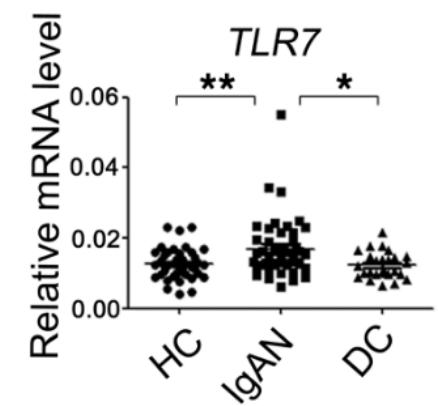
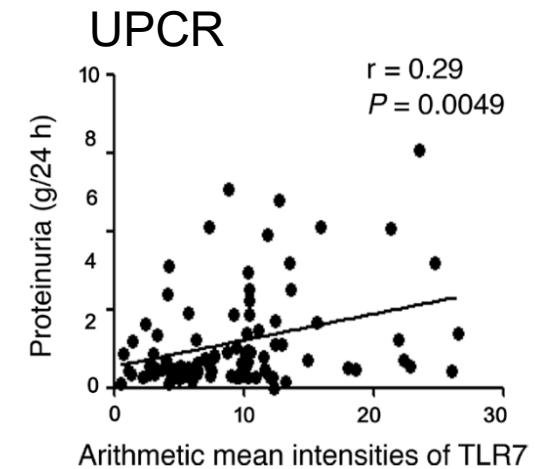
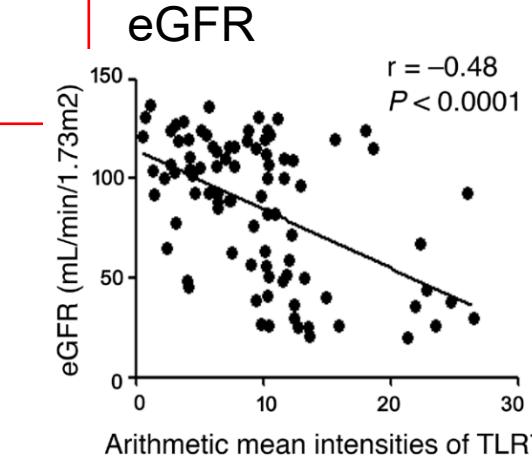
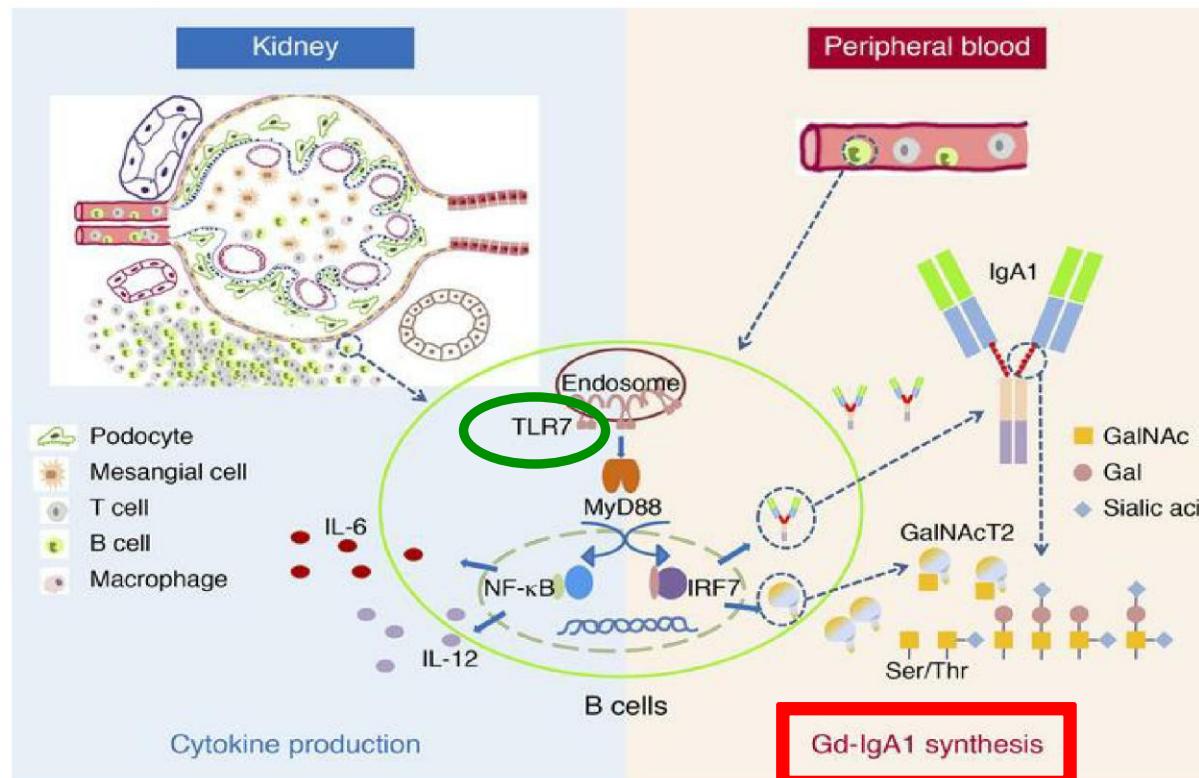
CpG Oligodeoxynucleotides (ligands for TLR9) aggravated renal injury with elevation of serum IgA and IgA-IgG IC

Before immunization 5 weeks after nasal immunization

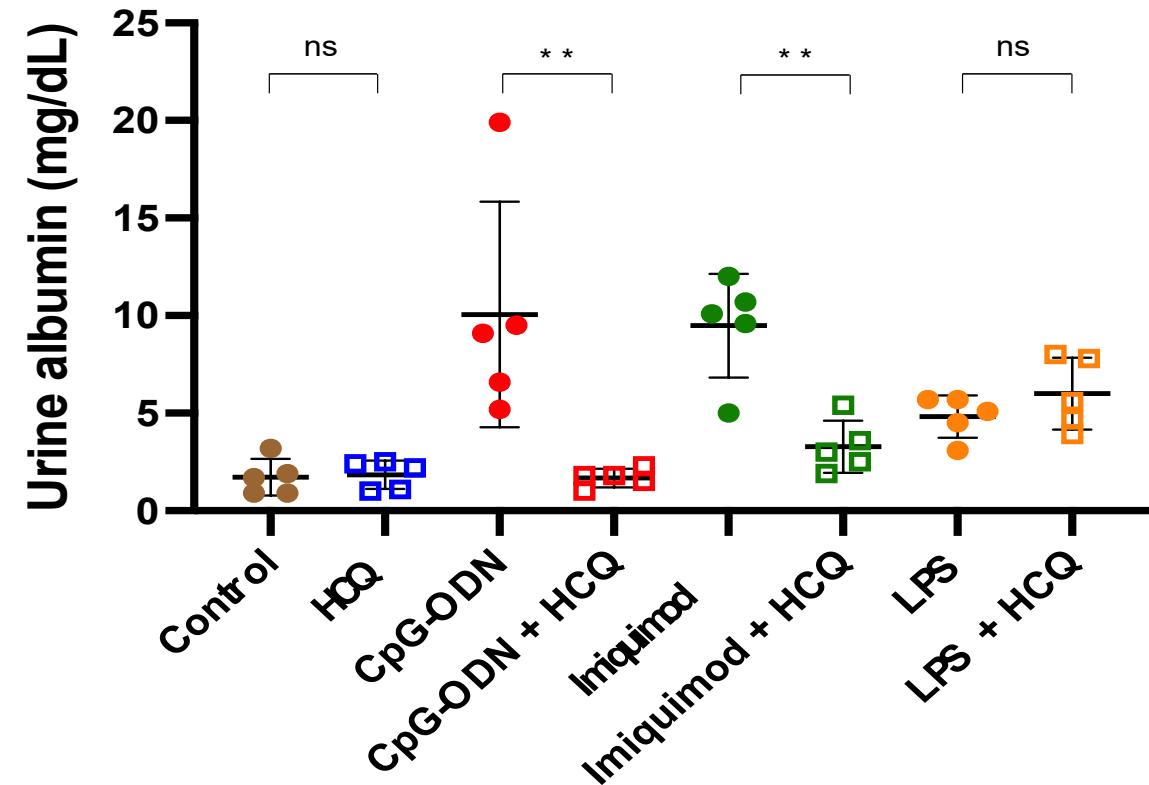
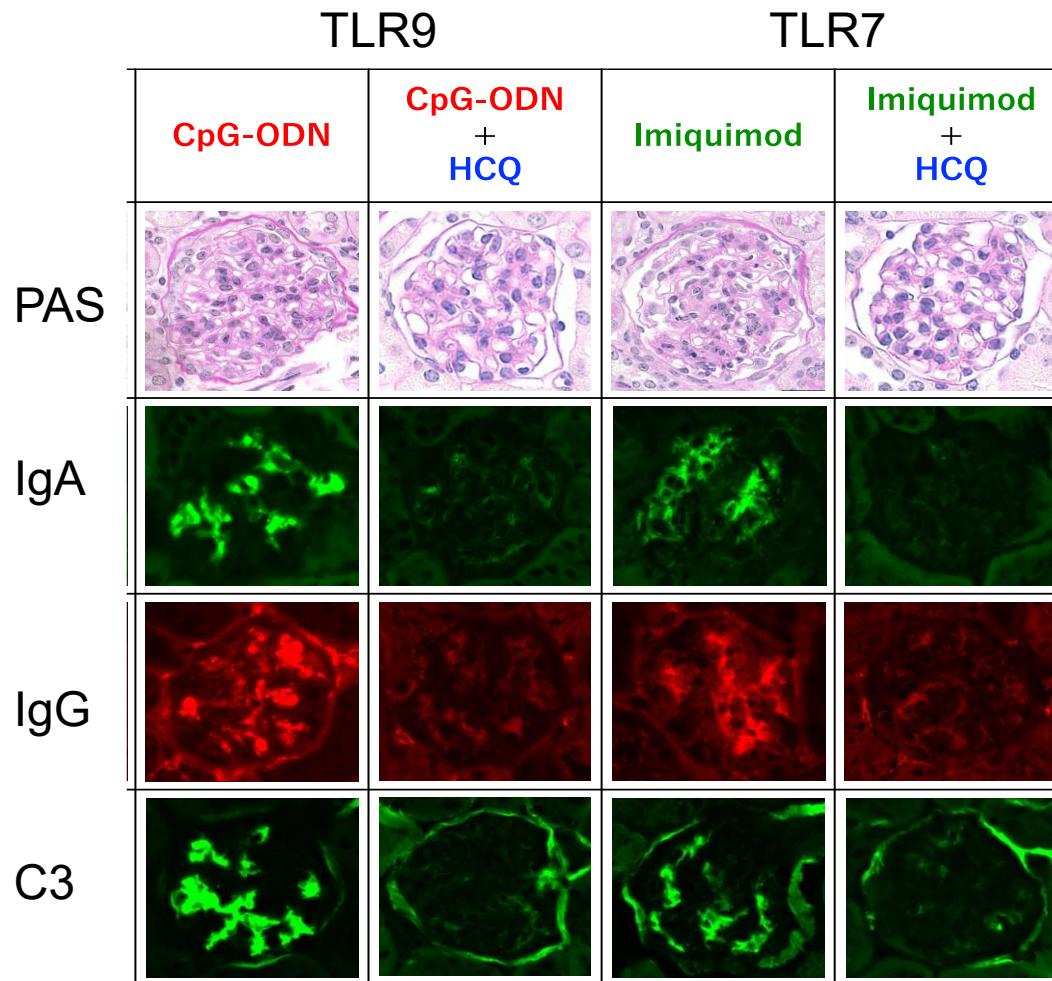


TLR7, recognizing RNA, is also involved in IgAN

TLR7 in B cells promotes renal inflammation and **Gd-IgA1 synthesis** in IgAN



- Nasal administration of CpG-ODN and imiquimod developed IgAN
- Co-administration of Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) improved glomerular deposition of IgA and C3

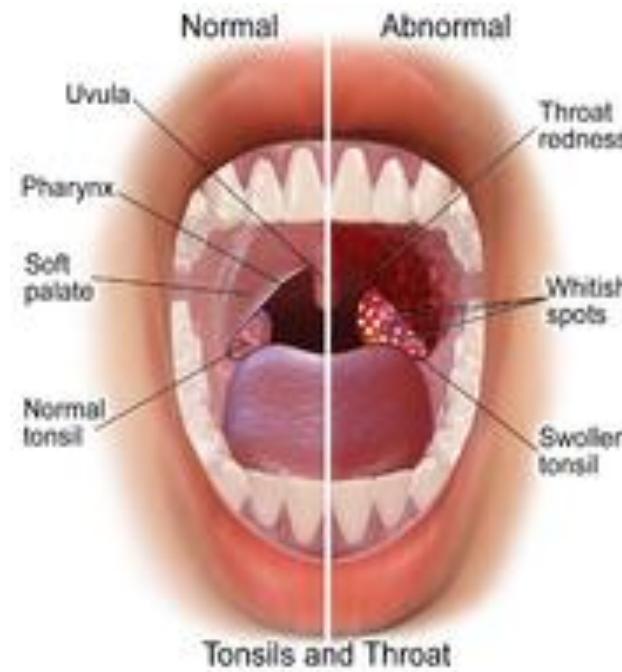


HCQ is treatment option for IgAN

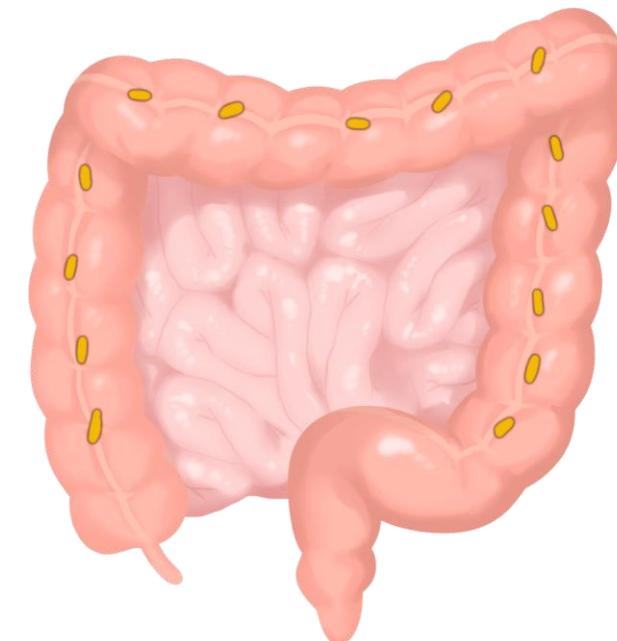
**Responsible mucosal site for
the pathogenesis of IgA nephropathy**

Which is responsible for the pathogenesis of IgA nephropathy?

NALT: Nasal-associated lymphoid tissue

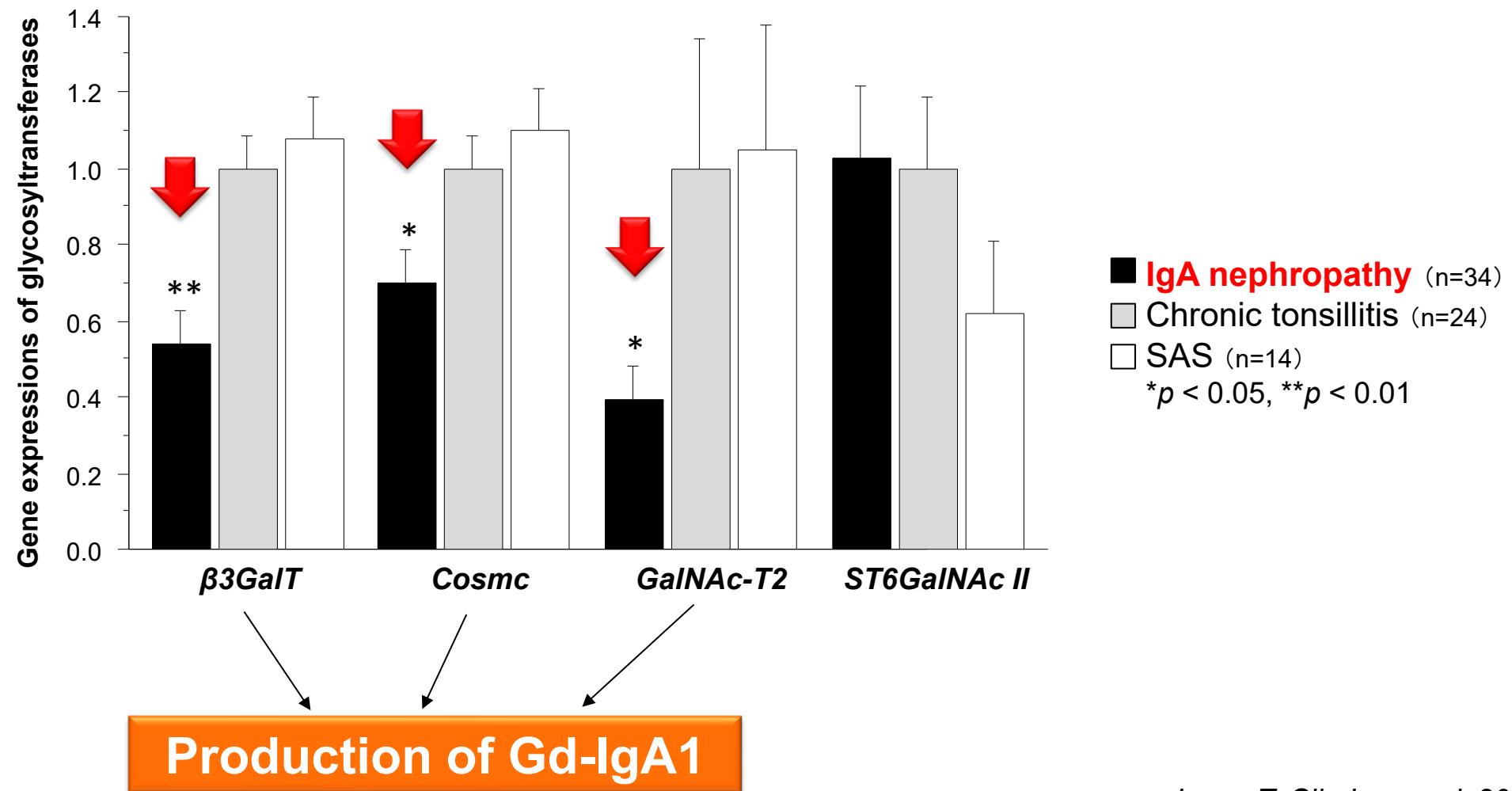


GALT: Gut-associated lymphatic tissue

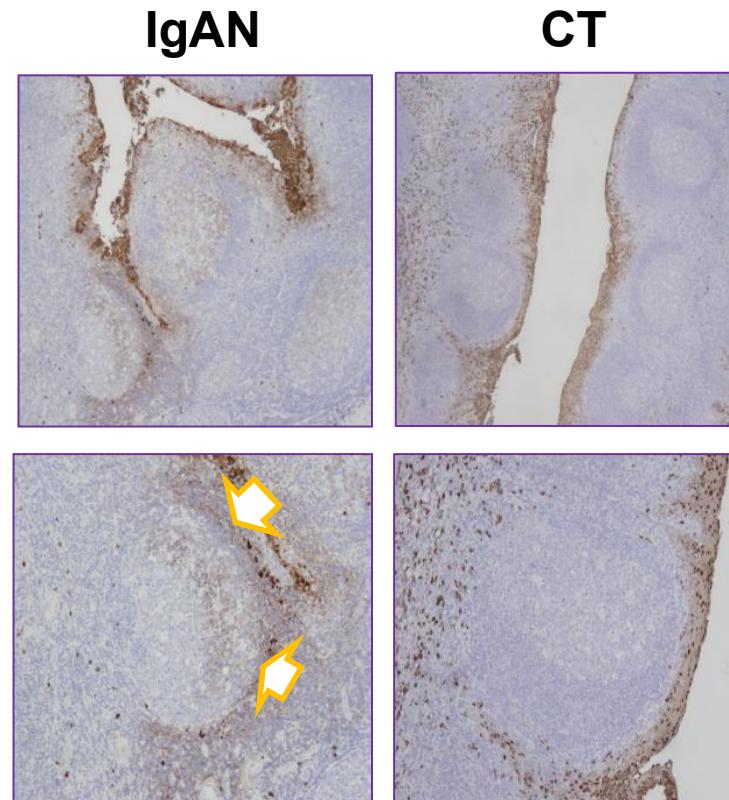
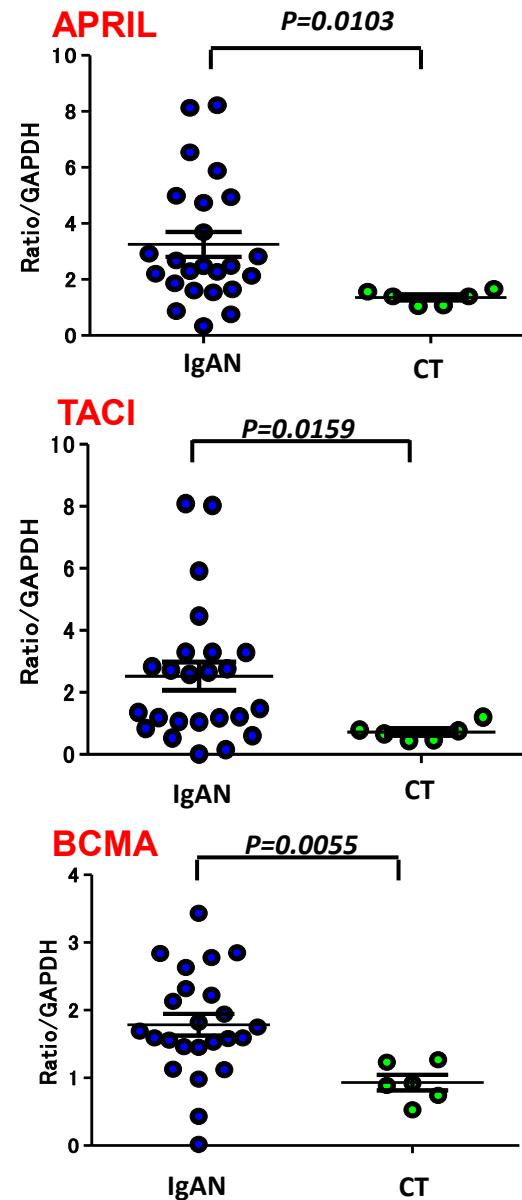


?

