Rapalogs downmodulate intrinsic immunity and promote cell entry of SARS-CoV-2

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Abstract

SARS-CoV-2 infection in immunocompromised individuals is associated with prolonged virus
shedding and the evolution of viral variants. Rapamycin and its analogs (rapalogs, including
everolimus, temsirolimus, and ridaforolimus) are FDA-approved as mTOR inhibitors in clinical
settings such as cancer and autoimmunity. Rapalog use is commonly associated with increased
susceptibility to infection, which has been traditionally explained by impaired adaptive immunity.
Here, we show that exposure to rapalogs increases susceptibility to SARS-CoV-2 infection in
tissue culture and in immunologically naïve rodents by antagonizing the cell-intrinsic immune
response. By identifying one rapalog (ridaforolimus) lacking this function, we demonstrate that
rapalogs promote Spike-mediated entry into cells by triggering the lysosomal degradation of
IFITM2 and IFITM3. Rapalogs that promote virus entry inhibit the mTOR-mediated
phosphorylation of TFEB, a transcription factor controlling lysosome biogenesis and degradative
capacity. In the hamster model of infection, injection of rapamycin four hours prior to virus
exposure resulted in elevated virus titers in lungs and accelerated weight loss, while ridaforolimus
had milder effects. Furthermore, rapamycin significantly elevated mouse-adapted SARS-CoV-2
titers in lungs of mice. Overall, our findings indicate that preexisting use of certain rapalogs may
elevate host susceptibility to SARS-CoV-2 infection and disease by activating a lysosome-
mediated suppression of intrinsic immunity.

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Significance

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Rapamycin is an immunosuppressant used in humans to treat cancer, autoimmunity, and other
disease states. Here, we show that rapamycin and related compounds promote the first step of the
SARS-CoV-2 infection cycle—entry into cells—by disarming cell-intrinsic immune defenses. We
outline the molecular basis for this effect by identifying a rapamycin derivative that is inactive,
laying the foundation for improved mTOR inhibitors that do not suppress intrinsic immunity. We
find that rapamycin analogs that promote SARS-CoV-2 entry are those that activate TFEB, a
transcription factor that triggers the degradation of antiviral membrane proteins inside of cells.
Finally, rapamycin administration to rodents prior to SARS-CoV-2 challenge results in enhanced
viral disease, revealing that its use in humans may increase susceptibility to infection.
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Introduction

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Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) coronavirus (CoV)-2 emerged in humans in
2019 following a species jump from bats and a possible intermediate animal host and is the cause
of COVID-19, a respiratory and multi-organ disease of variable severity [1, 2]. The
characterization of virus-host interactions that dictate SARS-CoV-2 infection and COVID-19
severity is a major priority for public health [3]. Immune impairment, such as that resulting from
cancer, has been associated with prolonged SARS-CoV-2 shedding and the seeding of "super-
spreader" events [4-8].
One group of compounds being considered for the treatment of COVID-19-related
immunopathology are rapamycin (sirolimus, Rapamune) and rapamycin analogs (rapalogs) [9-20].
As Food and Drug Administration-approved inhibitors of mammalian target of rapamycin (mTOR)
kinase, these macrolide compounds are used therapeutically to inhibit the processes of cancer,

autoimmunity, graft versus host disease, atherosclerosis, and aging [21]. Rapalogs, including
everolimus (RAD-001), temsirolimus (Torisel, CCI-779), and ridaforolimus (deforolimus, AP-
23573), were developed to decrease the half-life of rapamycin *in vivo* in order to minimize the
systemic immunosuppression caused by rapamycin use, which is associated with increased
susceptibility to infections [22-26]. Differing by only a single functional group at carbon-40
(Figure 1), it is believed that rapamycin and rapalogs share the same molecular mechanism of
action to inhibit mTOR kinase—they bind to FK506-binding proteins (FKBP) and the resulting
complex physically interacts with mTOR and disrupts its signaling [25, 27].

Activation of mTOR promotes cell growth, cell proliferation, and cell survival [28]. In
addition, mTOR activation promotes pro-inflammatory T-cell differentiation and mTOR inhibitors
have been used to block lymphocyte proliferation and cytokine storm [29]. Since respiratory virus
infections like SARS-CoV-2 can cause disease by provoking hyper-inflammatory immune
responses that result in immunopathology [30-32], rapalogs are being tested as treatments to
decrease viral disease burden. At least three active clinical trials have been designed to test the
impact of rapamycin on COVID-19 severity in infected patients (NCT04461340, NCT04341675,
NCT04371640).

In addition to their potential utility for mitigating disease in individuals already infected by
SARS-CoV-2, there are also calls to use rapalogs as antiviral agents to inhibit virus infection itself
(i.e. as a prophylactic) [33]. It was recently shown that rapalogs inhibit SARS-CoV-2 replication
when added to cells post-infection [34], attesting to a potential use of rapalogs as antivirals in
infected individuals. Nonetheless, rapalogs are known to induce an immunosuppressed state in
humans characterized by an increased rate of infections, including those caused by respiratory
viruses. Furthermore, rapamycin administration concurrent with virus challenge has been shown
to promote Influenza A replication in mice and to exacerbate viral disease [35, 36], but the
mechanism was unknown. We previously found that exposure of human and murine cells to
rapamycin induced the lysosomal degradation of a select group of cellular proteins, including the
interferon-inducible transmembrane (IFITM) proteins, and rendered cells more permissive to
infection by Influenza A virus and gene-delivering lentiviral vectors [37, 38]. IFITM1, IFITM2,
and IFITM3 are expressed constitutively in a variety of tissues, are further upregulated by type-I
and type-II interferons, and are important components of cell-intrinsic immunity, the antiviral
network that defends individual cells against virus invasion [39, 40]. Nonetheless, it remained to
be determined how rapamycin-mediated regulation of intrinsic immunity impacts host
susceptibility to virus infection *in vivo*.

In this report, we show that rapalogs differentially counteract the constitutive and
interferon-induced antiviral state in lung cells and increase permissiveness to SARS-CoV-2
infection. We found that the enhancing effect of rapalogs on SARS-CoV-2 infection is functionally
linked to their capacity to trigger degradation of IFITM proteins, particularly IFITM2 and IFITM3.
By identifying a rapalog that lacks this activity, we found that IFITM protein turnover and SARS-
CoV-2 infection enhancement are associated with activation of TFEB, a master regulator of
lysosome function that is regulated by mTOR. Administration of rapamycin to naive rodents four
hours prior to experimental SARS-CoV-2 infection increased virus replication and viral disease
severity, indicating for the first time that suppression of intrinsic immunity by rapamycin
contributes to its immunosuppressive properties *in vivo*.

Results

Select rapalogs promote SARS-CoV-2 infection and downmodulate IFITM proteins in lung cells

To assess how rapamycin and rapalogs impact SARS-CoV-2 infection, we took advantage of a pseudovirus system based on human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). This pseudovirus (HIV-CoV-2 S) is limited to a single round of infection, cell entry is mediated by SARS-CoV-2 Spike, and infection of target cells is measured by luciferase activity. SARS-CoV-2 can enter cells via multiple routes, and sequential proteolytic processing of Spike is essential to this process. SARS-CoV-2 Spike is cleaved at a polybasic motif (RRAR) located at the S1/S2 boundary by furin-like proteases in virus-producing cells prior to release. Subsequently, the S2' site is cleaved by the trypsin-like proteases TMPRSS2 on the target cell surface or cathepsins B and L in target cell endosomes, triggering membrane fusion at those sites [41-43].