Abnormal expressions of specific glycosyltransferases of IgA1 in tonsillar B cell of IgAN

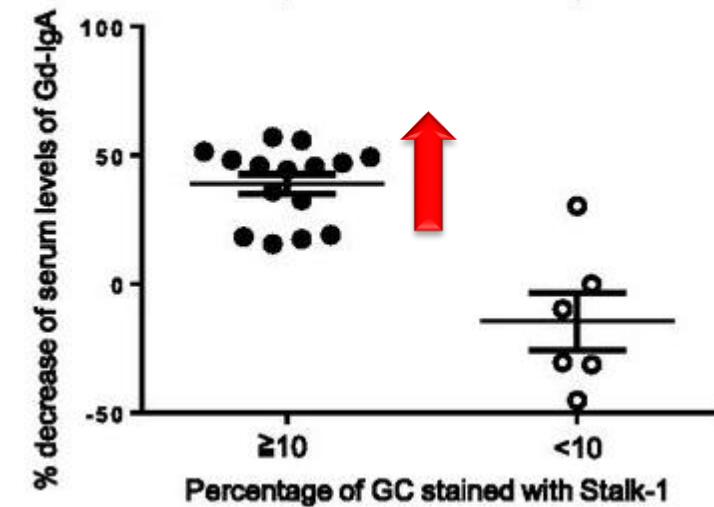


APRIL and its receptors are overexpressed in tonsils of IgAN



APRIL: a proliferation inducing ligand
B lymphocyte development, selection, and
homoeostasis, IgA classswitch

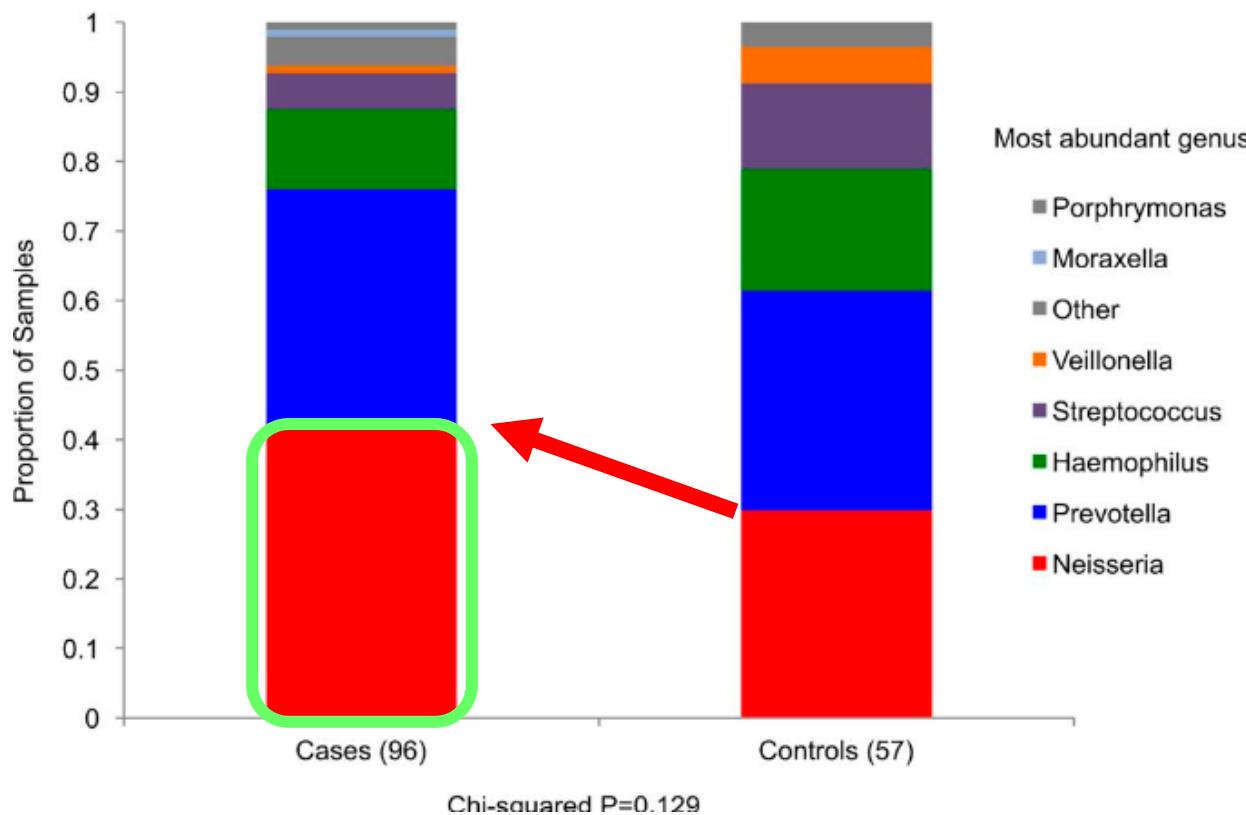
APRIL+ cell in GC↑
→ **serum Gd-IgA1↑**



Percentage of APRIL+ cells in
germinal center (GC) links to
severity of IgAN

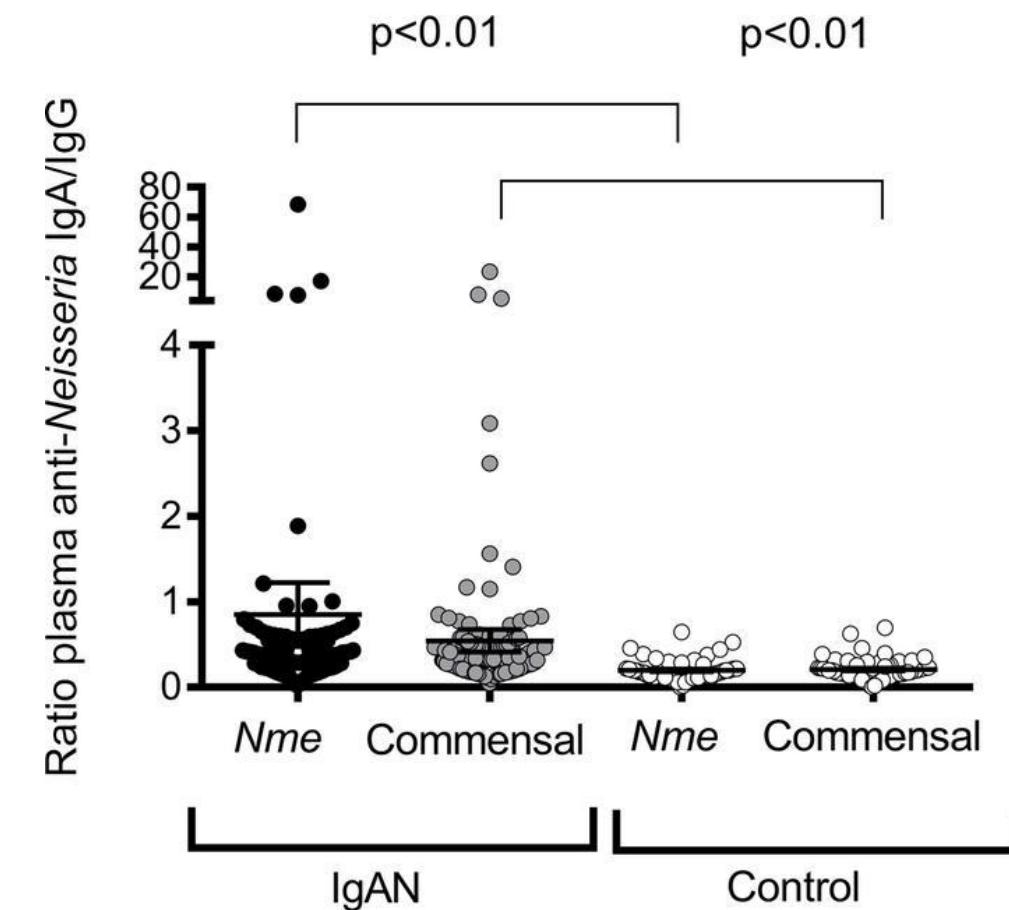
Muto M, et al, J Am Soc Nephrol, 2017

Aberrant mucosal immune responses to oropharyngeal pathobionts, such as *Neisseria*, in the immunopathogenesis of IgAN



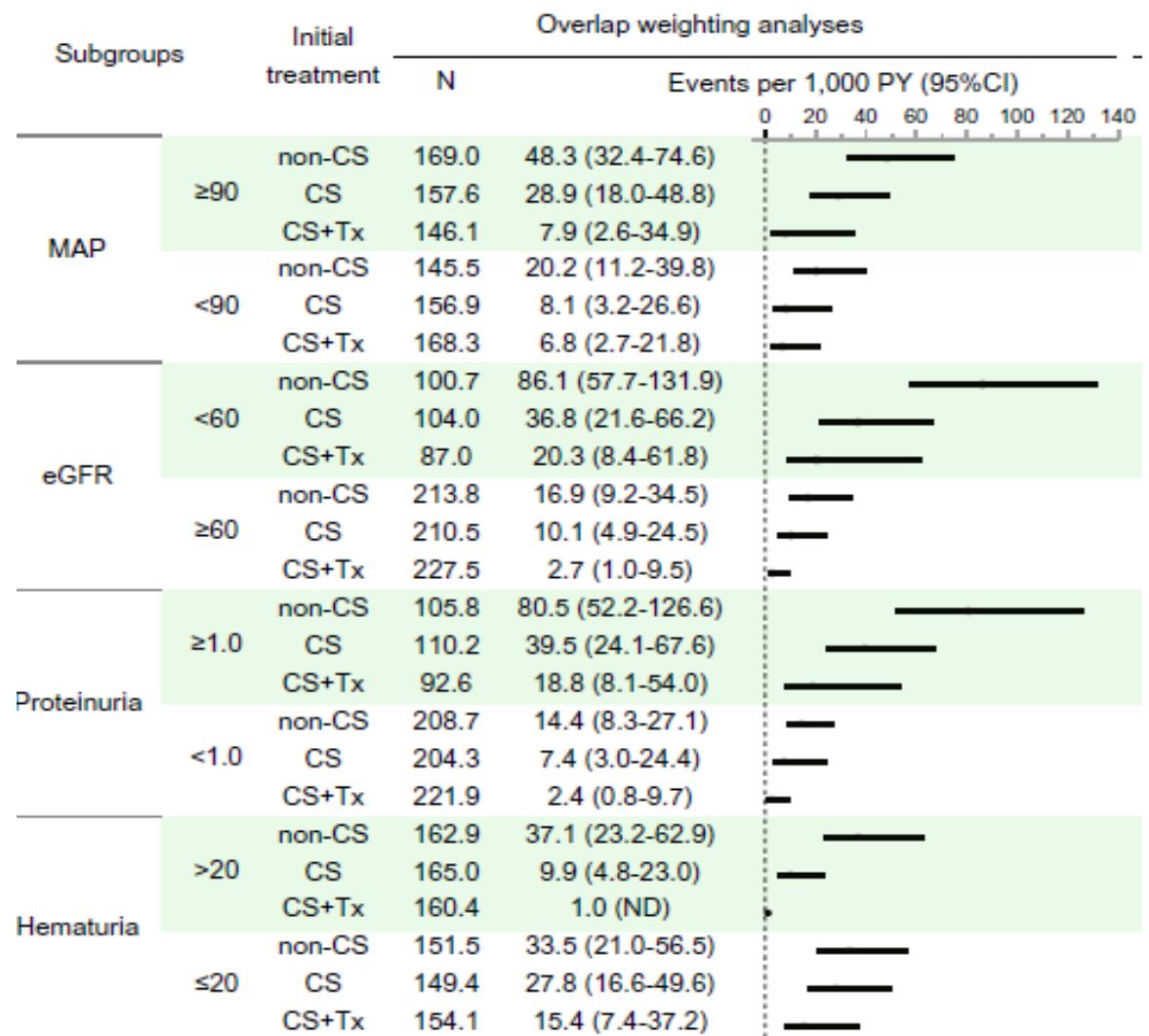
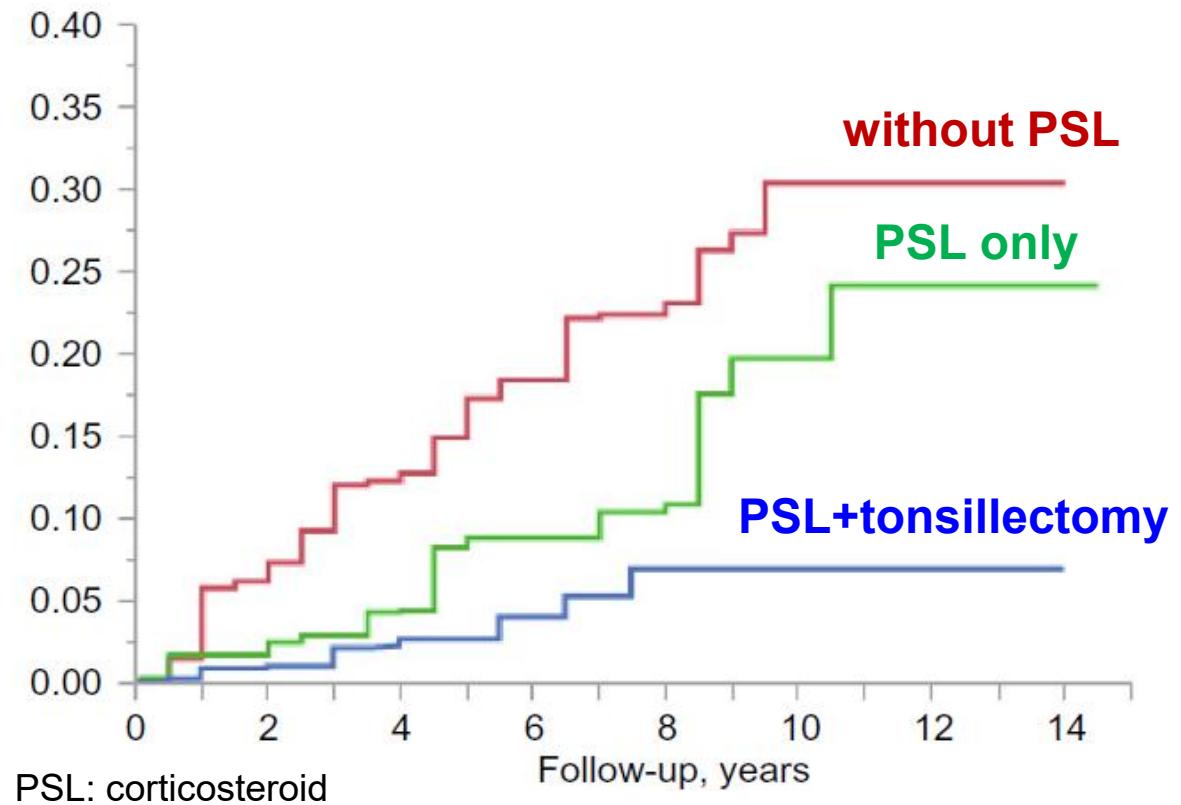
The most abundant genus in tonsil swabs in patients with IgAN was *Neisseria*

Patients with IgAN exhibited exaggerated IgA-biased anti-*Neisseria* responses to both pathogenic and nonpathogenic *Neisseria* species.



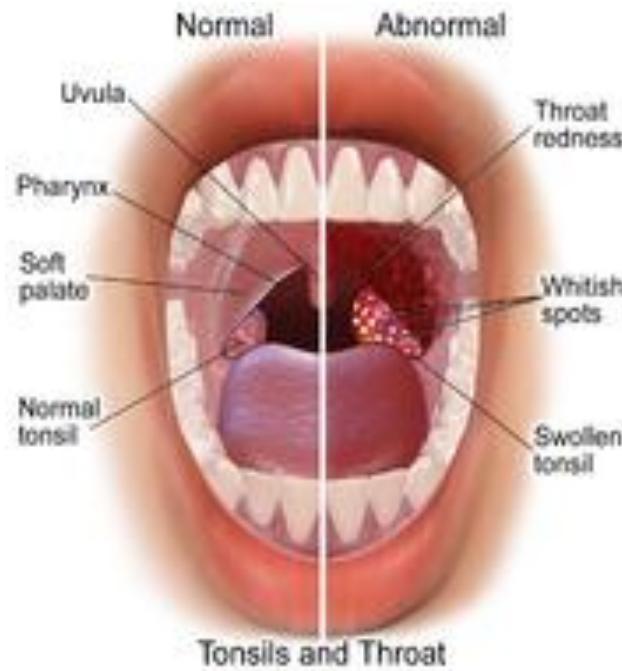
Tonsillectomy with corticosteroid therapy is effective for kidney survival in a multicenter prospective study for IgAN

Renal outcome



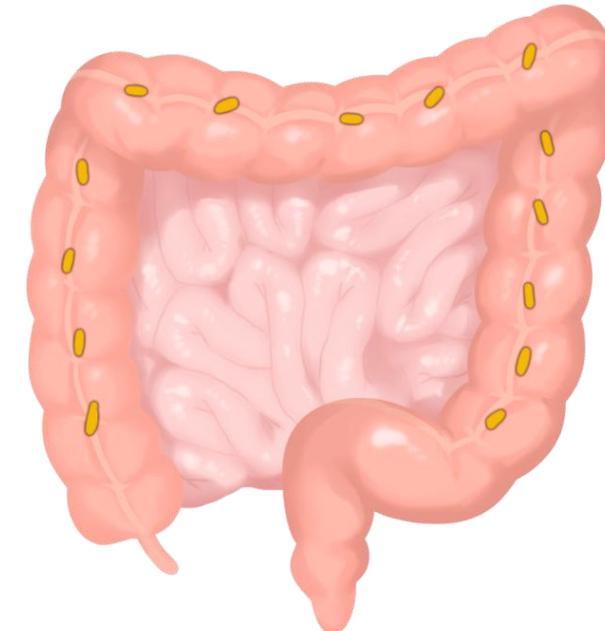
Which is responsible for the pathogenesis of IgA nephropathy?

NALT: Nasal-associated lymphoid tissue

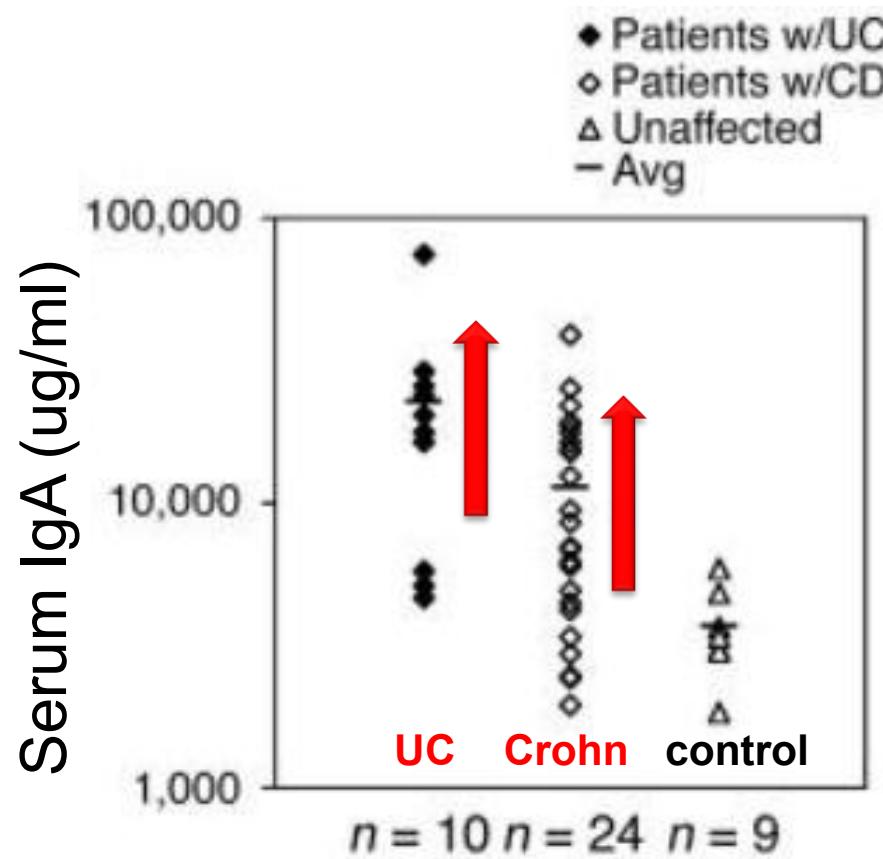


GALT: Gut-associated lymphatic tissue

?

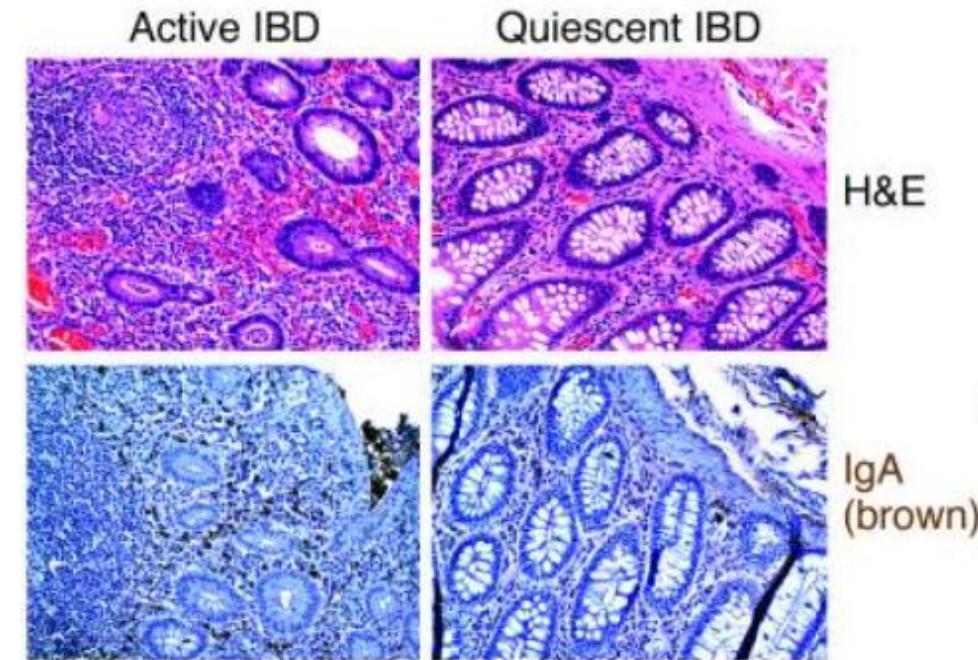


Increased IgA⁺ PCs in the intestine in patients with inflammatory bowel diseases (IBD)



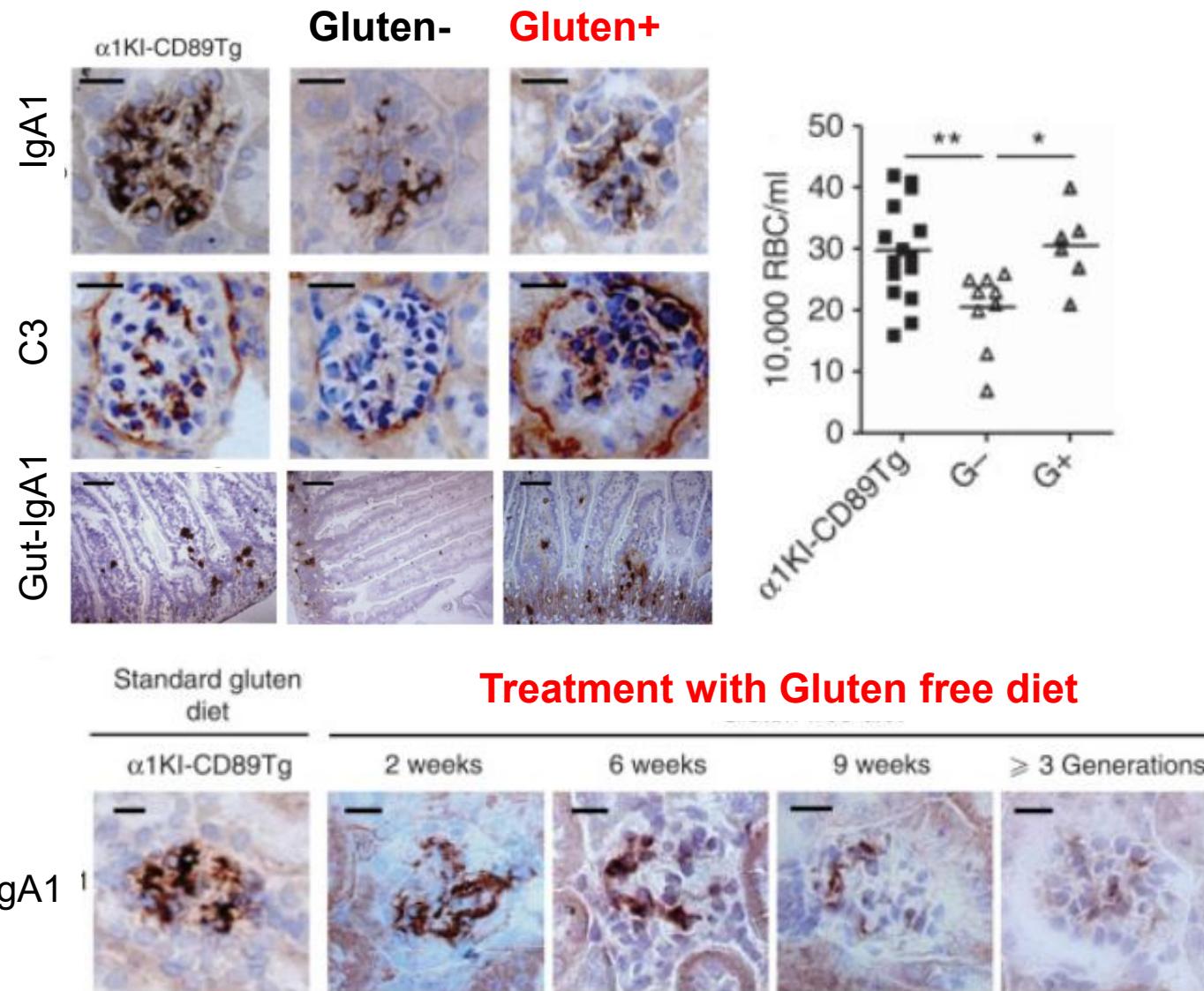
UC: Ulcerative colitis
Crohn: Crohn disease

Increased IgA⁺ Plasma cells in the intestine in patients with active IBD



Wang J, et al. *J Clin Invest* 113, 826-835, 2004

Intestinal mucosal immune response in IgAN



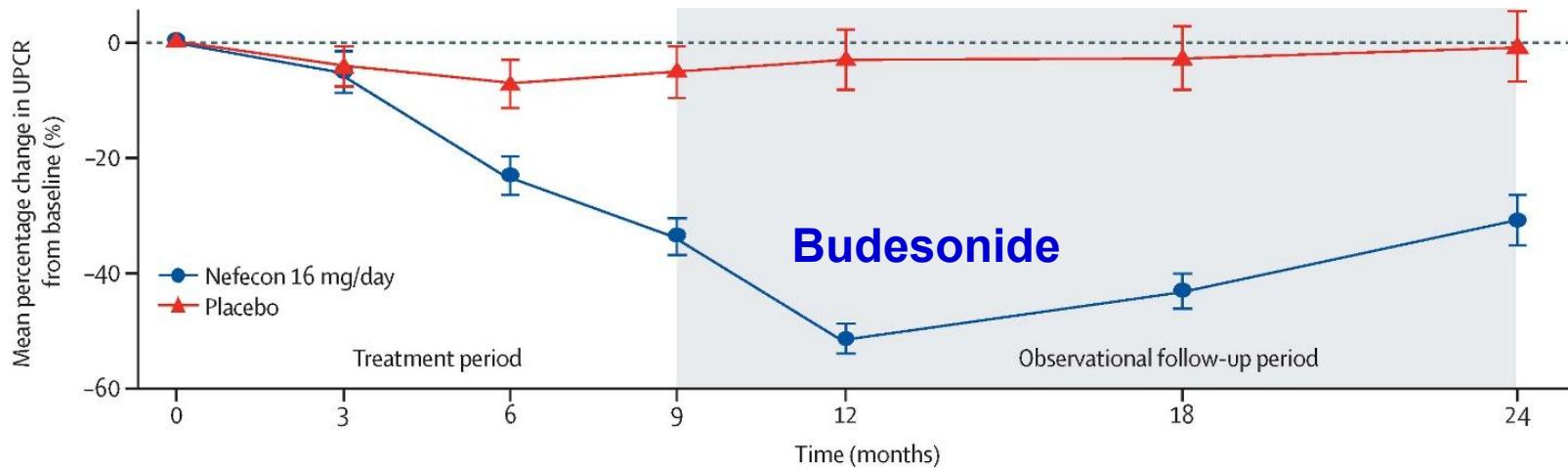
Gluten exacerbates IgAN in IgA1+CD89+ humanized mice



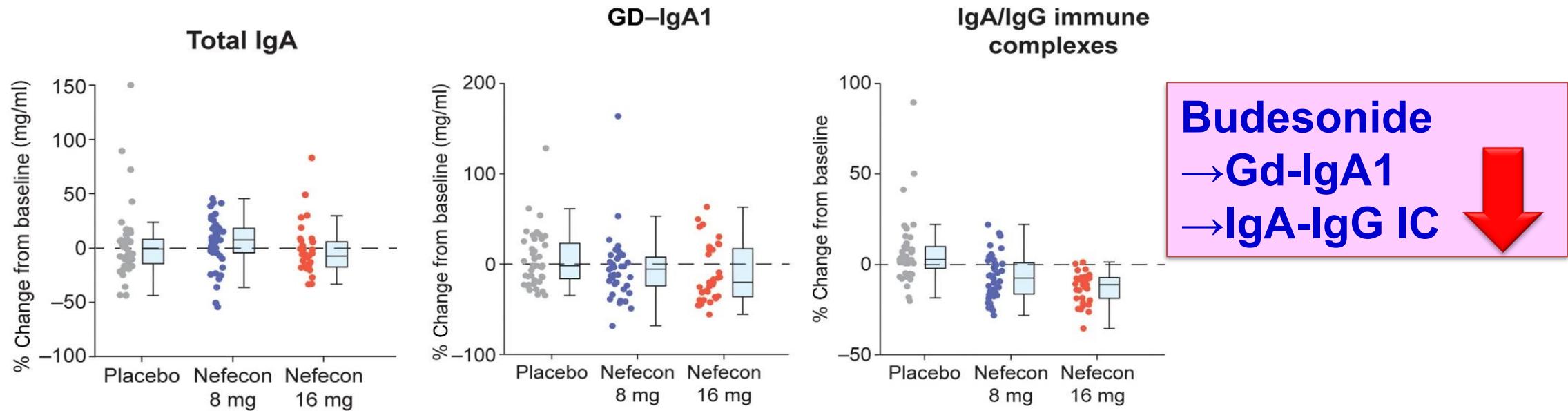
- Deposition of IgA1/C3
- Immune complex
- Hematuria/proteinuria

Treatment with a gluten-free diet could be beneficial to prevent progression of IgAN

Efficacy and safety of a targeted-release formulation of budesonide in patients with IgAN (NeflgArd): 2-year results from a randomised phase 3 trial

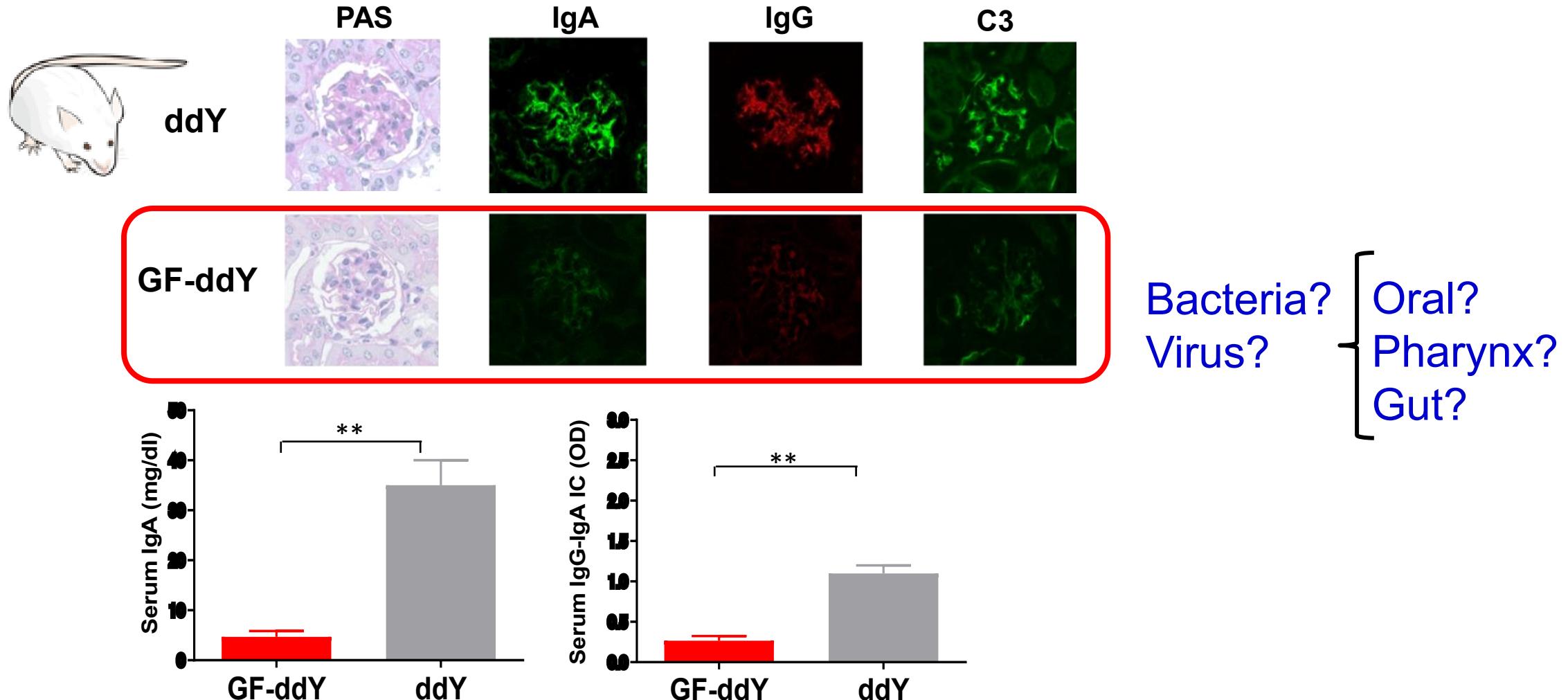


Lafayette R. Lancet 402: 859, 2023



Kidney Int 105:381, 2024

Germ free condition markedly decreased proteinuria and IgA, IgG, C3 deposits in the mesangium



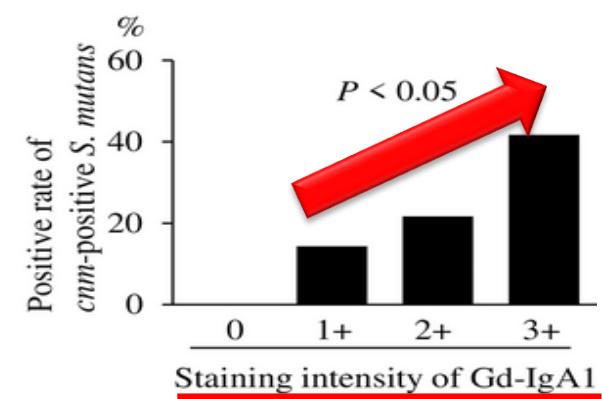
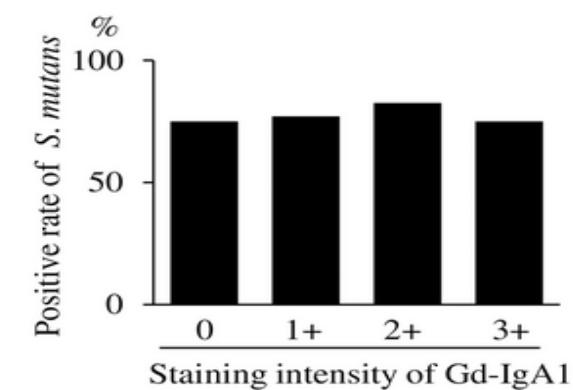
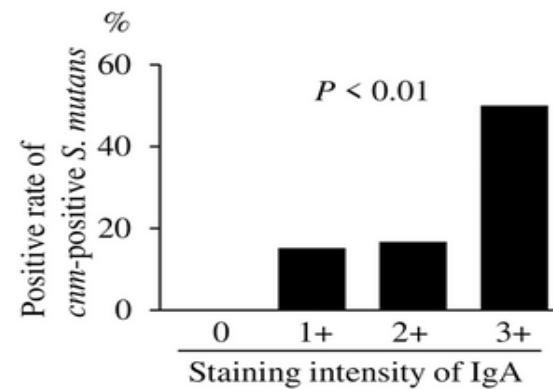
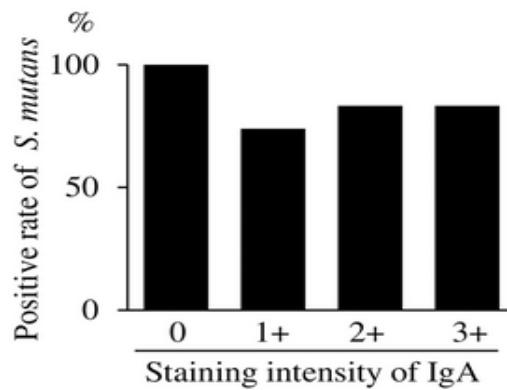
RESEARCH ARTICLE

cnm-positive *Streptococcus mutans* is associated with galactose-deficient IgA in patients with IgA nephropathy

Taro Misaki^{1,2*}, Shuhei Naka³, Hitoshi Suzuki^{1,2}, Mingfeng Lee⁴, Ryosuke Aoki⁴, Yasuyuki Nagasawa⁵, Daiki Matsuoka³, Seigo Ito⁶, Ryota Nomura^{7,8}, Michiyo Matsumoto-Nakano³, Yusuke Suzuki⁴, Kazuhiko Nakano⁸