Using A549-ACE2 (transformed human lung epithelial cells that, in addition to overexpressing the ACE2 receptor, naturally express TMPRSS2), we pre-treated cells with 20 μM rapamycin, everolimus, temsirolimus, ridaforolimus, or DMSO (vehicle control) for four hours and then challenged cells with HIV-CoV-2. Interestingly, we found that rapalogs promoted Spike-mediated infection to different extents: rapamycin, everolimus, and temsirolimus significantly enhanced infection (up to 5-fold) while ridaforolimus did not **(Figure 2A)**. To determine whether rapalogs promote cell permissiveness to infection by upregulating dependency factors or by downregulating restriction factors, we performed the same experiment in cells pre-treated with type-I interferon. While type-I interferon suppressed infection by approximately 90%, the addition of rapamycin, everolimus, and temsirolimus resulted in rescue of infection by up to 20-fold **(Figure 2A)**. As a result, infection levels were partially restored to those achieved in the absence of interferon, with everolimus having the greatest boosting effect and ridaforolimus having no effect. Therefore, rapalogs differentially promote SARS-CoV-2 Spike-mediated infection by counteracting intrinsic antiviral defenses in lung cells to different extents.

Type-I interferon treatment of A549-ACE2 resulted in upregulation of *IFITM2* and *IFITM3*, as detected by an antibody recognizing both proteins in whole cell lysates **(Figure 2B)**. A549-ACE2 cells express low but detectable levels of IFITM2/3 in the absence of interferon treatment **(Supplemental Figure 1A)**. Consistent with our previous publication, addition of rapamycin resulted in substantial loss of IFITM2/3 protein levels from cells. In a manner that mirrored the differential effects of rapalogs on pseudovirus infection, everolimus and temsirolimus greatly diminished IFITM2/3 levels while ridaforolimus reduced IFITM2/3 to a lesser extent **(Figure 2B)**. In contrast, ACE2 levels were not affected by interferon nor by rapalog treatment. Therefore, rapamycin derivatives may facilitate infection by antagonizing constituents of intrinsic immunity, including IFITM2/3, and this activity is determined by the chemical moiety found at carbon-40 of the macrolide structure.

To extend our findings to primary lung cells, we performed similar experiments in human small airway epithelial cells (HSAEC). While these cells were not permissive to HIV-CoV-2, they were susceptible to infection by pseudovirus based on vesicular stomatitis virus (VSV-CoV-2) whereby infection is reported by GFP expression. Pre-treatment of HSAEC with rapalogs enhanced VSV-CoV-2 infection to varying extents, but as observed in A549-ACE2 cells, everolimus exhibited the greatest effect and ridaforolimus, the least. Endogenous IFITM3 was readily detected in HSAEC under basal conditions (in the absence of interferon), while IFITM1 was barely detected and IFITM2 was not detected at all, and IFITM3 levels were downmodulated differentially by rapalogs **(Supplemental Figure 1B)**. siRNA-mediated knockdown of IFITM3 in

HSAEC resulted in enhanced VSV-CoV-2 infection, indicating that IFITM3 restricts Spike-
mediated infection in these cells **(Supplemental Figure 1C)**. We also treated semi-transformed
nasal epithelial cells known as UNCNN2TS with rapalogs in order to assess an impact on
endogenous IFITM3 levels. As observed in HSAEC, downmodulation of IFITM3 occurred
following treatment of UNCNN2TS with rapamycin, everolimus, temsirolimus, and to a lesser
extent, ridaforolimus **(Supplemental Figure 1D)**.
Since 20 μM quantities of rapalogs promoted pseudovirus infection mediated by SARS-
CoV-2 Spike, we tested how pretreatment of A549-ACE2 cells with varying amounts of
everolimus impacted infection by replication-competent SARS-CoV-2. We observed a dose-
dependent enhancement of infectious SARS-CoV-2 yield in supernatants of infected cells (up to
4-fold) **(Figure 2D)**. Therefore, everolimus boosts pseudovirus infection and SARS-CoV-2
infection to similar extents, and since Spike is the only viral component shared between the two
sources of infection, cellular entry is the infection stage inhibited by the intrinsic defenses that are
sensitive to downmodulation by rapalogs.
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200 **Rapalogs facilitate cell entry mediated by various viral fusion proteins**
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In order to gain a greater mechanistic understanding of the effects of rapalogs on SARS-
CoV-2 infection, we took advantage of HeLa cells overexpressing ACE2 (HeLa-ACE2). HeLa-
ACE2 were pre-treated for four hours with increasing amounts of everolimus and then challenged
with SARS-CoV-2. Everolimus increased titers of infectious virus released into supernatants in a
dose-dependent manner, and to a greater extent than was observed for A549-ACE2 cells **(Figure
3A)**. Furthermore, we found that pre-treatment of cells with 20 μM amounts of rapalogs enhanced
SARS-CoV-2 titers to varying extents **(Figure 3B)**. Rapamycin, everolimus, and temsirolimus
significantly boosted SARS-CoV-2 infection (up to 10-fold) while ridaforolimus had less of an
impact. We also performed infections of HeLa-ACE2 with HIV-CoV-2 pseudovirus, and the
results were similar—ridaforolimus was inactive while the other three compounds significantly
boosted Spike-mediated infection **(Figure 3C)**. To test the link between infection enhancement
and downmodulation of IFITM proteins by rapalogs, we probed for levels of IFITM3, IFITM2,
and IFITM1 by immunoblotting whole cell lysates and by immunofluorescence in intact cells using
specific antibodies. All IFITM proteins were readily detected in HeLa-ACE2 in the absence of
interferon. IFITM3, IFITM2, and IFITM1 were significantly downmodulated following treatment
with rapamycin, everolimus, and temsirolimus, but ridaforolimus had little to no effect on their
expression **(Figure 3D-E)**. In contrast, ridaforolimus reduced levels of IFITM proteins to a lesser
extent. Furthermore, prolonged treatment (24 hours) of cells with everolimus and temsirolimus
resulted in strong suppression of IFITM2 and IFITM3 protein levels **(Supplemental Figure 2A)**.
We confirmed that depletion of IFITM proteins by rapalogs occurs at the post-translational level,
since bafilomycin A1, an inhibitor of endolysosomal acidification and function, prevented their
loss **(Supplemental Figure 2B)**. We previously showed that lysosomal degradation of IFITM3
triggered by rapamycin occurs as a result of multivesicular body (MVB)-lysosome fusion, a
process that does not require an autophagosome intermediate [44]. Here, we used SAR405, a
selective inhibitor of phosphatidylinositol-3-phosphate (PI3P) production by vps34/PI3KC3 [45]
to prevent macroautophagy induction. At a concentration sufficient to reduce intracellular PI3P
(Supplemental Figure 2C), SAR405 did not prevent degradation of IFITM2/3 following
treatment with rapamycin, everolimus, or temsirolimus **(Supplemental Figure 2D)**. Therefore,
rapamycin and specific rapalogs trigger the degradation of endogenous factors mediating intrinsic

resistance to SARS-CoV-2 infection, including the IFITM proteins, by promoting their turnover
in lysosomes via the macroautophagy-independent MVB pathway.
Enveloped virus entry into cells is a concerted process involving virus attachment to the
cell surface followed by fusion of cellular and viral membranes. Since IFITM proteins are known
to inhibit virus-cell membrane fusion, we quantified the terminal stage of HIV-CoV-2 entry by
tracking the cytosolic delivery of beta-lactamase (BlaM) in single cells. We found that treatment
of cells with rapamycin, everolimus, and temsirolimus resulted in enhanced HIV-CoV-2 entry
while ridaforolimus had no such effect **(Figure 4A)**. To measure whether rapalogs promote the
cell entry process driven by other coronavirus Spike proteins, we produced HIV incorporating
Spike from SARS-CoV (HIV-CoV-1) or MERS-CoV (HIV-MERS-CoV). Infections by both HIV-
CoV-1 and HIV-MERS-CoV were elevated by rapalog treatment in HeLa-ACE2 and HeLa-DPP4,
respectively, although the extent of enhancement was lower than that observed with HIV-CoV-2
(Figure 4B-C). Consistently, ridaforolimus was the least active among the rapalogs tested and it
did not significantly promote pseudovirus infection. Since we previously showed that rapamycin
promoted the cellular entry of Influenza A virus and VSV-G pseudotyped lentiviral vectors [44],
we also assessed infection of pseudoviruses incorporating hemagglutinin (HIV-HA) or VSV G
(HIV-VSV G). Rapamycin, everolimus, and especially temsirolimus boosted HA- and VSV G-
mediated infections (up to 30-fold and 11-fold, respectively), while ridaforolimus was inactive
(Figure 4D-E). Since IFITM proteins have been previously shown to inhibit infection by SARS-
CoV-1, MERS-CoV, VSV, and Influenza A virus [40], these data suggest that rapalogs promote
infection, at least in part, by lowering the barrier to virus entry imposed by IFITM proteins.
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253 **IFITM2/3 mediate the rapalog-sensitive barrier to SARS-CoV-2 infection in HeLa-ACE2**
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To formally address how rapalog-mediated depletion of IFITM proteins impacts SARS-
CoV-2 Spike-mediated entry, we used HeLa cells in which IFITM1, IFITM2, and IFITM3 are
knocked out (*IFITM1-3* KO) and introduced human ACE2 by transient transfection
(Supplemental Figure 3A). IFITM2 alone or both IFITM2 and IFITM3 were restored in *IFITM1-
3* KO cells by transient overexpression **(Supplemental Figure 3B)** and cells were challenged with
HIV-CoV-2. Relative to WT cells, HIV-CoV-2 infection was approximately 50-fold higher in
IFITM1-3 KO cells, indicating that endogenous IFITM proteins restrict SARS-CoV-2 Spike-
mediated infection. Furthermore, while temsirolimus significantly promoted infection by 10-fold
in WT cells, little to no enhancement was observed in *IFITM1-3* KO cells **(Supplemental Figure
3C)**. Ectopic expression of IFITM2 inhibited infection and partially restored sensitivity to
temsirolimus, while the combination of IFITM2 and IFITM3 restricted infection further and fully
restored temsirolimus sensitivity. These findings indicate that temsirolimus promotes Spike-
mediated infection in HeLa-ACE2 cells by lowering levels of endogenous IFITM2 and IFITM3.
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269 **Rapalogs differentially activate a lysosomal degradation pathway orchestrated by TFEB**
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Since rapamycin and rapalogs are known to inhibit signaling by mTOR by binding both
mTOR and FKBP12 (and other FKBP members), we sought to determine whether mTOR binding
and its inhibition are required for rapalog-mediated enhancement of SARS-CoV-2 infection. To
that end, we tested the effect of tacrolimus (also known as FK506), a macrolide
immunosuppressant that is chemically related to rapalogs but does not bind nor inhibit mTOR.
Instead, tacrolimus forms a ternary complex with FKBP12 and calcineurin to inhibit the signaling

properties of the latter [46]. In HeLa-ACE2 cells, a four-hour treatment of 20 μM tacrolimus did
not reduce levels of IFITM2/3 **(Supplemental Figure 4A)**, nor did it boost HIV-CoV-2 infection
(Supplemental Figure 4B). These results suggest that FKBP12 binding is not sufficient for drug-
mediated enhancement of SARS-CoV-2 infection. They also suggest that the extent to which
mTOR is inhibited may explain the differential degree to which infection is impacted by the
immunosuppressants examined in this study. Therefore, we surveyed the phosphorylation status
of TFEB, a transcription factor that controls lysosome biogenesis and degradative processes
carried out by lysosomes [47]. mTOR phosphorylates TFEB at serine 211 (S211), which promotes
its sequestration in the cell cytoplasm and decreases its translocation into the nucleus [47-49].
Furthermore, this phosphorylation event was previously shown to be sensitive to inhibition by
rapamycin and temsirolimus [48, 50]. We found that rapamycin, everolimus, and temsirolimus
significantly reduced S211 phosphorylation of endogenous TFEB in A549-ACE2 cells while
ridaforolimus did not **(Figure 5A-B)**. Loss of pTFEB (S211) following treatment with
temsirolimus was associated with significantly elevated protein levels of several TFEB-regulated
genes (cathepsin L, VAMP8, syntaxin 8, M6PR, and SCAMP2 [51, 52]) as measured using
proteomics by mass spectrometry **(Figure 5C)**.
We also assessed the effect of temsirolimus and ridaforolimus on TFEB phosphorylation
in HeLa-ACE2 cells. As observed in A549-ACE2, temsirolimus significantly reduced pTFEB
(S211) levels while ridaforolimus did not **(Figure 6A-B)**. Furthermore, we measured the
subcellular distribution of TFEB-GFP in HeLa-ACE2 treated with different compounds and found
that, compared to ridaforolimus, temsirolimus induced a significantly greater accumulation of
TFEB-GFP in the nucleus **(Figure 6C-D)**. These findings suggest that ridaforolimus exhibits a
less potent inhibition of mTOR-mediated TFEB phosphorylation. Therefore, nuclear translocation
of TFEB is associated with IFITM2/3 degradation and increased cellular susceptibility to SARS-
CoV-2 Spike-mediated infection. Consistent with a direct relationship between TFEB activation,
IFITM2/3 turnover, and Spike-mediated cell entry, we found that ectopic expression of a
constitutively active form of TFEB lacking the first 30 amino-terminal residues [47] was sufficient
to trigger IFITM2/3 loss from cells **(Figure 6F-G)** and sufficient to increase susceptibility to HIV-
CoV-2 infection **(Figure 6H)**. In summary, our results employing functionally divergent rapalogs
reveal a previously unrecognized immunoregulatory role played by the mTOR-TFEB-lysosome
axis that affects the cell entry of SARS-CoV-2 and other viruses.
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309 **Rapamycin enhances SARS-CoV-2 infection and viral disease *in vivo***
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Our findings from SARS-CoV-2 and pseudovirus infection of human cells demonstrate
that rapamycin, everolimus, and temsirolimus can suppress intrinsic immunity at the post-
translational level, while ridaforolimus does not. However, whether these compounds are
functionally divergent when administered *in vivo* was unclear. Since temsirolimus is a prodrug of
rapamycin (it is metabolized to rapamycin), and since rapamycin was previously shown to promote
morbidity of Influenza A infection in mice [36, 53], we tested how intraperitoneal injection of
rapamycin, ridaforolimus, or DMSO before intranasal challenge with SARS-CoV-2 impacted
virus replication and disease course in naïve hamsters **(Figure 7A)**. Hamsters are a permissive
model for SARS-CoV-2 because hamster ACE2 is sufficiently similar to human ACE2 to support
productive infection. Furthermore, in contrast to transgenic mice expressing human ACE2 or mice
infected with mouse-adapted (MA) SARS-CoV-2, hamsters exhibit severe disease characterized
by lung pathology when high viral loads are achieved [54]. Four hamsters were randomly allocated