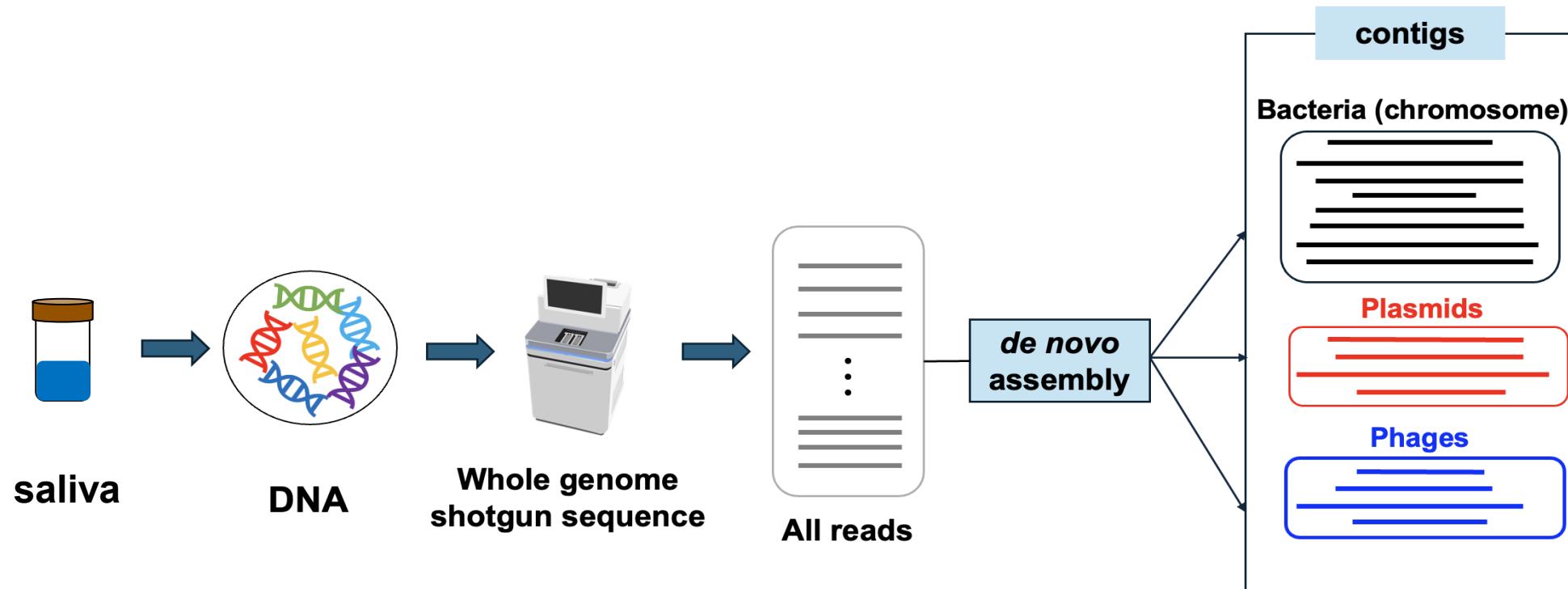
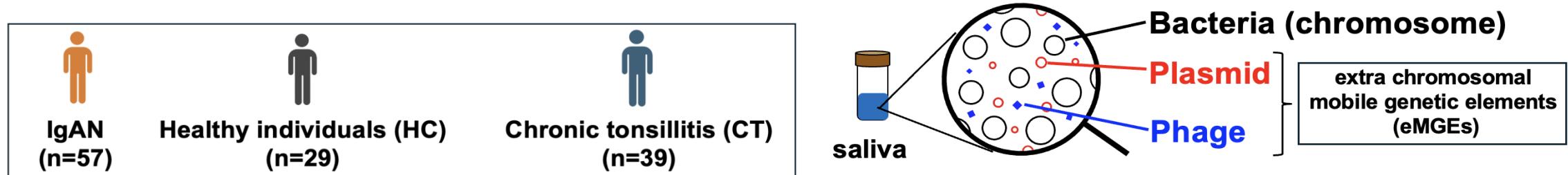
Several bacterial species have been reported to be potential contributors to the pathogenesis of IgAN, including
--periodontitis-related and
--dental caries-related bacteria

Association between glomerular IgA and Gd-IgA1 and the rate of *cnm*-positive *S. mutans* in the oral cavity

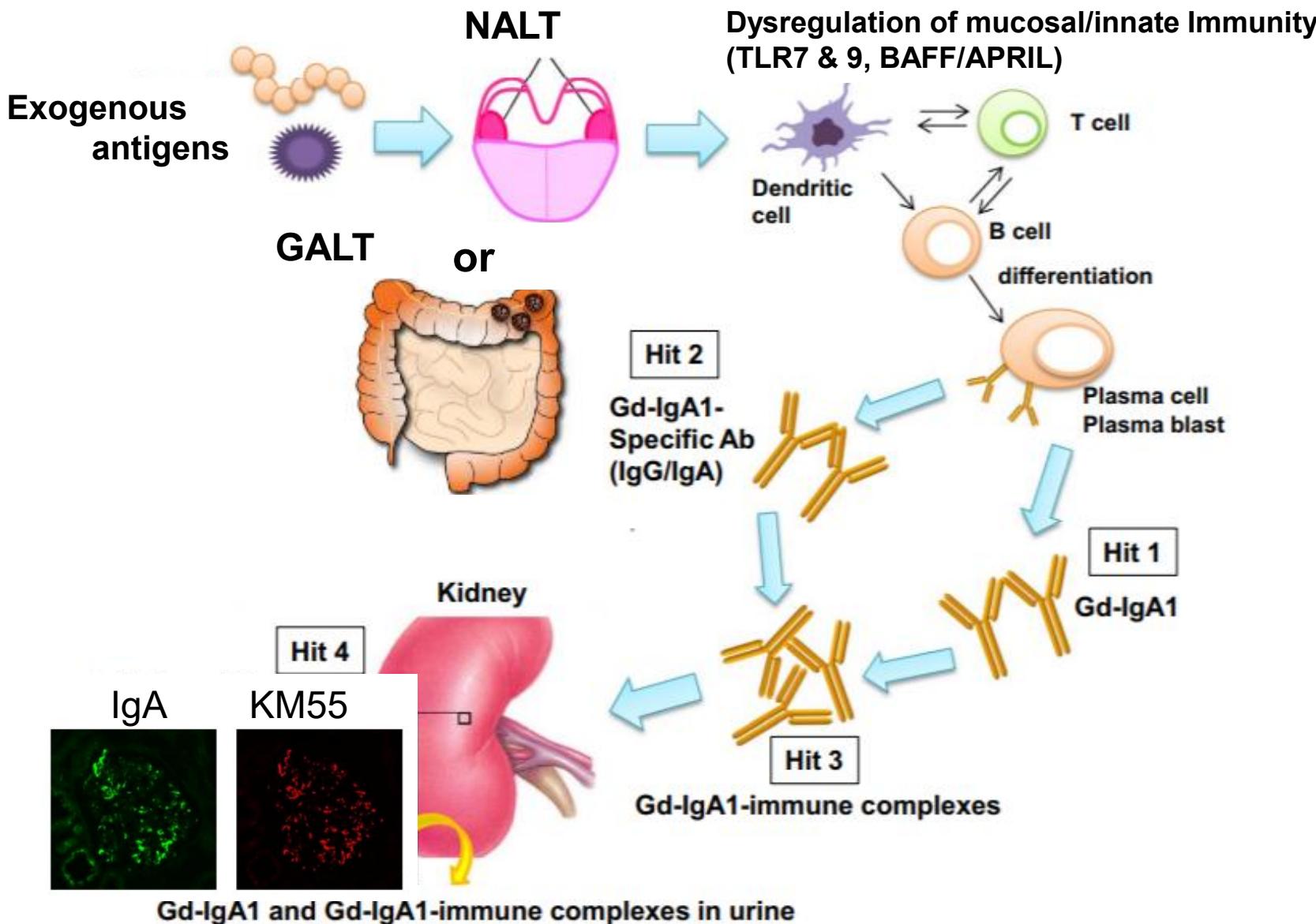


Sho Hamaguchi, et al. Deep shotgun metagenomic analysis of the oral microbiome identifies certain bacterial plasmids associated with IgAN.

Please see the Oral Communications 7: Basic Research, Oral 5-4, 5th Dec, 2025



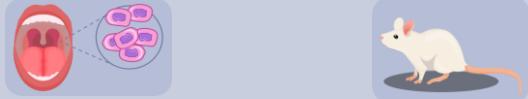
Multi-Hit model of pathogenesis of IgA nephropathy



Plasmacytoid dendritic cells (pDCs) modulate the pathogenesis of IgA nephropathy by facilitating aberrantly glycosylated IgA production

Focus of study was to investigate the role of plasmacytoid dendritic cells (pDCs) in the synthesis of aberrantly glycosylated IgA in IgAN

Methods

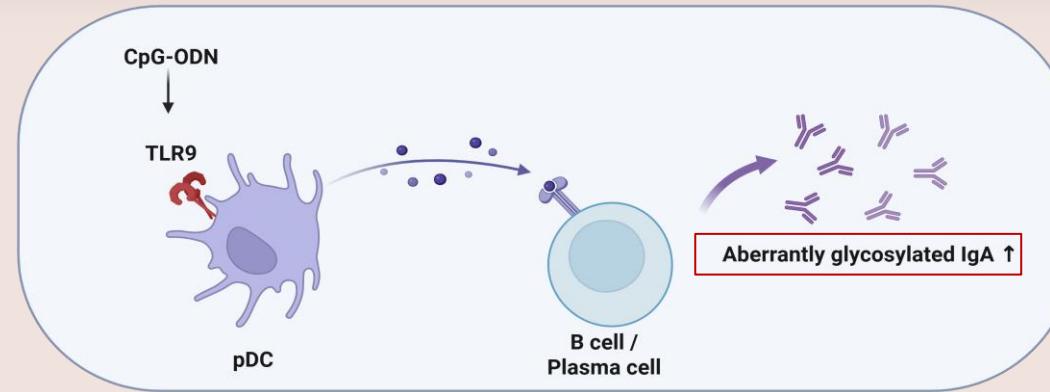


tonsillar mononuclear cells from IgAN patients ddY mice nasally immunized with CpG-oligonucleotide

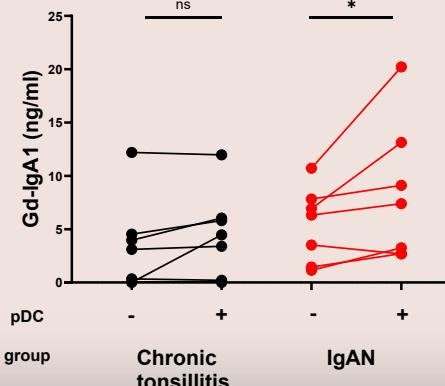
Exposures:
pDC isolation

Outcomes:
Analysis of the level of aberrantly glycosylated IgA in culture supernatant of tonsillar cells and serum of the ddY mice

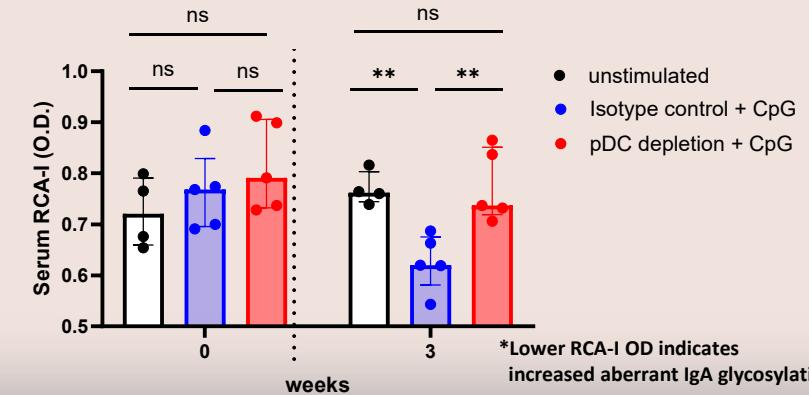
Results



Tonsillar pDCs modulates the production of Gd-IgA1 in patients with IgAN



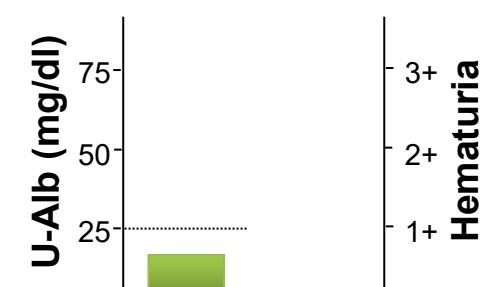
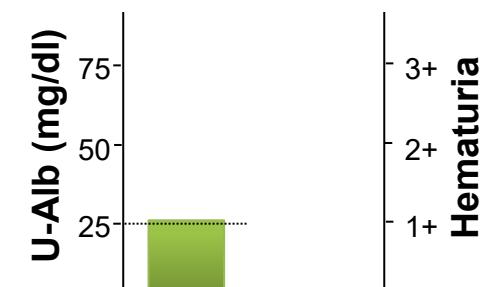
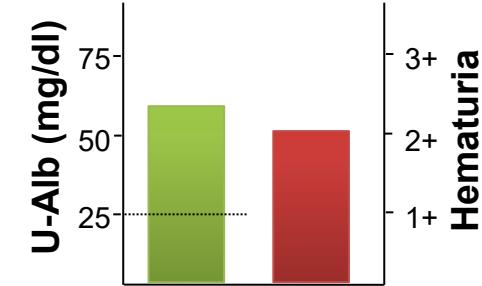
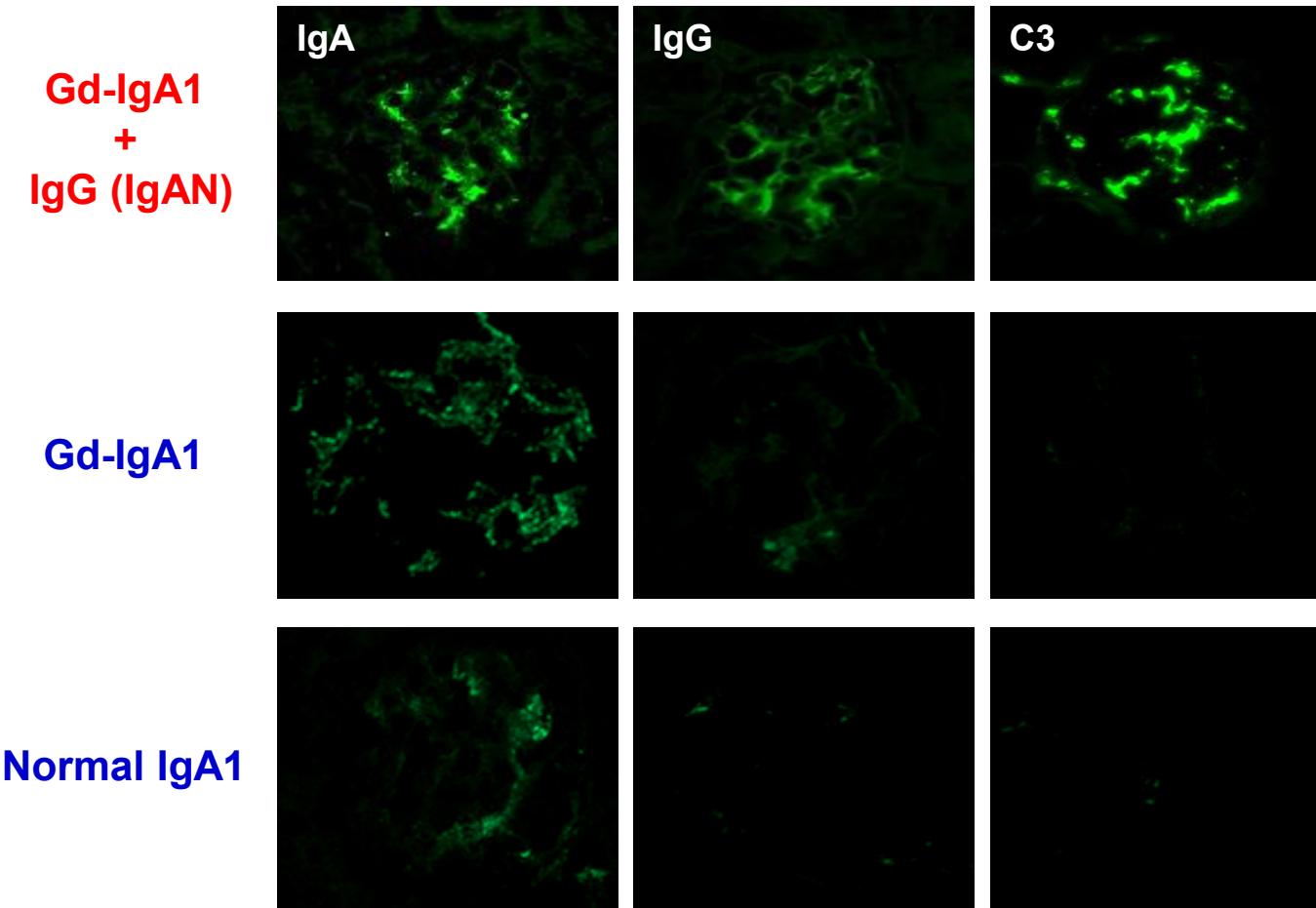
pDC depletion abrogates CpG-induced aberrantly glycosylated IgA production in murine model



Outline

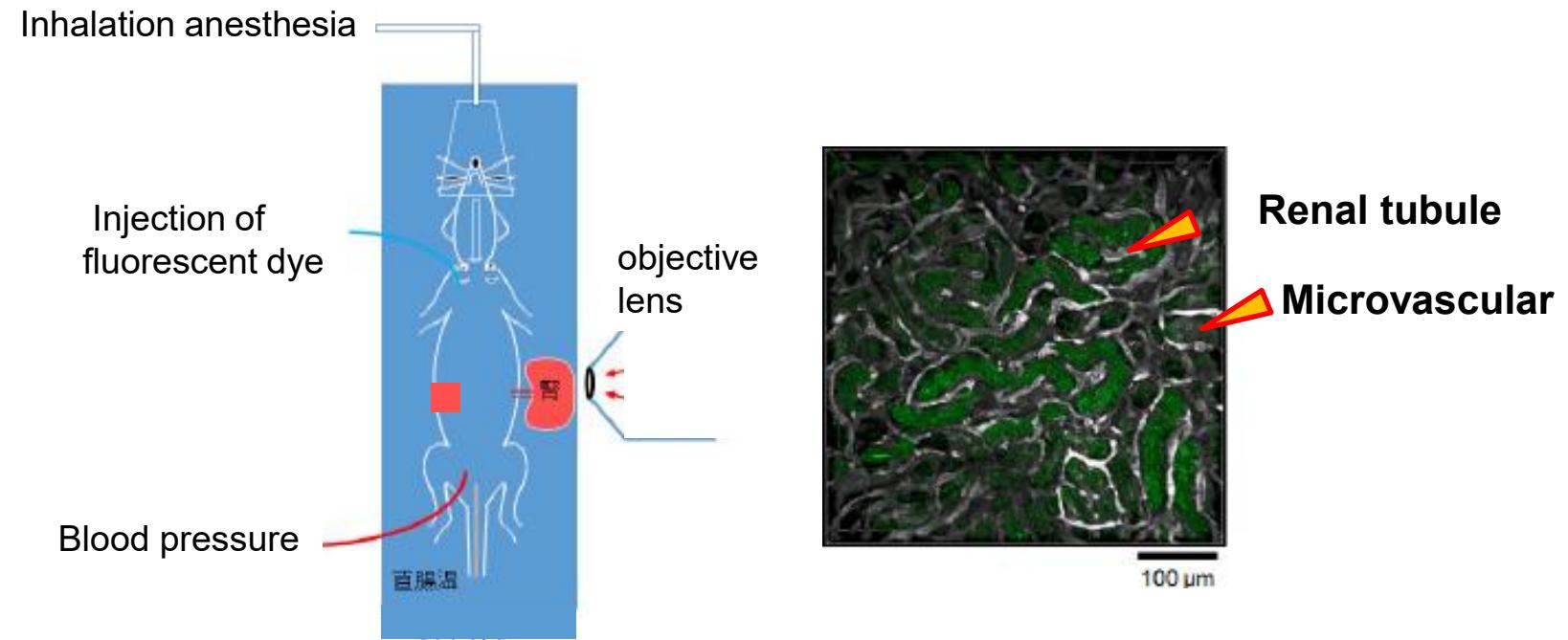
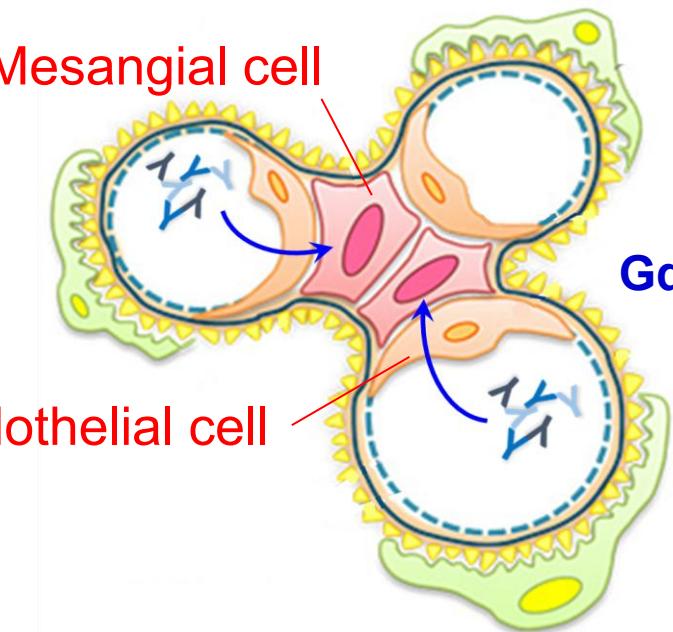
- Mucosal immunity of IgA nephropathy
- **Mechanisms of glomerular deposition of IgA**
- Development of new treatment

Gd-IgA1-IgG IC-injected mice showed mesangial deposits of IgA, IgG, and C3 with albuminuria and hematuria



Real-time glycocalyx imaging

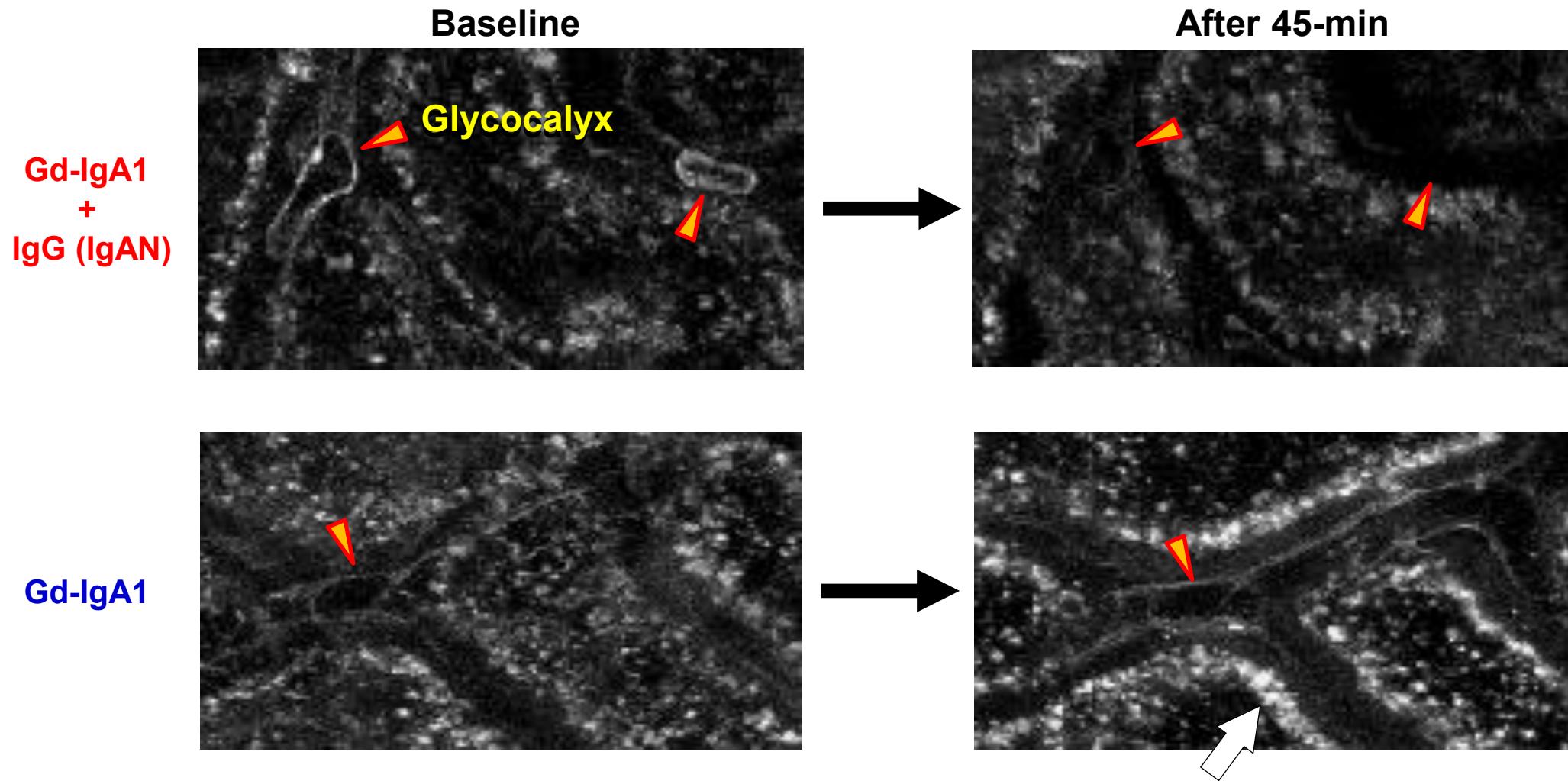
How Gd-IgA1 ICs deposit in mesangium?



Gd-IgA1 + IgG (IgAN) →
Gd-IgA1 + PBS →

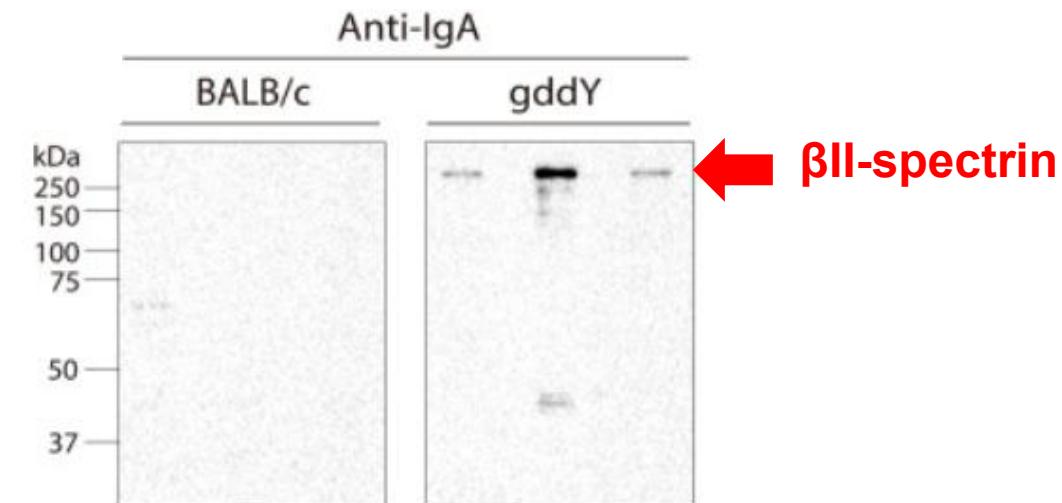
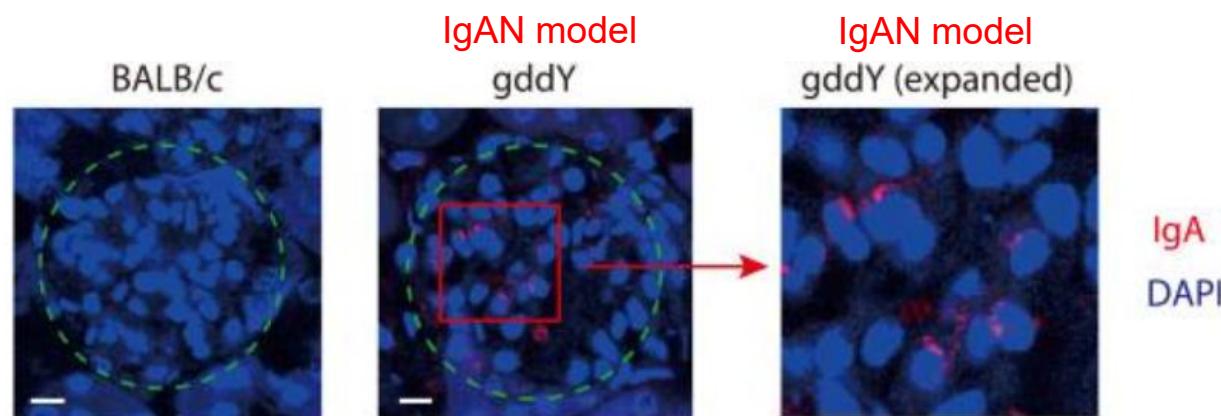


Gd-IgA1-IgG IC damaged renal microvascular glycocalyx immediately after injection

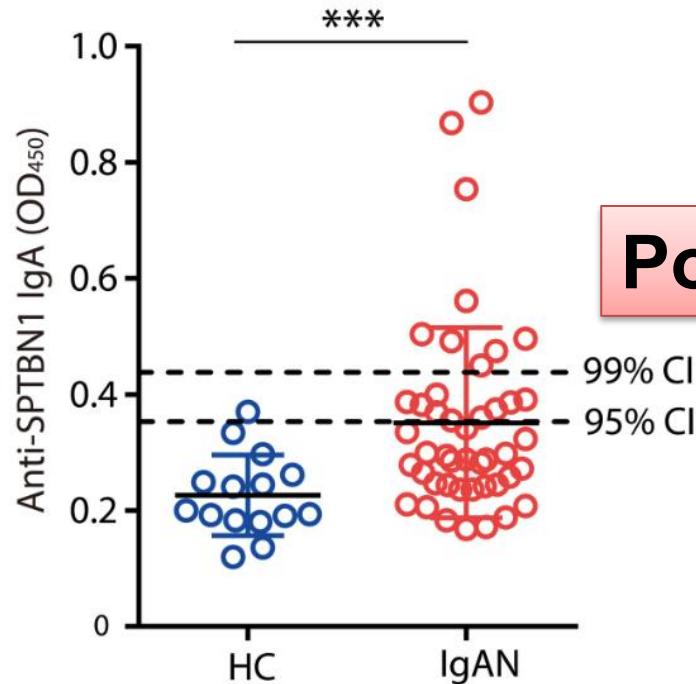


Identification of IgA autoantibodies targeting mesangial cells redefines the pathogenesis of IgA nephropathy

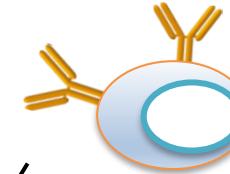
Yoshihito Nihei^{1,2}, Kei Haniuda^{2†}, Mizuki Higashiyama², Shohei Asami², Hiroyuki Iwasaki^{1,2}, Yusuke Fukao¹, Maiko Nakayama¹, Hitoshi Suzuki¹, Mika Kikkawa³, Saiko Kazuno³, Yoshiki Miura³, Yusuke Suzuki^{1*}, Daisuke Kitamura^{2*}



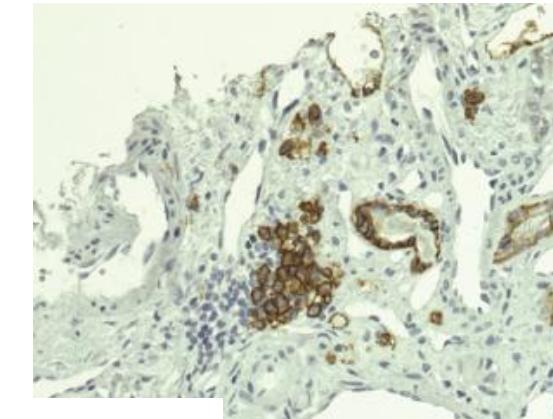
Serum anti- β II-spectrin IgA



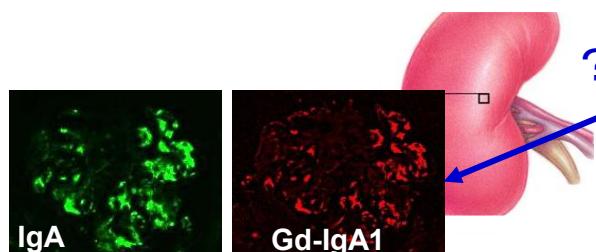
anti- β II-spectrin IgA producing plasma cells



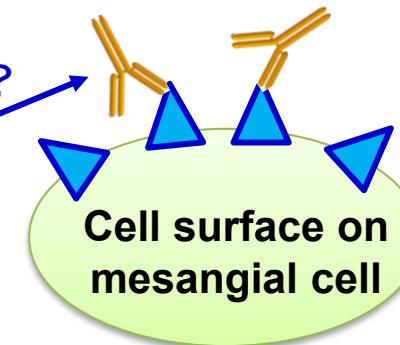
Homing to inflammation site (Kidney)



anti- β II-spectrin IgA



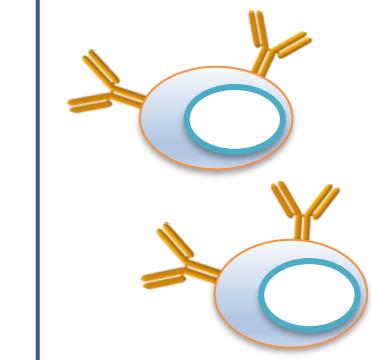
Mesangial deposition



Cell surface on mesangial cell

△ β II-spectrin

tubulointerstitium



Gd-IgA1 producing cell targeting therapeutic Intervention

Multi-Hit model of pathogenesis of IgA nephropathy

Hit1

Increased circulating galactose-deficient IgA1

Hit2

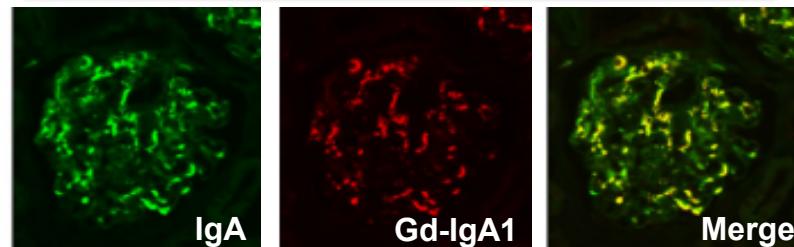
Production of unique anti-glycan antibodies

Hit3

Formation of pathogenic IgA1-containing circulation immune complexes

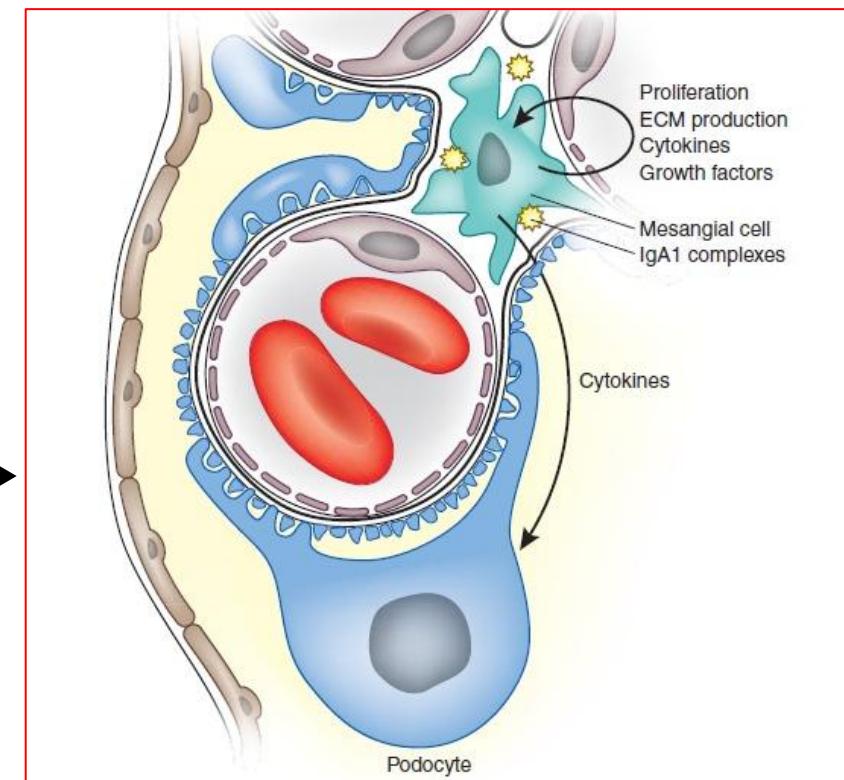
Hit4

Mesangial deposition and activation of mesangial cells resulting in glomerular injury



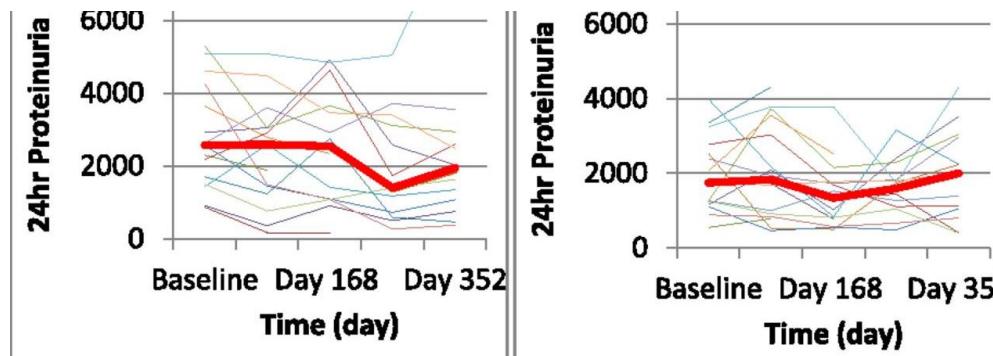
Rituximab?

(IgG, IgA)



Controlled trial of Rituximab in IgA nephropathy

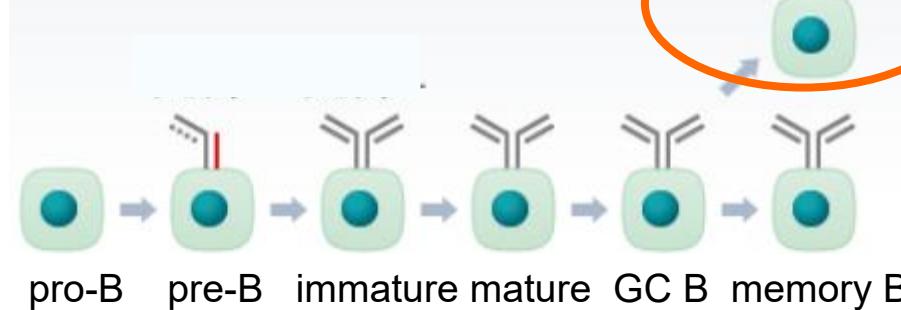
rituximab versus control



No effect for proteinuria

no favorable effect of rituximab on Gd-IgA1 or autoantibodies to Gd-IgA1

B cell differentiation



CD43	CD43	IgM	IgM	CD77	CD27
CD117	CD25		IgD	CD38	
CD45R	CD45R	CD45R	CD45R	PNA	
CD19	CD19	CD19	CD19	CD138	

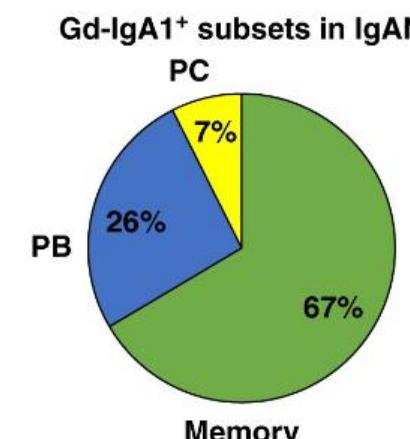
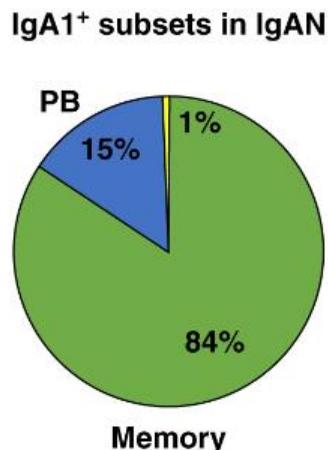
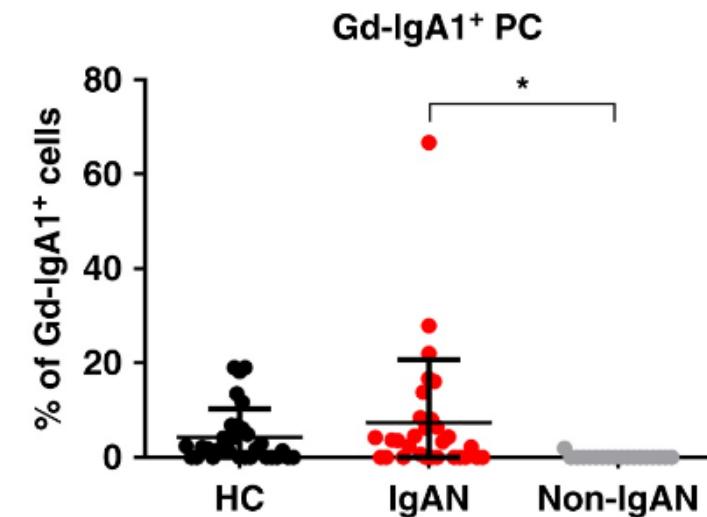
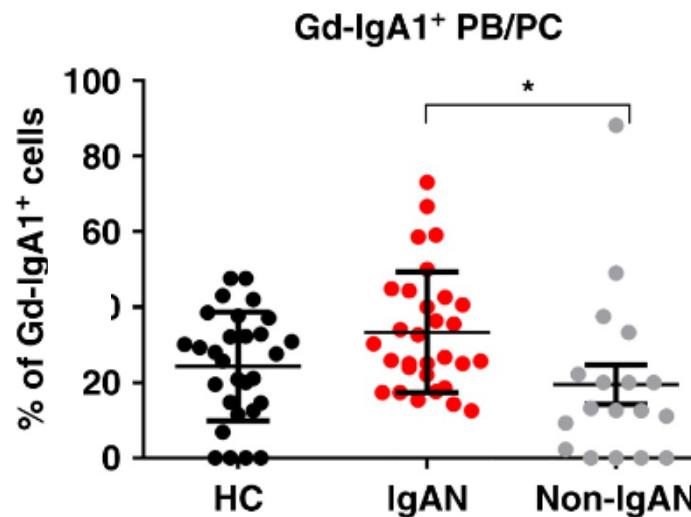
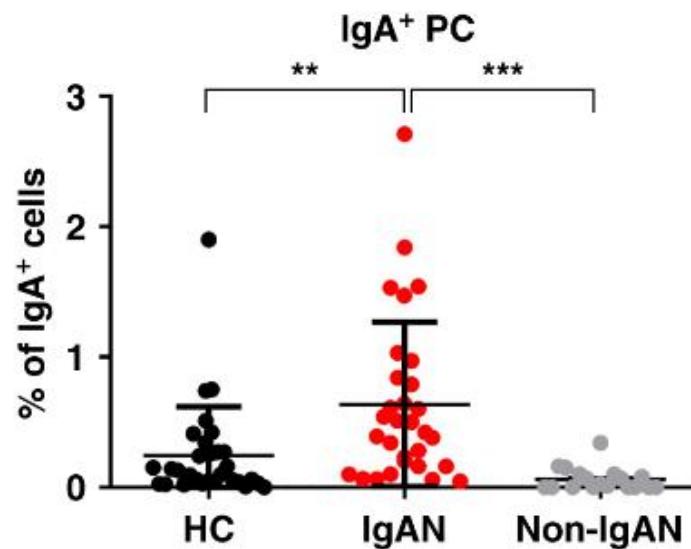
Rituximab