to each group. Relative to DMSO treatment, hamsters injected with rapamycin four hours prior to challenge exhibited a significantly greater loss of body weight at days 2-5 post-infection **(Figure 7B)**. In contrast, ridaforolimus treatment impacted weight loss to a slightly lesser extent, with significant differences from DMSO apparent at days 3 and 4 post-infection. While none of the hamsters treated with DMSO exhibited severe weight loss necessitating euthanasia and body weights recovered, three of the four animals treated with rapamycin were euthanized on day 7 post-infection, and the fourth animal was found dead on day 8. Meanwhile, two of the four hamsters treated with ridaforolimus met requirements for euthanasia on day 7 post-infection, and the two survivors recovered body weight between days 8 and 10 post-infection **(Figure 7B)**. As a result, hamsters treated with rapamycin exhibited significantly reduced survival compared to the DMSO group **(Figure 7C)**. Early SARS-CoV-2 replication was measured by quantitative PCR from oral swabs taken on day 2 post-infection. While there was large variance among hamsters in the DMSO group, rapamycin-treated hamsters exhibited a higher viral burden on average while ridaforolimus-treated hamsters exhibited more moderate increases **(Figure 7D)**. Terminal viral titers in lungs were also measured following euthanasia. Infectious virus was undetectable in the lungs of DMSO-treated hamsters on day 10 post-infection, indicative of viral clearance **(Figure 7E)**. In contrast, infectious virus was detected in lungs of the three rapamycin-treated hamsters that were euthanized on day 7 post-infection (the fourth hamster that was found dead on day 8 was not examined). By comparison, virus detected in lungs of two ridaforolimus-treated hamsters euthanized on the same day were lower on average. No infectious virus was detected in lungs from the remaining two hamsters treated with ridaforolimus that survived until the end of the study. Overall, these results suggest that rapamycin administration just prior to SARS-CoV-2 exposure increases host susceptibility to infection and significantly increases morbidity and mortality in a manner that is associated with elevated virus replication.

We previously found that, like its human counterpart, murine IFITM3 is sensitive to depletion by rapamycin [44]. To confirm that rapamycin promotes host susceptibility to SARS-CoV-2 infection, we injected C57BL/6 mice with rapamycin or DMSO four hours prior to challenge with MA SARS-CoV-2 and measured infectious viral burden in lungs upon euthanasia on day 2 post-infection **(Figure 7F)**. We found that virus titers were significantly increased (144-fold) in rapamycin-treated mice compared to DMSO-treated mice **(Figure 7G)**, supporting the notion that rapamycin downmodulates intrinsic barriers to infection *in vivo*.

Discussion

By assessing their impact on infection at the single-cell and whole-organism level, we draw attention to an immunosuppressive property of rapamycin and some rapalogs that acts on cell-intrinsic immunity and increases cellular susceptibility to infection by SARS-CoV-2 and likely other pathogenic viruses. Side effects of rapalog use in humans, including increased risk of respiratory tract infections, are regularly attributed to immunosuppression of adaptive immunity [55]. Indeed, rapalogs have been used to mitigate systemic immunopathology caused by T-cell responses, and this is one reason why they are being tested for therapeutic benefit in COVID-19 patients. However, by injecting rapamycin into immunologically naïve hosts just prior to virus challenge, it is unlikely that rapalogs used in our experiments modulated adaptive immunity against SARS-CoV-2. Therefore, while immunomodulation of adaptive immunity by rapalogs may provide benefit for patients already suffering from COVID-19, pre-existing rapalog use may enhance susceptibility by counteracting cell-intrinsic immunity. The injection dose of rapamycin

or ridaforolimus (3 mg/kg) that we administered once to hamsters or daily to mice, when adjusted
for body surface area and an average human weight of 60 kg [56], equates to approximately 15 mg
per human. This figure is similar to those administered to humans in clinical settings, such as the
use of rapamycin for the treatment of glioblastoma (up to 10 mg daily for multiple days) or the use
of temsirolimus for the treatment of renal cell carcinoma (25 mg once weekly) [23, 57, 58].
Therefore, our results may provide new insight into how rapamycin and rapalogs elicit unintended
immunocompromised states in humans.
By leveraging the differential functional properties of rapalogs, we reveal how the mTOR-
TFEB-lysosome axis impacts intrinsic resistance to SARS-CoV-2 and other virus infections.
Specifically, rapamycin and select rapalogs (everolimus and temsirolimus) promote infection at
the stage of cell entry, and this is functionally associated with nuclear accumulation of TFEB and
the lysosomal degradation of IFITM proteins **(Figure 8)**. While mTOR phosphorylates TFEB at
S211 to promote the sequestration of TFEB in the cytoplasm, the phosphatase calcineurin
dephosphorylates TFEB at this position to promote nuclear translocation [59]. Therefore, the
extent to which different rapalogs promote nuclear TFEB accumulation may be a consequence of
differential mTOR inhibition and/or differential calcineurin activation. Calcineurin is activated by
calcium release through the lysosomal calcium channel TRPML1 (also known as mucolipin-1)
[59], and interestingly, it was shown that rapamycin and temsirolimus, but not ridaforolimus,
promote calcium release by TRPML1 [50]. Therefore, it is worth examining whether TRPML1 or
related lysosomal calcium channels are required for the effects of rapalogs on virus infection.
Overall, our findings reveal a previously unrecognized mechanism by which TFEB promotes virus
infections—inhibition of cell-intrinsic defenses restricting virus entry. We show that nuclear TFEB
induces the degradation of IFITM proteins, but it may also trigger the loss or relocalization of other
antiviral factors. Furthermore, TFEB-mediated induction of dependency factors, such as cathepsin
L, is likely to partially contribute to the overall impact of rapalogs on SARS-CoV-2 infection. Our
proteomics dataset will facilitate the identification of additional factors regulated by
rapalogs/TFEB that play positive and negative roles during SARS-CoV-2 and other virus
infections. Nonetheless, this work identifies TFEB as a therapeutic target, and inhibitors that limit
levels of nuclear TFEB could be mobilized for broad-spectrum antiviral activity.
We previously demonstrated that treatment of cells with micromolar quantities of
rapamycin induced the lysosomal degradation of IFITM2/3 via a pathway that is independent of
macroautophagy yet dependent upon endosomal complexes required for transport (ESCRT)-
mediated sorting of IFITM2/3 into intraluminal vesicles of late endosomes/MVB [37]. This MVB-
mediated degradation pathway is also referred to as microautophagy, which occurs directly on
endosomal or lysosomal membranes and involves membrane invagination [60]. In both yeast and
mammalian cells, microautophagy is characterized by ESCRT-dependent sorting of
endolysosomal membrane proteins into intraluminal vesicles followed by their degradation by
lysosomal hydrolases [61]. While microautophagy selectively targets ubiquitinated endolysosomal
membrane proteins, cytosolic proteins can also be non-selectively internalized into intraluminal
vesicles and degraded [62, 63]. Interestingly, microautophagy is known to be regulated by mTOR
[64, 65], and mTOR inhibition triggers a ubiquitin- and ESCRT-dependent turnover of vacuolar
(lysosomal) membrane proteins in yeast [66, 67]. Overall, our findings suggest that select rapalogs
induce a rapid endolysosomal membrane remodeling program controlled by TFEB, and IFITM
proteins are among the client proteins subjected to this pathway. The full cast of cellular factors
that orchestrate this selective degradation program in mammalian cells and the other client proteins
subjected to it will need to be worked out. Interestingly, the E3 ubiquitin ligase NEDD4 was

previously shown to ubiquitinate IFITM2 and IFITM3 and to induce their lysosomal degradation
in mammalian cells [68, 69], while Rsp5, the yeast ortholog of NEDD4, was shown to ubiquitinate
vacuolar proteins turned over by microautophagy in yeast [70]. Therefore, rapamycin and select
rapalogs may upregulate NEDD4 function, resulting in selective degradation of a subset of the
cellular proteome that includes IFITM proteins. Indeed, NEDD4 and the related NEDD4L are
among the known target genes regulated by TFEB [52].
The relationship between IFITM proteins and human coronaviruses is complex. It was
previously shown that IFITM3 facilitates replication of the seasonal coronavirus hCoV-OC43 [71],
while we and others recently showed that SARS-CoV-1 and SARS-CoV-2 infection is inhibited
by ectopic and endogenous IFITM1, IFITM2, and IFITM3 from mice and humans [72-76].
Intriguingly, mutants of human IFITM3 that lack the capacity to internalize into endosomes lost
antiviral activity and promoted SARS-CoV-2 and MERS-CoV infection, revealing that IFITM3
can either inhibit or enhance infection depending on its subcellular localization [72, 77].
Furthermore, one study reported that endogenous human IFITM proteins promoted infection by
SARS-CoV-2 in certain human tissues [78]. Overall, the net effect of human IFITM proteins on
SARS-CoV-2 infection *in vivo* remains unclear. However, the impact of rapamycin in our
experimental SARS-CoV-2 infections of hamsters and mice suggests that rapamycin-mediated
loss of IFITM proteins favors virus infection and viral disease, consistent with IFITM proteins
performing antiviral roles against SARS-CoV-2 in those species.
Other lines of evidence support an antiviral role for IFITM proteins during SARS-CoV-2
infection in humans. While SARS-CoV-2 infection has been shown to cause deficiencies in
interferon synthesis and interferon response pathways, administration of type I interferon *in vivo*
promotes SARS-CoV-2 clearance in hamsters and humans [79]. Notably, IFITM3 is among the
most highly induced genes in primary human lung epithelial cells exposed to SARS-CoV-2 [80,
81], and humans experiencing mild or moderative COVID-19 showed elevated induction of
antiviral genes, including *IFITM1* and *IFITM3*, in airway epithelium compared to individuals
suffering from more severe COVID-19 [82]. Single nucleotide polymorphisms in human *IFITM3*
known as ns12252 and rs34481144, which lead to IFITM3 loss-of-function, have been associated
with severe outcomes following Influenza A virus infection as well as severe COVID-19 [83, 84].
These data suggest that cell-intrinsic immunity in airways plays a role in restricting virus spread
and constraining systemic pathology during infection. Therefore, downmodulation of IFITM
proteins, and possibly other cellular proteins, by select rapalogs may contribute to the
immunocompromised state that these drugs are well known to elicit in humans. This possibility
warrants the close examination of different rapalog regimens on respiratory virus acquisition and
disease in humans.
450
451 **Materials and Methods**
452
453 **Cell lines, cell culture, inhibitors, and cytokines**
454
HEK293T cells were obtained from ATCC (CRL-3216). HeLa-ACE2, HeLa-DPP4, and A549-
ACE2 cell lines were produced by transducing cells with lentivirus packaging pWPI encoding
ACE2 or DPP4 and selecting with blasticidin. HeLa IFITM1/2/3 Knockout (C5-9) cells were
purchased from ATCC (CRL-3452). Primary human small airway (lung) epithelial cells (HSAEC)
were purchased from ATCC (PCS-301-010). The partially immortalized nasal epithelial cell line
(UNCNN2TS) was kindly provided by Scott H. Randell (University of North Carolina School of

Medicine). Vero E6 cells (NR-53726) were obtained from BEI Resources. Vero-TMPRSS2 cells
were a kind gift from Shan-Lu Liu (The Ohio State University). All cells were cultured at 37°C
with 5% CO_2 in Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Medium (DMEM) supplemented with 10% fetal
bovine serum (HyClone, Cytiva), except for UNCNN2TS, which were cultured in EpiX Medium
(Propagenix), and HSAEC, which were cultured with airway epithelial cell basal medium (ATCC,
PCS-300-030) and the bronchial epithelial cell growth kit (ATCC, PCS-300-040). Rapamycin
(553211) was obtained from Sigma. Everolimus (S1120), temsirolimus (S1044), ridaforolimus
(S5003), tacrolimus (S5003), and SAR405 (S7682) were obtained from Selleckchem. Type-I
interferon (human recombinant interferon-beta$_{ser17}$, NR-3085) was obtained from BEI Resources.
470
471 **Plasmids and RNA interference**
472
pcDNA3.1 encoding human ACE2 was kindly provided by Thomas Gallagher (Loyola
University). pcDNA3.1 encoding CoV-1 Spike or CoV-2 Spike tagged with a C9 epitope on the
C-terminus, or MERS Spike, was kindly provided by Thomas Gallagher (Loyola University).
pcDNA3.1 encoding CoV-1 Spike or CoV-2 Spike tagged with a FLAG epitope on the C-terminus
was obtained from Michael Letko and Vincent Munster (NIAID). pMD2.G encoding VSV-G
(12259) was obtained from Addgene (a generous gift from Didier Trono). pWPI was obtained
from Addgene (12254) and human ACE2 or human TMPRSS2 was introduced by Gateway
cloning (Gateway LR Clonase II Enzyme mix (11791020)) as per manufacturer's instructions.
pPolII encoding hemagglutinin (HA) or neuraminidase (NA) from Influenza A/Turkey/1/2005
(H5N1) were kindly provided by Richard Yi Tsun Kao (The University of Hong Kong). pCMV
encoding HIV-1 Vpr fused to beta lactamase (pCMV4-BlaM-Vpr) was obtained from Addgene
(21950). A plasmid encoding replication-incompetent HIV-1 lacking *env* and *vpr* and encoding
luciferase (pNL4-3LucR-E-) was kindly provided by Vineet KewalRamani (National Cancer
Institute). A plasmid encoding replication-incompetent HIV-1 lacking *env* (pNL4-3E-) was kindly
provided by Olivier Schwartz (Institut Pasteur). pEGFP-N1-TFEB (38119) and pEGF-N1-
Δ30TFEB (44445) were obtained from Addgene (a generous gift of Shawn M. Ferguson). pEGFP-
2xFYVE (140047) was obtained from Addgene (a gift from Harald Stenmark). Silencer Select
siRNA targeting IFITM3 (s195035) and a non-targeting control (No. 1) was obtained from
Ambion. Cells were transfected with 20 nM siRNA using Opti-MEM (Gibco) and Lipofectamine
RNAiMAX (Thermo Fisher).
493
494 **Virus and pseudovirus infections**
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SARS-CoV-2 isolate USA-WA1/2020 (MN985325.1) was provided by the Centers for Disease
Control or by BEI Resources (NR-52281). Virus propagation was performed in Vero E6 cells.
Mouse-adapted (MA) SARS-CoV-2 variant MA10 (in the USA-WA1/2020 backbone) [85] was
obtained from BEI Resources (NR-55329). Virus propagation was performed in Vero E6 cells and
subsequently in Vero-TMPRSS2 cells. Virus was sequenced to ensure lack of tissue culture
adaptations, including furin cleavage site mutations. Virus titers were calculated by plaque assay
performed in Vero E6 cells as follows: serial 10-fold dilutions were added to Vero E6 monolayers
in 48-well plates for 1 hour at 37°C. Cells were overlaid with 1.5% carboxymethyl cellulose
(Sigma) in modified Eagle's medium containing 3% fetal bovine serum (Gibco), 1 mM L-
glutamine, 50 units per mL penicillin and 50 μg per mL streptomycin. Three days post-infection,
cells were fixed in 10% formalin and stained with crystal violet to visualize and count plaques as