	Baseline	after treatment (1yr)
Total IgA (mg/mL)	5.0	4.4
Gd-IgA1 (U)	54.8	60.5
Anti-Gd-IgA1 IgG (U/mL)	1492.5	1751.3

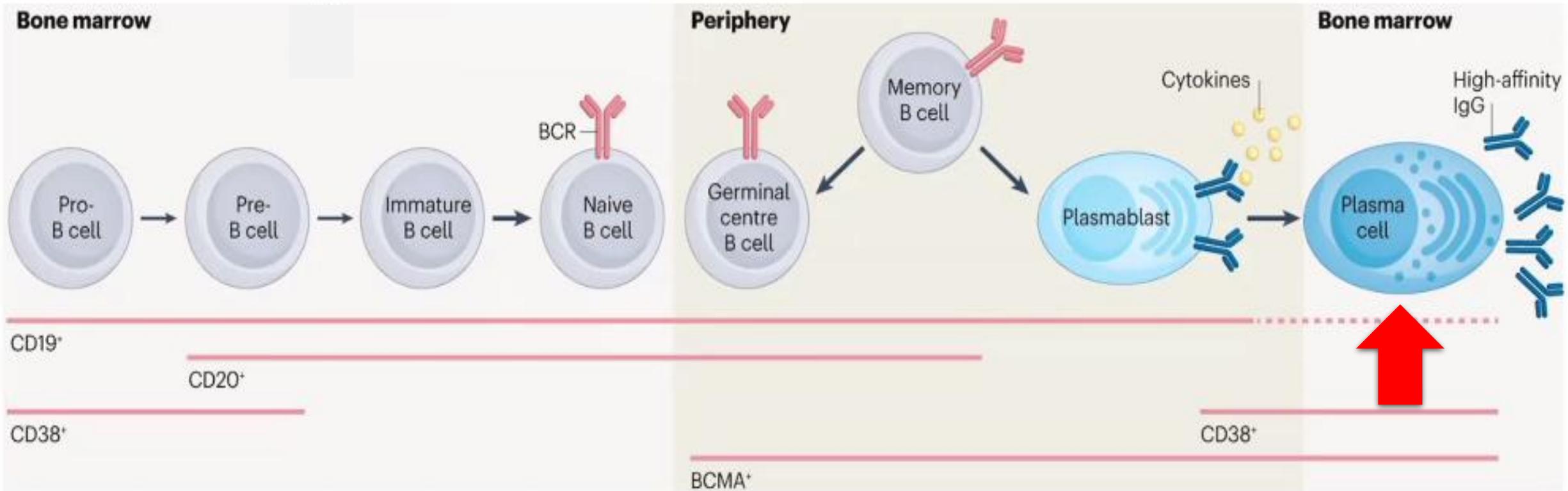
No change

Gd-IgA1 and anti Gd-IgA1 IgG may originate from plasma cells.

Gd-IgA1⁺ cell populations in peripheral blood are enriched with plasmablasts/plasma cells



Anti-CD38 Ab: Targeting plasma cells



Phase 2 clinical trials are underway in patients with IgAN

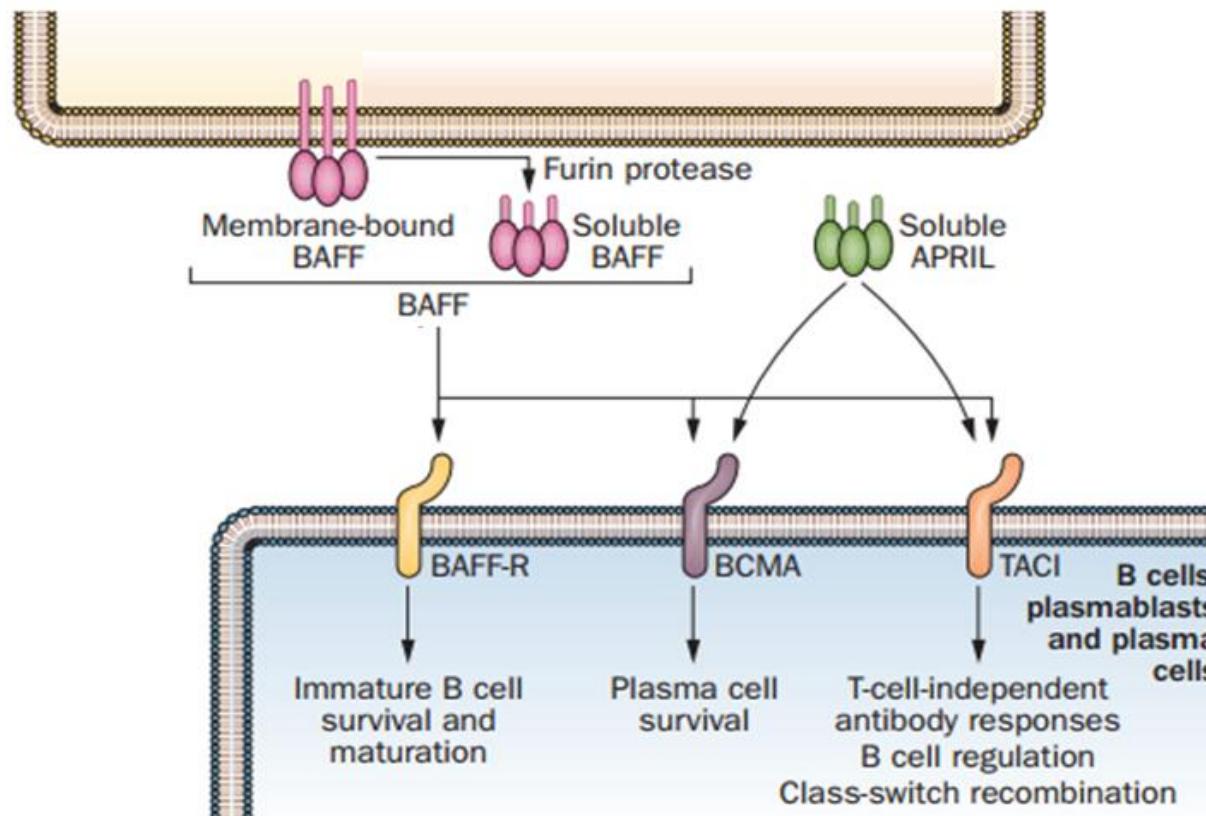
B lymphocyte development, selection, and homoeostasis

BAFF and APRIL

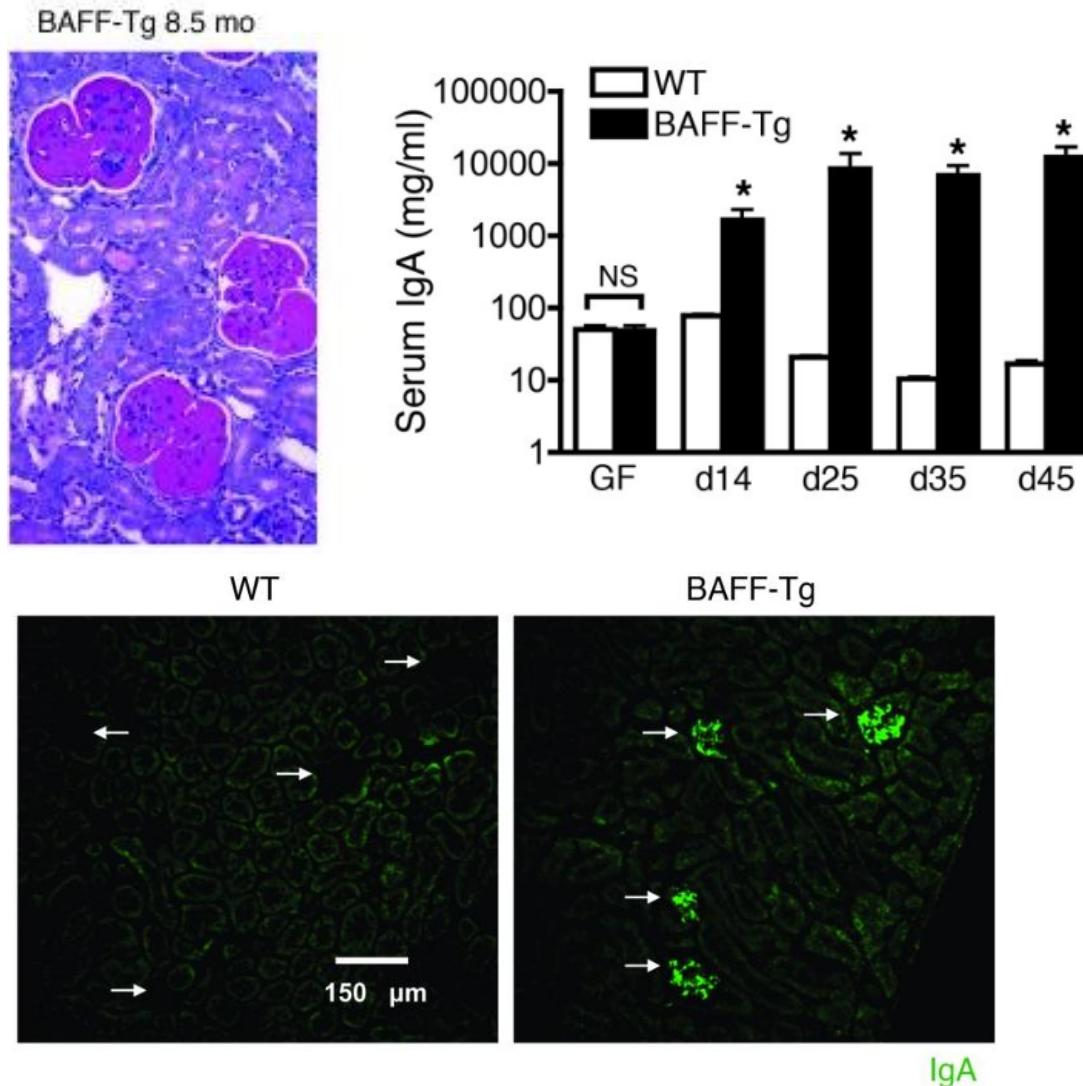
Members of TNF α superfamily ligands

BAFF: B cell activating factor, APRIL: a proliferation inducing ligand

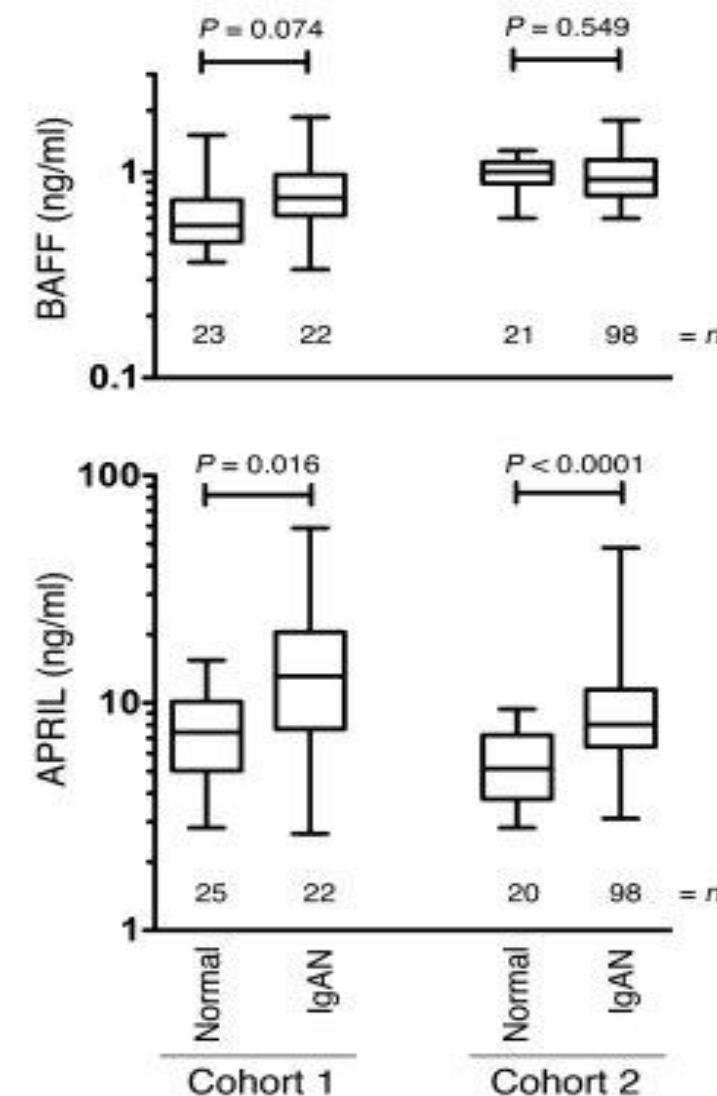
- BAFF and APRIL play a central role in B lymphocyte development, selection, and homeostasis



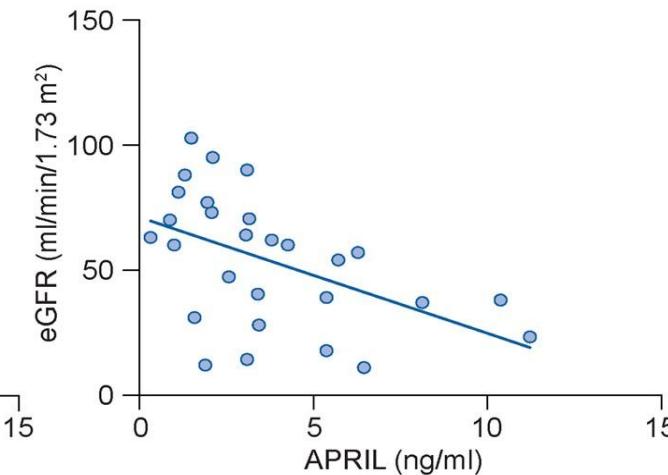
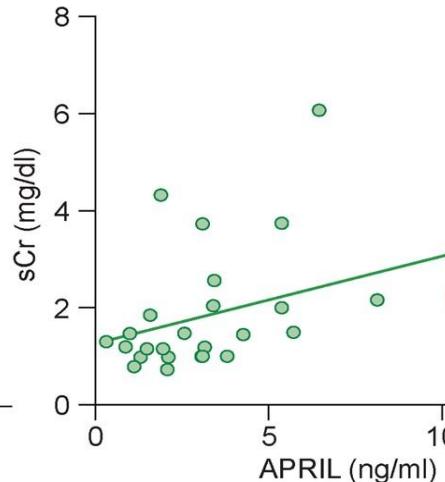
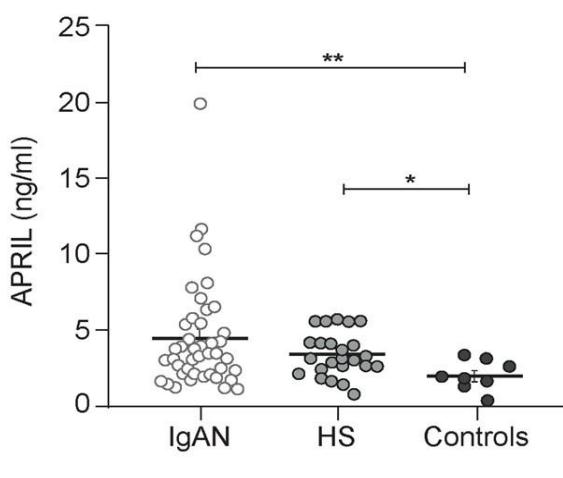
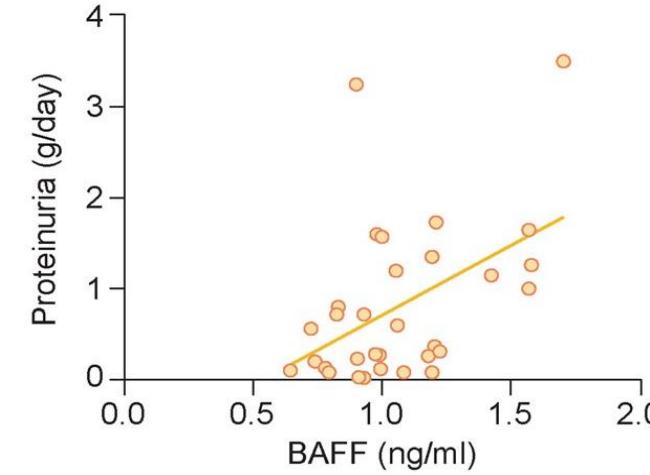
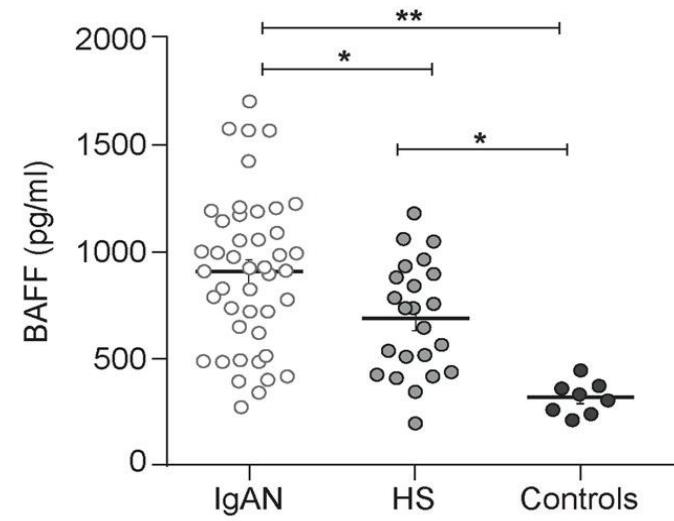
BAFF-Tg mice exhibit IgA-associated nephropathy



Serum levels of APRIL and BAFF elevated in patients with IgAN



Serum levels of BAFF and APRIL were correlated with proteinuria or eGFR in patients with IgAN



GWAS for IgAN demonstrated strong contribution of TNFSF13 (APRIL) to disease risk

nature genetics

A genome-wide association study in Han Chinese identifies multiple susceptibility loci for IgA nephropathy

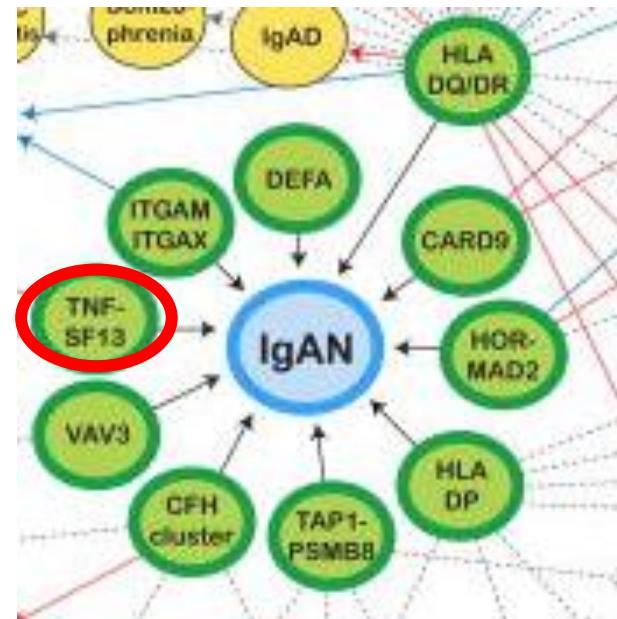
Yu XQ, et al. *Nat Genet*, 2011

APRIL: candidate genes

nature genetics

Discovery of new risk loci for IgA nephropathy implicates genes involved in immunity against intestinal pathogens