previously described [86]. Titers were calculated as plaque forming units per mL and normalized as described in the figure captions. HIV-based pseudovirus was produced by transfecting HEK293T cells with 12 µg of pNL4-3LucR-E- and 4 µg of plasmid encoding viral glycoproteins (pcDNA3.1 Spike (CoV-1, CoV-2, or MERS), pMD2.G-VSV-G, or 2 µg of pPol1II-HA and 2 µg of pPol1II-NA) using TransIT-293 (Mirus). Virus supernatant was harvested 72 hours post-transfection and filtered through 0.22 µm filters. Pseudovirus titers were determined by p24 ELISA (XpressBio) and 100 ng p24 equivalent was added to target cells and incubated for 72 hours prior to lysis with Passive Lysis Buffer (Promega). Luciferase activity was measured using the Luciferase Assay System (Promega). VSV-based pseudovirus was produced as previously described [87]. In brief, HEK293T cells were transfected with 2 µg pcDNA3.1 CoV-1, CoV-2, or MERS Spike using Lipofectamine2000 (Thermo Fisher). At 24 hours post-transfection, culture medium was removed from cells and 2 mL of VSV-luc/GFP + VSV-G (seed particles) was added. At 48 hours post-infection, virus supernatants were collected, clarified by centrifugation at 500xG for 5 mins, and stored. 50 µL of virus supernatants were added to target cells for a period of 24 hours prior to fixation with 4% paraformaldehyde (for measurements of GFP+ cells with flow cytometry). For infections with replication-competent SARS-CoV-2, rapamycin, everolimus, temsirolimus, or ridaforolimus (20 µM) were used to pretreat cells for 4 hours and then drugs were washed away prior to addition of virus at a multiplicity of infection (MOI) of 0.1. DMSO (Sigma) was used as a vehicle control. At one hour post-virus addition, cells were washed once with 1X PBS and overlayed with complete medium. Supernatants were harvested 24 hours later, and titers were determined on plaque assays performed in Vero E6 cells. For single-round infections using HIV- or VSV-based pseudovirus, rapamycin, everolimus, temsirolimus, ridaforolimus, or tacrolimus (20 µM) were used to pretreat cells for 4 hours and were maintained for the duration of infection and until harvest of cells for luciferase assay or flow cytometry. DMSO (Sigma) was used as a vehicle control.

FRET-based virus entry assay

HIV-based pseudovirus incorporating BlaM-Vpr and CoV-2 Spike was produced by transfecting HEK293T cells with pNL4-3E- (15 µg), pCMV4-BlaM-Vpr (5 µg), and pcDNA3.1 CoV-2 Spike (5 µg) using the calcium phosphate technique. Briefly, six million 293T cells were seeded in a T75 flask. Plasmid DNA was mixed with sterile H_2O, $CaCl_2$, and Tris-EDTA (TE) buffer, and the totality was combined with Hepes-buffered saline (HBS). The transfection volume was added dropwise, and cells were incubated at 37°C for 48 h. Supernatants were recovered and clarified by centrifugation, passed through a 0.45 µm filter, and stored. Titers were measured using an HIV-1 p24 ELISA kit (XpressBio). 50 ng p25 equivalent of virus was added to HeLa-ACE2 cells for 2 hours. Cells were washed and labeled with the CCF2-AM β-lactamase Loading Kit (Invitrogen) for 2 hours and analyzed for CCF2 cleavage by flow cytometry as described [88]. Rapamycin, everolimus, temsirolimus, or ridaforolimus (20 µM) were used to pretreat cells for 4 hours prior to virus addition and were maintained for the duration of infection. DMSO (Sigma) was used as a vehicle control.

Western blot, flow cytometry, and antibodies

Whole cell lysis was performed with RIPA buffer (Thermo Fisher) supplemented with Halt Protease Inhibitor EDTA-free (Thermo Fisher). Lysates were clarified by centrifugation and

supernatants were collected and stored. Protein concentration was determined with the Protein
Assay Kit II (Bio-Rad), and 10-15 μg of protein was loaded into 12% acrylamide Criterion XT
Bis-Tris Precast Gels (Bio-Rad). Electrophoresis was performed with NuPage MES SDS Running
Buffer (Invitrogen) and proteins were transferred to Amersham Protran Premium Nitrocellulose
Membrane, pore size 0.20 μm (GE Healthcare). Membranes were blocked with Odyssey Blocking
Buffer (Li-COR) and incubated with the following primary antibodies diluted in Odyssey
Antibody Diluent (Li-COR): anti-IFITM1 (60074-1-Ig; Proteintech), anti-IFITM2 (66137-1-Ig;
Proteintech), anti-IFITM3 (EPR5242, ab109429; Abcam), anti-IFITM2/3 (66081-1-Ig;
Proteintech), anti-actin (C4, sc-47778; Santa Cruz Biotechnology), anti-hACE2 (ab15348;
Abcam), anti-TFEB (4240S; Cell Signaling Technology), and anti-pTFEB (Ser211) (37681S; Cell
Signaling Technology). Secondary antibodies conjugated to DyLight 800 or 680 (Li-Cor) and the
Li-Cor Odyssey CLx imaging system were used to reveal specific protein detection. Images were
analyzed (including signal quantification) and assembled using ImageStudioLite (Li-Cor).

Confocal fluorescence and immunofluorescence microscopy

HeLa-ACE2 cells were fixed with 4% paraformaldehyde, stained with anti-IFITM2/3 (66081-1-
Ig; Proteintech), goat anti-mouse IgG Alexa Fluor 647 (A21235; Thermo Fisher) and DAPI
(62248; Thermo Fisher), and imaged in a glass-bottom tissue culture plate with an Operetta CLS
High-Content Analysis System (Perkin Elmer). For measurement of TFEB-GFP
nuclear/cytoplasmic distribution, HeLa-ACE2 cells were transfected with pEGFP-N1-TFEB for
24 hours, fixed with 4% paraformaldehyde, stained with HCS CellMask Red Stain (H32712;
Thermo Fisher) and DAPI, and imaged with an Operetta CLS. Using Harmony software (Perkin
Elmer), nuclear/cytoplasmic ratios of TFEB-GFP were calculated in single cells as follows: cells
were delineated by CellMask Red Stain, nuclei were delineated by DAPI, nuclear TFEB-GFP was
designated as GFP overlapping with DAPI, and cytoplasmic TFEB-GFP was designated as total
GFP signal minus nuclear TFEB-GFP. Average ratios were calculated from 20-30 cells per field,
and the mean of averages from 10 fields was obtained (total of approximately 250 cells per
condition). For measurement of IFITM2/3 levels in cells transfected with TFEBΔ30-GFP, HeLa-
ACE2 cells were transfected with pEGF-N1-Δ30TFEB for 24 hours, fixed and permeabilized with
BD Cytofix/Cytoperm (Fisher Scientific), stained with anti-IFITM2/3 and goat anti-mouse IgG
Alexa Fluor 647, and imaged with an Operetta CLS. The IFITM2/3 fluorescence intensity within
a single, medial Z section was measured in approximately 150 GFP-negative cells and 150 GFP-
positive cells using the freehand selections tool in ImageJ.

Proteomics by mass spectrometry

<u>Protein Digestion and TMT labeling.</u> Cell pellets were produced in triplicate from A549-ACE2
cells treated with 20 μM temsirolimus or ridaforolimus, or an equivalent volume of DMSO and
lysed in RIPA buffer followed by sonication. Lysates were clarified by centrifugation and protein
concentration was quantified using BCA protein estimation kit (Thermo Fisher). One hundred
micrograms of lysate were alkylated and digested by addition of trypsin at a ratio of 1:50
(Promega) and incubating overnight at 37ºC. Digestion was acidified by adding formic acid (FA)
to a final concentration of 1% and desalted using peptide desalting columns (Thermo Fisher)
according to manufacturer's protocol. Peptides were eluted from the columns using 50%
ACN/0.1% FA, dried in a speedvac, and kept frozen at -20ºC until further analysis. For TMT

labeling, 15 µg of each sample was reconstituted in 50 µL of 50 mM HEPES, pH 8.0, and 75 µg
of TMTpro label (Thermo Fisher) in 100% ACN was added to each sample. After incubating the
mixture for 1 hr at room temperature with occasional mixing, the reaction was terminated by
adding 8 µL of 5% hydroxylamine. The peptide samples for each condition were pooled and
cleaned using peptide desalting columns (Thermo Fisher). High pH reverse phase fractionation.
The first dimensional separation of the peptides was performed using a Waters Acquity UPLC
system coupled with a fluorescence detector (Waters) using a 150 mm x 3.0 mm Xbridge Peptide
BEM^{TM} 2.5 um C18 column (Waters) operating at 0.35 mL/min. The dried peptides were
reconstituted in 100 µL of mobile phase A solvent (3 mM ammonium bicarbonate, pH 8.0). Mobile
phase B was 100% acetonitrile (Thermo Fisher). The column was washed with mobile phase A
for 10 min followed by gradient elution 0-50% B (10-60 min) and 50-75% B (60-70 min). The
fractions were collected every minute. These 60 fractions were pooled into 24 fractions. The
fractions were vacuum centrifuged to dryness and stored at -80°C until analysis by mass
spectrometry. Mass Spectrometry acquisition and data analysis. The dried peptide fractions were
reconstituted in 0.1% TFA and subjected to nanoflow liquid chromatography (Thermo Ultimate^{TM}
3000RSLC nano LC system, Thermo Scientific) coupled to an Orbitrap Eclipse mass spectrometer
(Thermo Scientific). Peptides were separated using a low pH gradient using 5-50% ACN over 120
minutes in mobile phase containing 0.1% formic acid at 300 nL/min flow rate. MS scans were
performed in the Orbitrap analyzer at a resolution of 120,000 with an ion accumulation target set
at $4e^5$ and max IT set at 50ms over a mass range of 400-1600 m/z. Ions with determined charge
states between 2 and 5 were selected for MS2 scans in the ion trap with CID fragmentation (Turbo;
NCE 35%; maximum injection time 35 ms; AGC 1×10^4). The spectra were searched using the
Real Time Search Node in the tune file using human Uniprot database using Comet search
algorithm with TMT16 plex (304.2071Da) set as a static modification of lysine and the N-termini
of the peptide. Carbamidomethylation of cysteine residues (+57.0214 Da) was set as a static
modification, while oxidation of methionine residues (+15.9949 Da) was set up as dynamic
modification. For the selected peptide, an SPS–MS3 scan was performed using up to 10 *b*- and *y*-
type fragment ions as precursors in an Orbitrap at 50,000 resolution with a normalized AGC set at
500 followed by maximum injection time set as "Auto" with a normalized collision energy setting
of 65. Acquired MS/MS spectra were searched against a human Uniprot protein database along
with a contaminant protein database, using a SEQUEST and percolator validator algorithms in the
Proteome Discoverer 2.4 software (Thermo Scientific). The precursor ion tolerance was set at 10
ppm and the fragment ions tolerance was set at 0.02 Da along with methionine oxidation included
as dynamic modification. Carbamidomethylation of cysteine residues and TMT16 plex
(304.2071Da) was set as a static modification of lysine and the N-termini of the peptide. Trypsin
was specified as the proteolytic enzyme, with up to 2 missed cleavage sites allowed. Searches used
a reverse sequence decoy strategy to control for the false peptide discovery and identifications
were validated using percolator software. Reporter ion intensities were adjusted to correct for the
impurities according to the manufacturer's specification and the abundances of the proteins were
quantified using the summation of the reporter ions for all identified peptides. The reporter
abundances were normalized across all the channels to account for equal peptide loading. Median
abundance values for DMSO, temsirolimus, and ridaforolimus were calculated from three
replicates and presented as medians plus 95% confidence intervals.

In vivo infections of hamsters and mice with SARS-CoV-2
640

Male Golden Syrian hamsters between the ages of 6-8 weeks were acclimated for 11 days
following receipt. Hamsters received an intraperitoneal injection (500 µL) of rapamycin (HY-
10219; MedChemExpress) or ridaforolimus (HY-50908; MedChemExpress) at 3 mg/kg or an
equivalent amount of DMSO (4 hamsters per group). Four hours later, hamsters were challenged
with 6×10^3 plaque forming units of SARS-CoV-2 isolate USA-WA1/2020 (amplified on Calu-3
cells) through intranasal inoculation (50 µL in each nare). Clinical observations and weights were
recorded daily up until day 10 post-infection. According to Institutional Animal Care and Use
Committee human euthanasia criteria, hamsters were euthanized immediately if weight loss
exceeded 20%. Otherwise, hamsters were euthanized on day 10 post-infection. Oral swabs were
collected for measurement of viral RNA by quantitative PCR of the viral N (nucleocapsid) gene.
Lungs were harvested following euthanasia (day 10 or earlier) and infectious viral load was
determined by $TCID_{50}$ assay in Vero-TMPRSS2 cells. C57BL/6 mice received an intraperitoneal
injection of rapamycin (NC9362949; LC-Laboratories) or an equivalent amount of DMSO (7 and
6 mice per group, respectively). The following day, mice were challenged intranasally with $6 \times$
10^4 $TCID_{50}$ equivalent of MA10 SARS-CoV-2 (USA-WA1/2020 backbone). Mice received a
second injection of rapamycin or DMSO on the day of infection and a third on day one post-
infection. Mice were euthanized for lung harvest on day two post-infection. Infectious viral load
was determined by $TCID_{50}$ assay in Vero-TMPRSS2 cells. Animal studies were conducted in
compliance with all relevant local, state, and federal regulations and were approved by the
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee of Bioqual and of the Ohio State University.
661
662   **Figure Legends**
663
Figure 1: Rapamycin and its analogs share a macrolide structure but differ by the functional
group present at carbon-40. Violet and green bubbles indicate the FKBP- and mTOR-binding
sites, respectively.