Kiryluk K, et al. *Nat Genet*, 2014

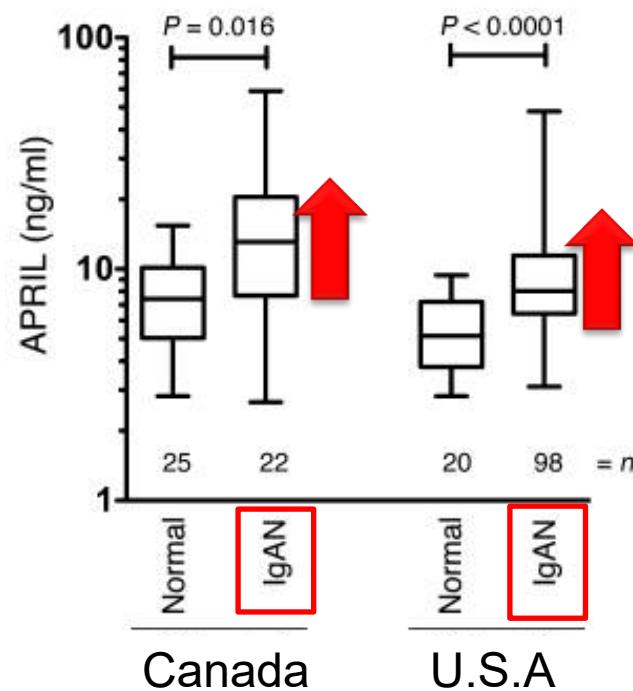


Kiryluk K, et al. *Nat Genet* 2014

Serum levels of APRIL increased in patients with IgAN

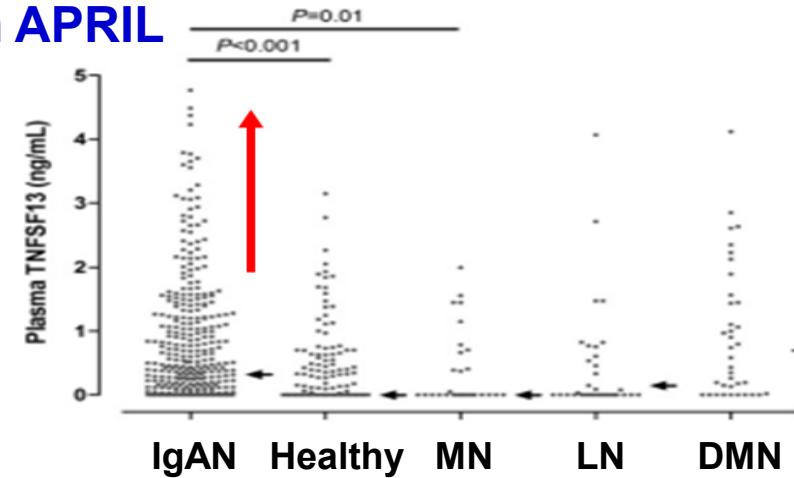
High levels of serum APRIL associated with high risk for ESRD

Serum APRIL

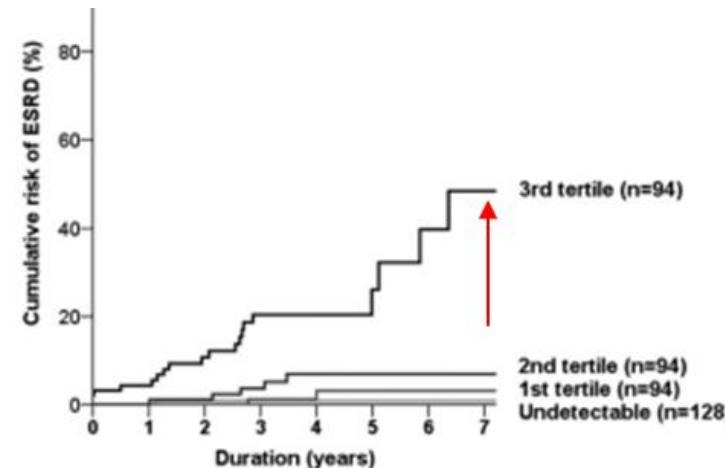


McCarthy DD. *J Clin Invest* 121:3991-4002, 2011

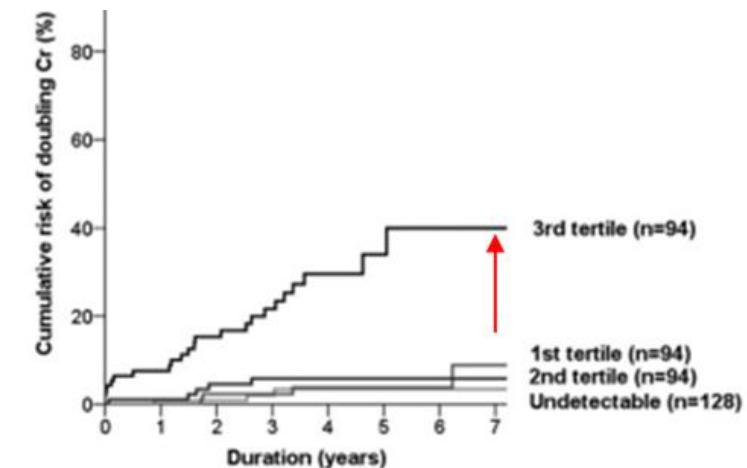
Serum APRIL



Risk for ESRD (%)

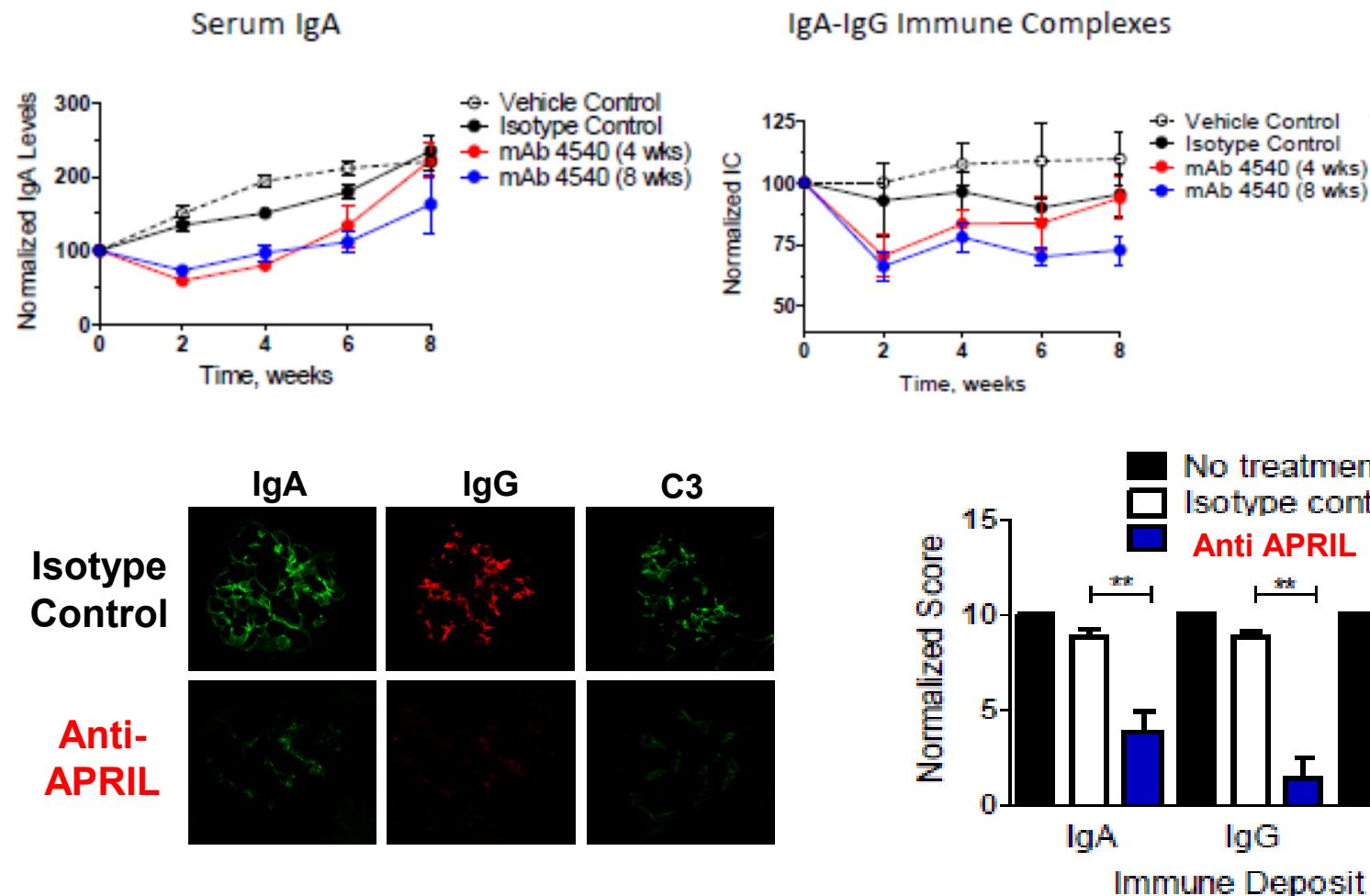


Risk for doubling sCr (%)



Han SS, et al: *J Am Soc Nephrol*, 2016

Anti-APRIL antibody treatment effectively reduces key IgA related disease mechanisms in the mouse model of IgAN



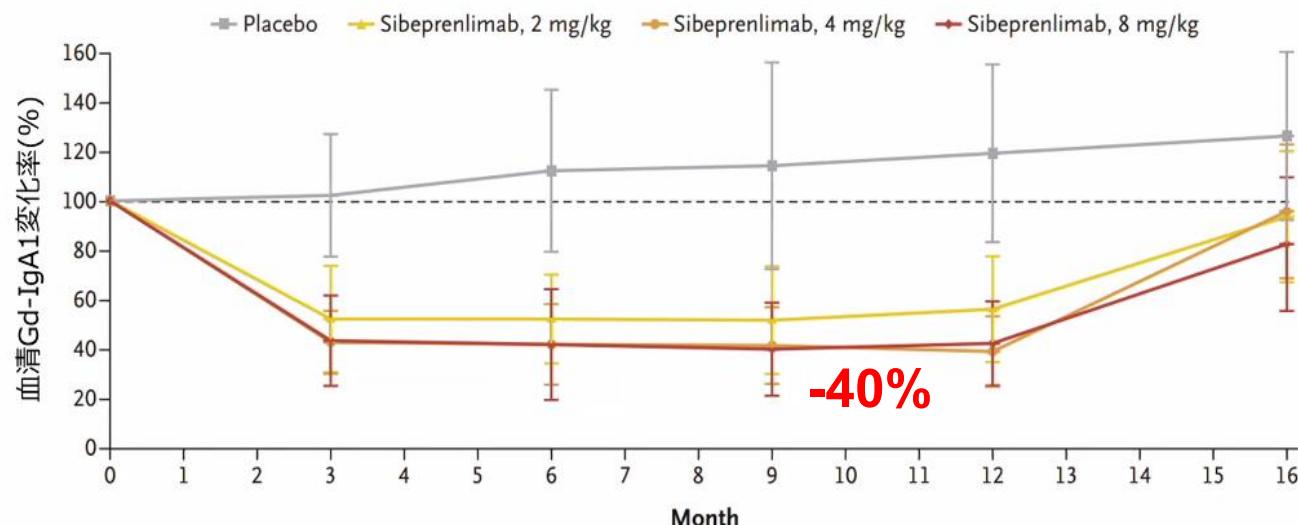
Clinical trials

A Phase 2 Trial of Sibemprelimab in Patients with IgA Nephropathy

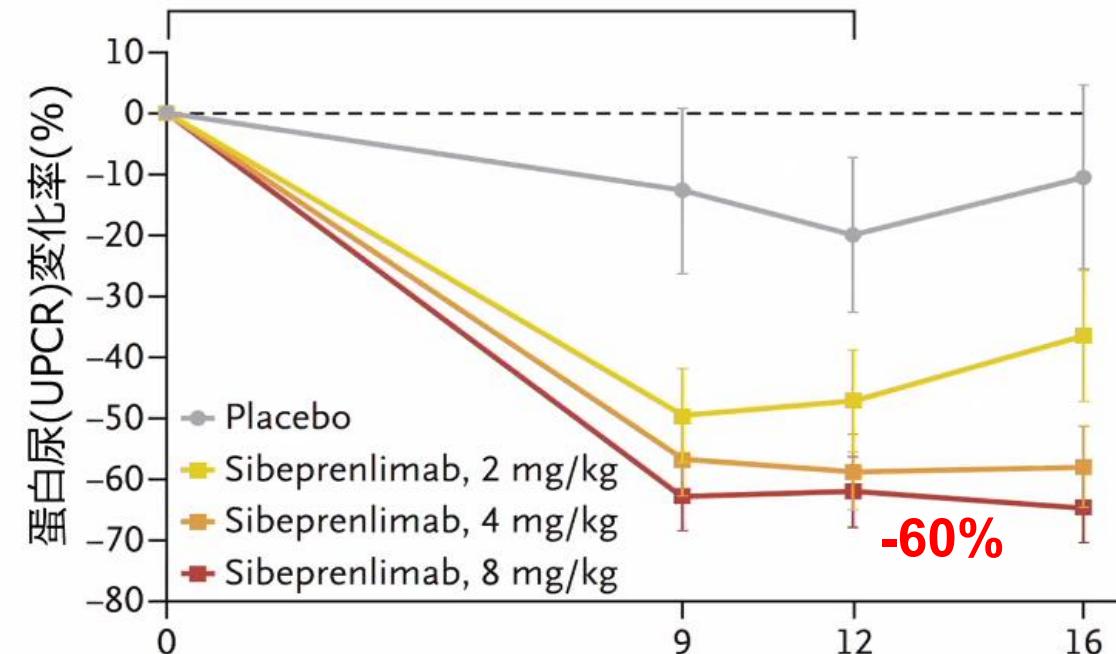
Authors: Mohit Mathur, M.D., Jonathan Barratt, Ph.D., Bobby Chacko, M.D., D.M., Tak Mao Chan, M.D., D.Sc., Laura Kooienga, M.D., Kook-Hwan Oh, M.D., Ph.D., Manisha Sahay, M.D., Yusuke Suzuki, M.D., Ph.D., Muh Geot Wong, M.B., B.S., Ph.D., Jill Yarbrough, B.A., Jing Xia, Ph.D., and Brian J.G. Pereira, M.D., for the ENVISION Trial

Investigators Group* [5](#) [Author Info & Affiliations](#)

Decrease of serum Gd-IgA1 treatment



Decrease of proteinuria treatment



Sibemprelimab in IgA Nephropathy — Interim Analysis of a Phase 3 Trial

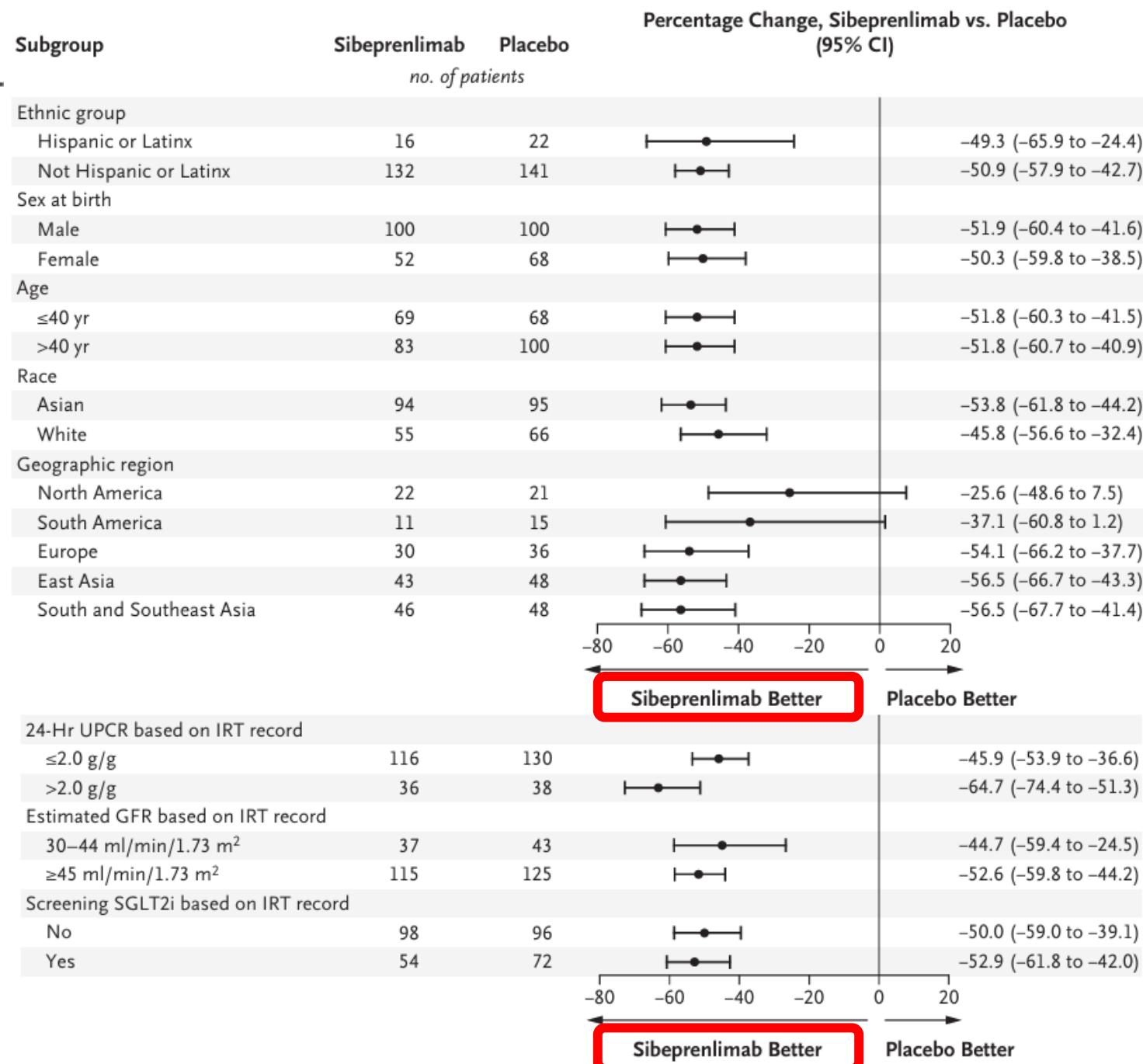
At 9 months

- UPCR: **50.2% reduction**

At 12 months,

- Hematuria positive ratio:
78.3 → 19.8%
- Gd-IgA1: **67.1 % reduction**

**Consistency was observed in
baseline histopathologic activity
and medication history**

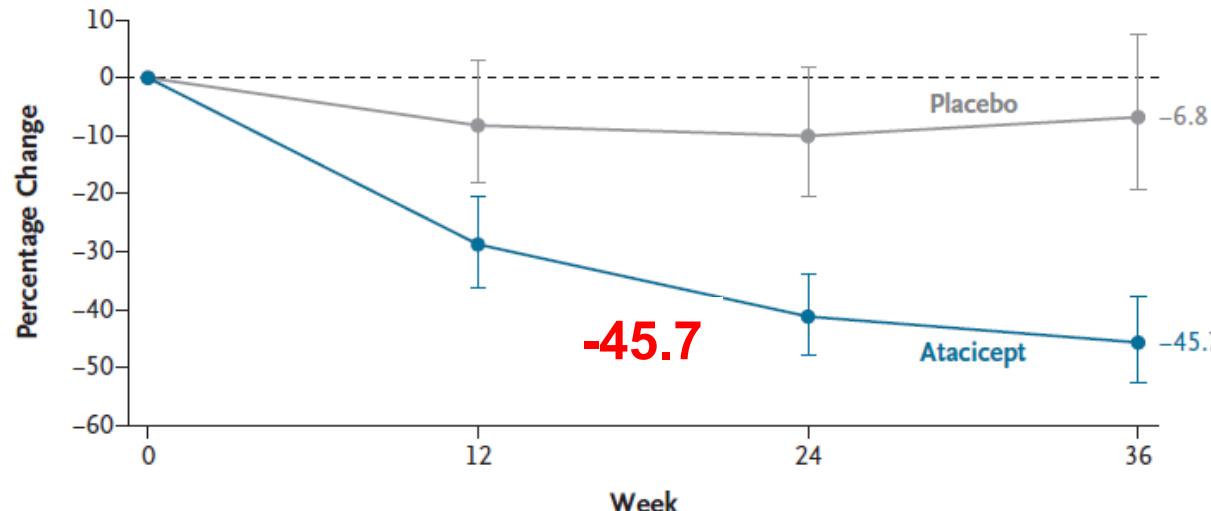


ORIGINAL ARTICLE

A Phase 3 Trial of Atacicept in Patients with IgA Nephropathy

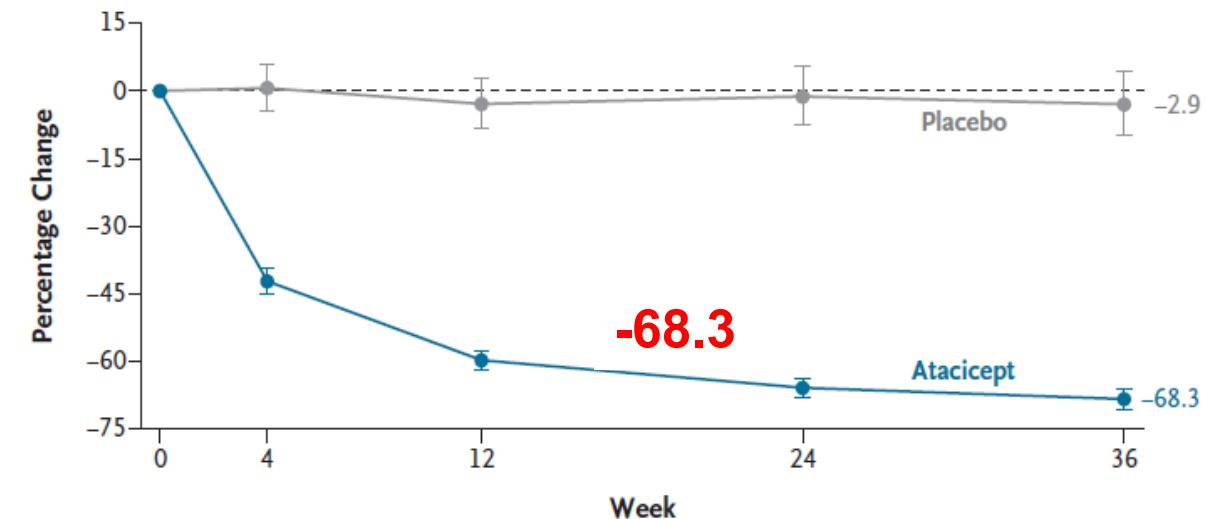
Richard Lafayette, M.D.,¹ Sean J. Barbour, M.D.,² Robert M. Brenner, M.D.,³ Kirk N. Campbell, M.D.,⁴ Tom Doan,³ Necmi Eren, M.D.,⁵ Jürgen Floege, M.D.,⁶ Vivekanand Jha, M.B., B.S., M.D., D.M.,⁷ Beom Seok Kim, M.D., Ph.D.,⁸ Adrian Liew, M.D.,⁹ Bart Maes, M.D., Ph.D.,¹⁰ Atanu Pal, M.D., D.M.,¹¹ Roberto Pecoits-Filho, M.D., Ph.D.,^{12,13} Richard K.S. Phoon, M.D.,^{14,15} Dana V. Rizk, M.D.,¹⁶ Hitoshi Suzuki, M.D., Ph.D.,¹⁷ Vladimir Tesař, M.D., Ph.D.,¹⁸ Hernán Trimarchi, M.D., Ph.D.,¹⁹ Xuelian Wei, Ph.D.,³ Hong Zhang, M.D., Ph.D.,²⁰ and Jonathan Barratt, Ph.D.,²¹ for the ORIGIN Phase 3 Trial Investigators*

Changes in UPCR

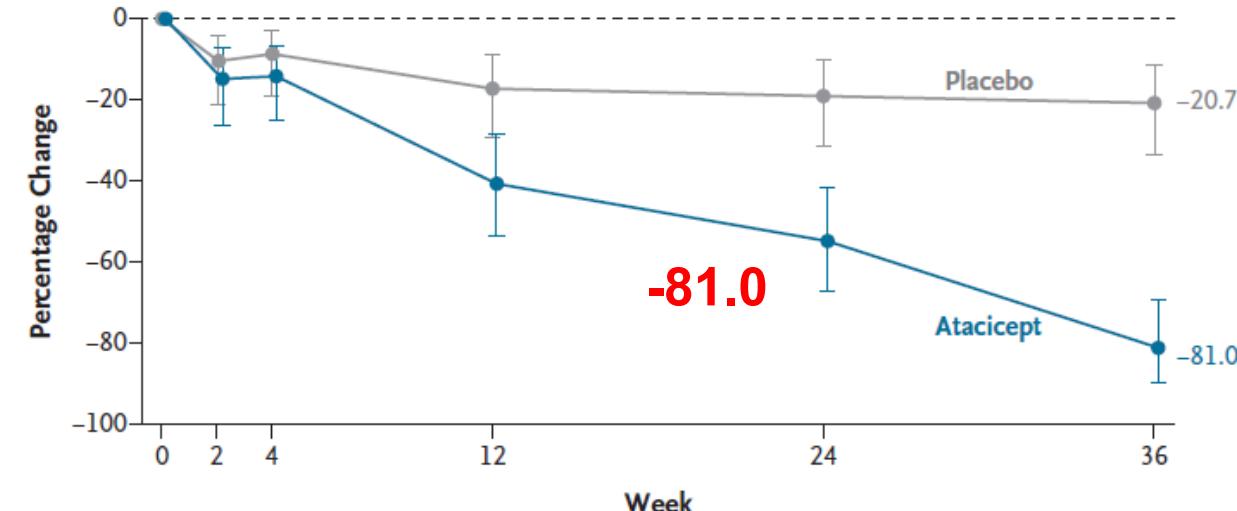


Atacicept: Dual blockade of BAFF and APRIL

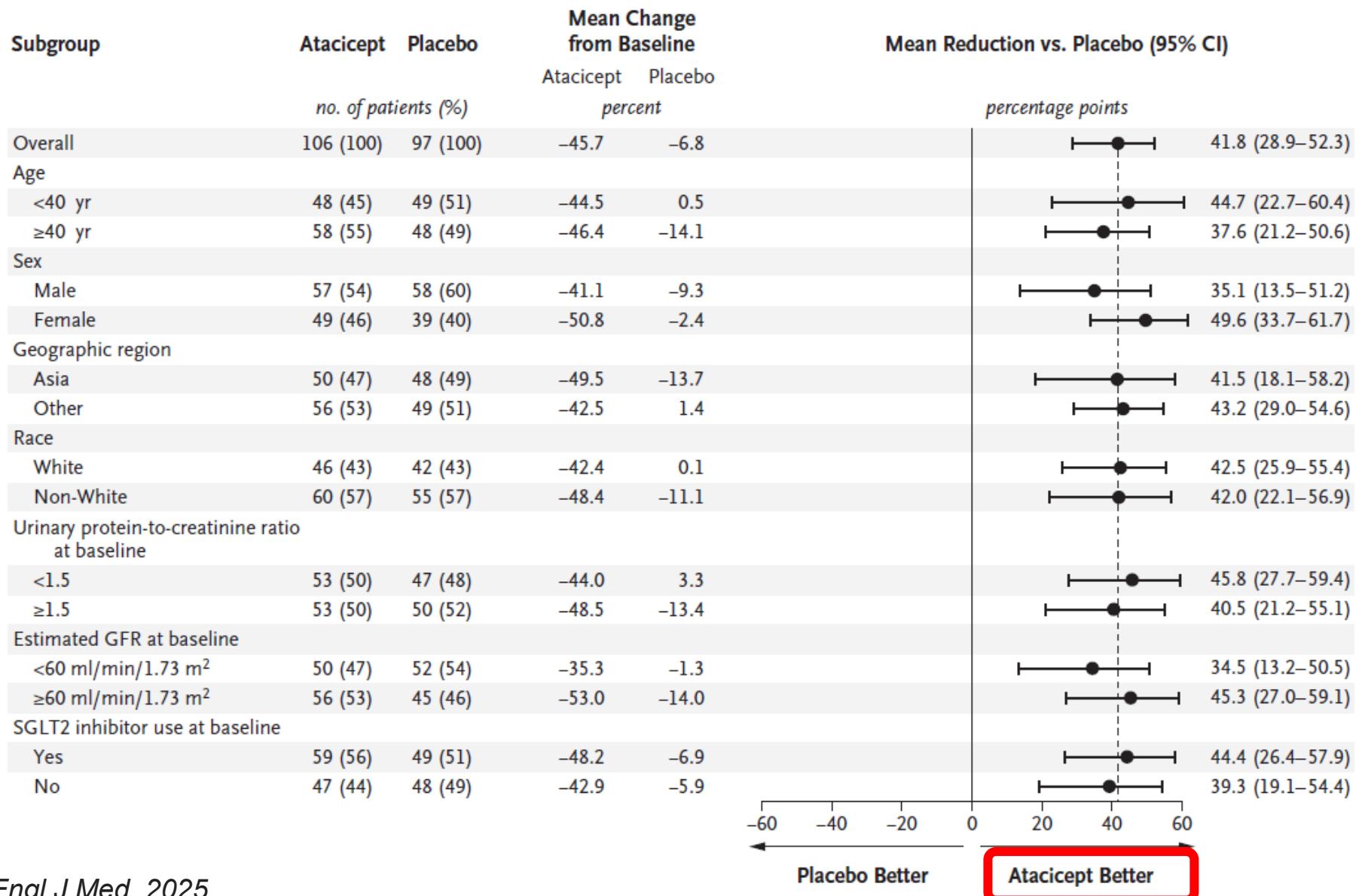
Changes in Gd-IgA1



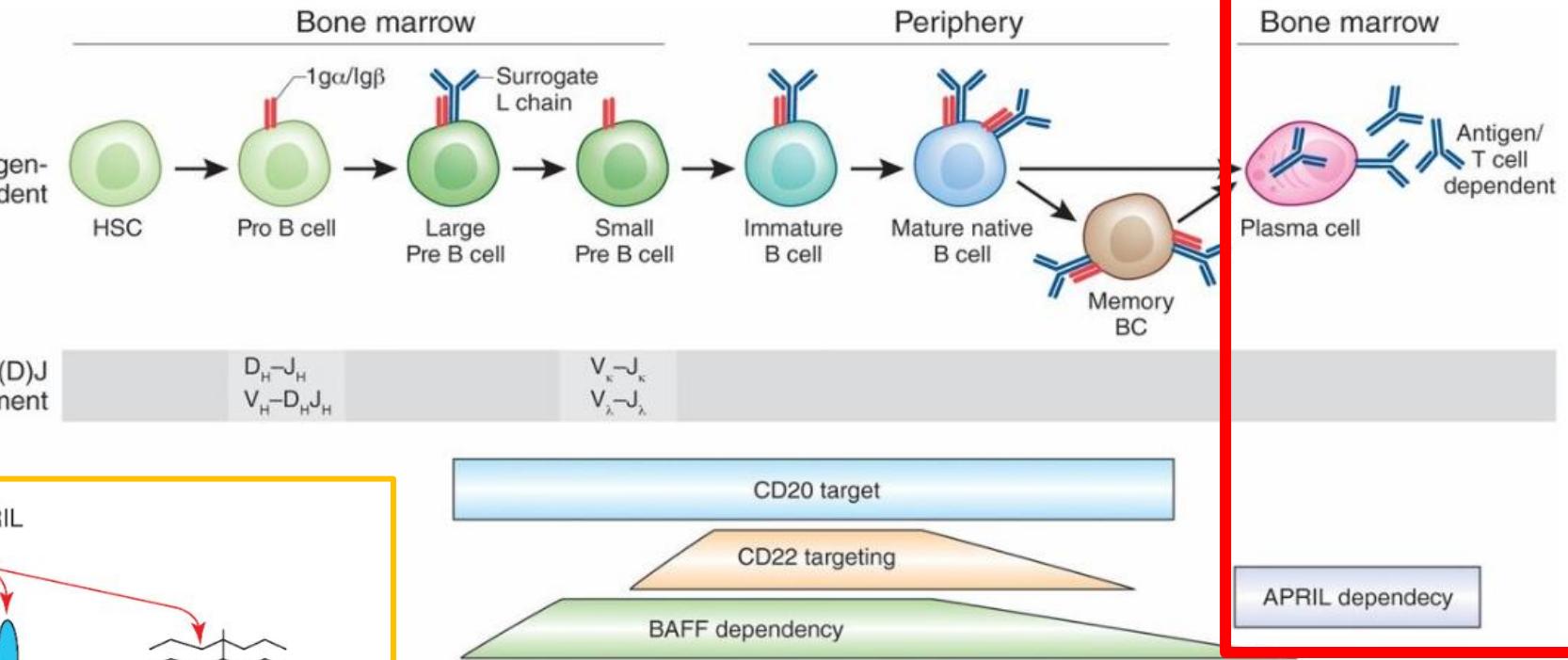
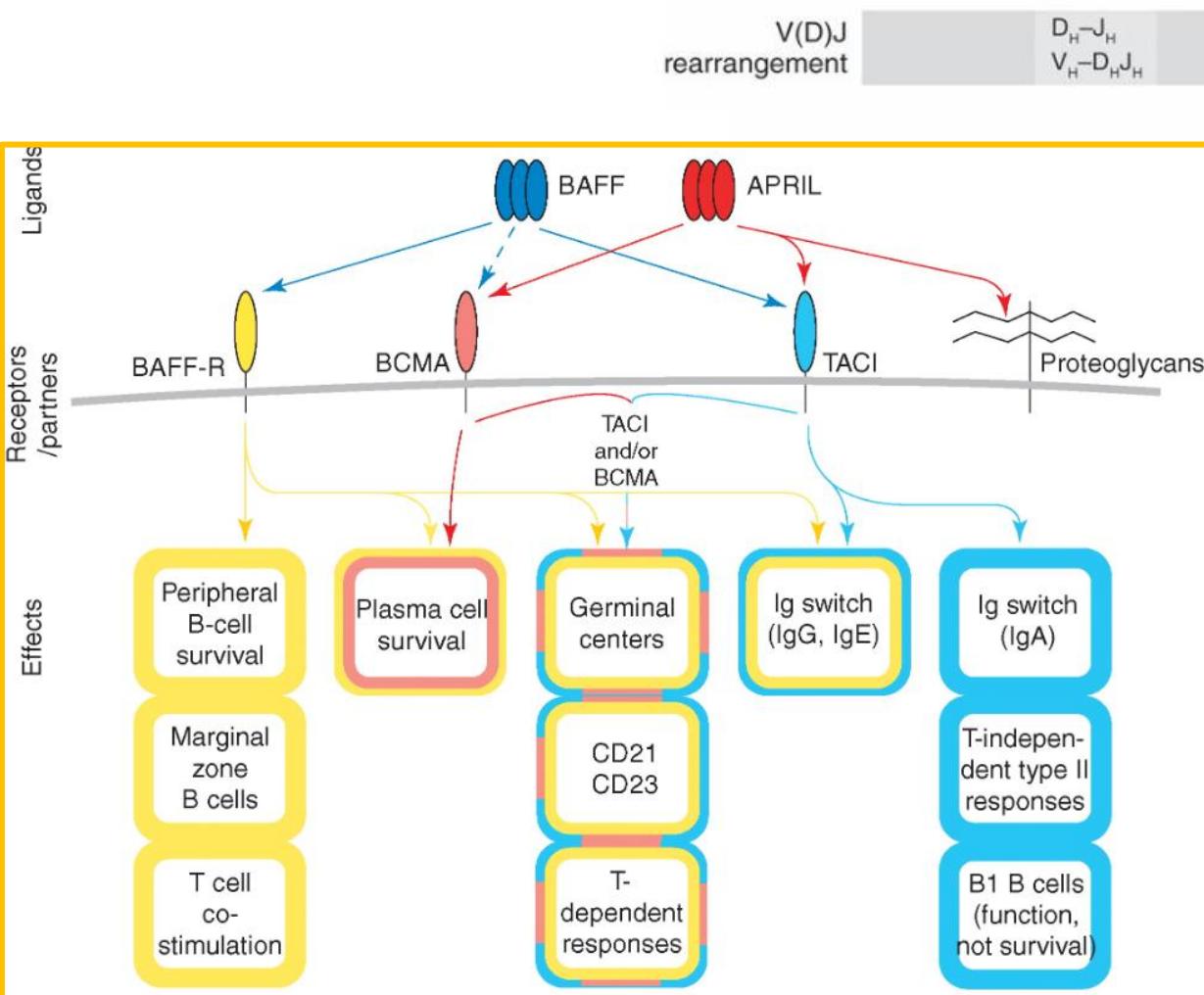
Changes in Hematuria



Consistency was observed in baseline histopathologic activity and medication history



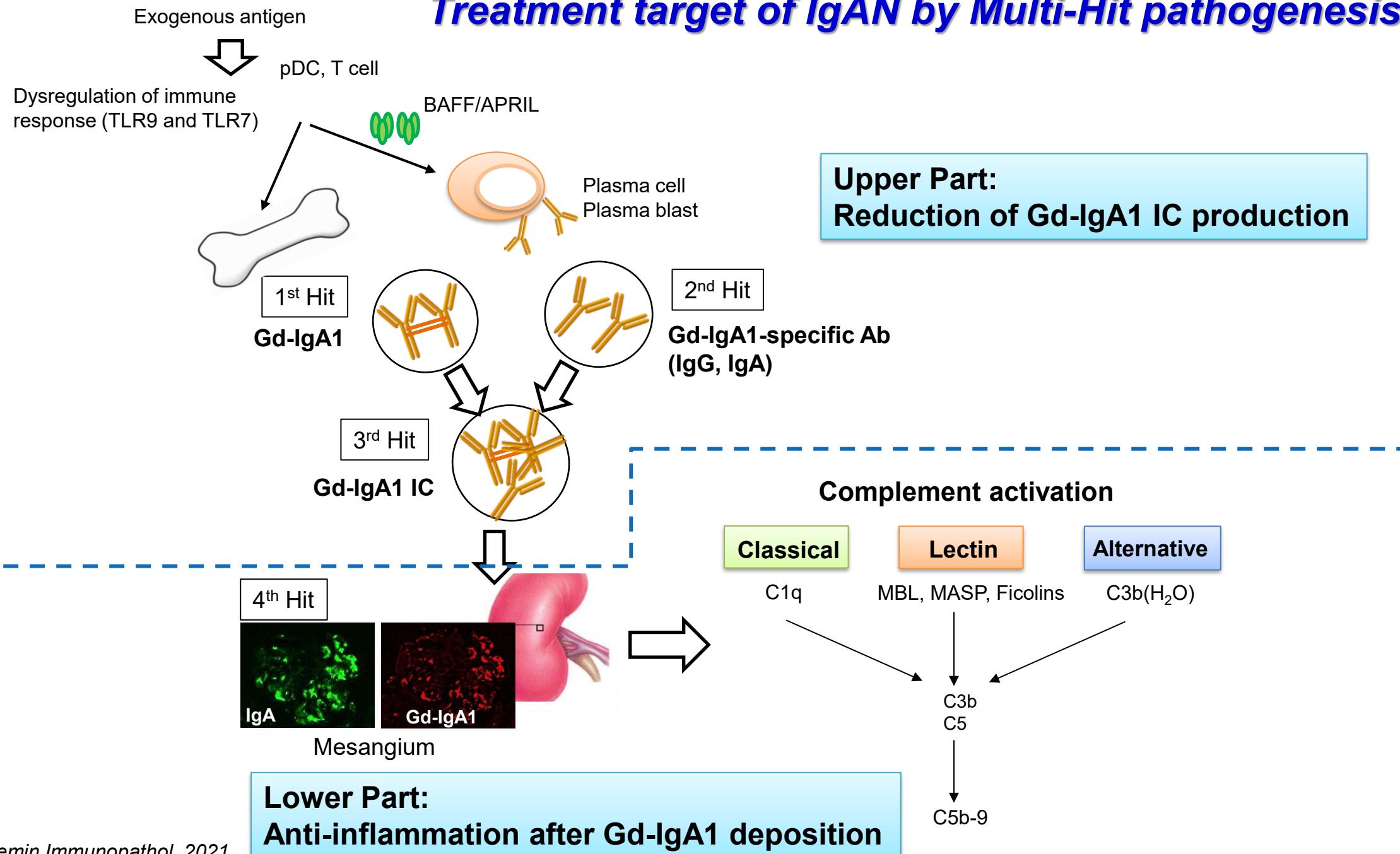
Interventions and their potential to target distinctly B lineage subsets and plasma cells



- ✓ BAFF bind strongly to BAFF-R and TACI and weakly to BCMA
- ✓ APRIL binds strongly to BCMA and moderately to TACI

Schrezenmeier E. J Am Soc Nephrol 29: 741-758, 2018
 Schneider P. Curr Opin Immunol 17: 282, 2005

Treatment target of IgAN by Multi-Hit pathogenesis





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非常感谢您的聆听





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