Figure 2: Rapalogs promote SARS-CoV-2 infection in lung epithelial cells to different extents
by counteracting the intrinsic antiviral state (A) A549-ACE2 were treated with or without type
I interferon (250 U/mL) for 18 hours and then treated with 20 µM rapamycin (Rap), everolimus
(Eve), temsirolimus (Tem), ridaforolimus (Rid), or an equivalent volume of DMSO (D) for 4
hours. HIV-CoV-2 (100 ng p24 equivalent) was added to cells and infection was measured by
luciferase activity at 48 hours post-infection. Luciferase units were normalized to 100 in the
DMSO condition in the absence of interferon. (B) A549-ACE2 cells from (A) were subjected to
SDS-PAGE and Western blot analysis. Immunoblotting was performed with anti-IFITM2/3, anti-
ACE2, and anti-actin (in that order) on the same nitrocellulose membrane. Numbers and tick marks
indicate size (kilodaltons) and position of protein standards in ladder. (C) Primary HSAEC were
treated with 20 µM Rap, Eve, Tem, Rid, or an equivalent volume of DMSO for 4 hours. VSV-
CoV-2 (50 µL) was added to cells and infection was measured by GFP expression at 24 hours
post-infection using flow cytometry. (D) A549-ACE2 were treated with varying concentrations of
Eve or DMSO for 4 hours. SARS-CoV-2 (nCoV-WA1-2020; MN985325.1) was added to cells at
an MOI of 0.1 and infectious titers were measured in VeroE6 cells by calculating the $TCID_{50}$ per
mL of supernatants recovered at 24 hours post-infection. $TCID_{50}$ per mL values were normalized
to 100 in the DMSO condition. Means and standard error were calculated from 3-5 experiments.
Statistical analysis was performed with one-way ANOVA and asterisks indicate significant
difference from DMSO. *, $p < 0.05$; **, $p < 0.01$. Rel.; relative.

Figure 3: Rapalogs promote SARS-CoV-2 infection in HeLa-ACE2 cells. (A) HeLa-ACE2 were treated with varying concentrations of Eve or DMSO for 4 hours. SARS-CoV-2 (nCoV-WA1-2020; MN985325.1) was added to cells at an MOI of 0.1 and infectious titers were measured in VeroE6 cells by calculating the $TCID_{50}$ of supernatants recovered at 24 hours post-infection. $TCID_{50}$ per mL values were normalized to 100 in the DMSO condition. (B) HeLa-ACE2 were treated with 20 µM Rap, Eve, Tem, Rid, or an equivalent volume of DMSO for 4 hours. SARS-CoV-2 (nCoV-WA1-2020; MN985325.1) was added to cells at an MOI of 0.1 and infectious titers were measured in VeroE6 cells by calculating the $TCID_{50}$ per mL of supernatants recovered at 24 hours post-infection. $TCID_{50}$ per mL values were normalized to 100 in the DMSO condition. (C) HeLa-ACE2 were treated with 20 µM Rap, Eve, Tem, Rid, or an equivalent volume of DMSO for 4 hours. HIV-CoV-2 (100 ng p24 equivalent) was added to cells and infection was measured by luciferase activity at 48 hours post-infection. Luciferase units were normalized to 100 in the DMSO condition. (D) HeLa-ACE2 cells from (C) were subjected to SDS-PAGE and Western blot analysis. Immunoblotting was performed with anti-IFITM2, anti-IFITM1, anti-IFITM3, anti-ACE2, and anti-actin (in that order) on the same nitrocellulose membrane. (E) IFITM3 levels from (D) were normalized to actin levels and summarized from 5 independent experiments. (F) HeLa-ACE2 were treated with 20 µM Rap, Eve, Tem, Rid, or an equivalent volume of DMSO for 4 hours and cells were fixed, stained with DAPI and anti-IFITM2/3, and imaged by confocal immunofluorescence microscopy. Images represent stacks of 5 Z-slices and one representative image is shown per condition. Means and standard error were calculated from 3-5 experiments. Statistical analysis was performed with one-way ANOVA and asterisks indicate significant difference from DMSO. *, $p < 0.05$; **, $p < 0.01$. Rel.; relative.

Figure 4: Rapalogs promote cell entry mediated by diverse viral fusion proteins. (A) HeLa-ACE2 were treated with 20 µM Rap, Eve, Tem, Rid, or an equivalent volume of DMSO for 4 hours. HIV-CoV-2 S pseudovirus incorporating BlaM-Vpr (HIV-BlaM-CoV-2) was added to cells for 2 hours and washed. Cells were incubated with CCF2-AM for an additional 2 hours and fixed. Cleaved CCF2 was measured by flow cytometry. Dot plots visualized as density plots from one representative experiment are shown on the left and the percentage of CCF2+ cells which exhibit CCF2 cleavage is indicated. Summary data representing the average of four experiments is shown on the right. (B) HIV-CoV-1, (C) HIV-MERS-CoV, (D) HIV-IAV HA, or (E) HIV-VSV G were added to HeLa-ACE2 or HeLa-DPP4 cells as in (A) and infection was measured by luciferase activity at 48 hours post-infection. Luciferase units were normalized to 100 in the DMSO condition. Means and standard error were calculated from 3-4 experiments. Statistical analysis was performed with one-way ANOVA and asterisks indicate significant difference from DMSO. *, $p < 0.05$; **, $p < 0.01$. Rel.; relative.

Figure 5: Enhancement of infection by select rapalogs is associated with inhibition of mTOR-mediated phosphorylation of TFEB in lung cells. (A) A549-ACE2 were treated with 20 µM Rap, Eve, Tem, Rid, or tacrolimus (Tac) for 4 hours and whole cell lysates were subjected to SDS-PAGE and Western blot analysis. Immunoblotting was performed with anti-TFEB and anti-pTFEB (S211). (B) pTFEB (S211) levels were divided by total TFEB levels and summarized as an average of 3 experiments. Means and standard error are shown. Statistical analysis was performed with one-way ANOVA and asterisks indicate significant difference from DMSO. (C) A549-ACE2 cells were treated with 20 µM Tem, Rid, or an equivalent volume of DMSO for 4 hours and proteins were extracted for analysis by mass spectrometry. Raw data in triplicate of all proteins detected is

732 presented in Supplemental File 1. Median protein levels for five genes known to be regulated by
733 TFEB are shown. ACE2 is also shown for comparison. Statistical analysis was performed with a
734 student's T test and asterisks indicate significant difference from DMSO. *, $p < 0.05$ or $p = 0.05$;
735 **, $p < 0.01$. Rel.; relative.
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Figure 6: Enforced localization of ectopic TFEB triggers IFITM2/3 turnover and promotes
Spike-mediated infection. (A) HeLa-ACE2 were treated with 20 µM Tem, Rid, or Tac for 4 hours
and whole cell lysates were subjected to SDS-PAGE and Western blot analysis. Immunoblotting
was performed with anti-TFEB and anti-pTFEB (S211). (B) pTFEB (S211) levels were divided
by total TFEB levels and summarized as an average of 3 experiments. (C) HeLa-ACE2 were
transfected with TFEB-GFP for 24 hours, treated with Tem, Rid or Tac for 4 hours, stained with
DAPI and CellMask, and imaged by high-content confocal fluorescence microscopy.
Representative images from each condition are shown on the left. The ratio of nuclear to
cytoplasmic TFEB-GFP was calculated in individual cells and the average ratio derived from
approximately 200-300 cells per condition is shown to the right. (E) HeLa-ACE2 were transfected
with 0.5 µg TFEBΔ30-GFP for 24 hours, fixed, stained with anti-IFITM2/3, and imaged by
confocal immunofluorescence microscopy. (F) The average intensity of IFITM2/3 levels in
approximately 150 GFP-negative and 150 GFP-positive cells is grouped and summarized from
two independent transfections. (G) HeLa-ACE2 were transfected with 0.5 µg TFEBΔ30-GFP for
24 hours and HIV-CoV-2 (100 ng p24 equivalent) was added to cells. Infection was measured by
luciferase activity at 48 hours post-infection. Luciferase units were normalized to 100 in the non-
transfected condition. Means and standard error were calculated from 3 experiments, except for
TFEB-GFP imaging experiments, for which 2 experiments (transfections) were performed.
Statistical analysis was performed with one-way ANOVA and asterisks indicate significant
difference from Tac. *, $p < 0.05$; **, $p < 0.01$. Rel.; relative.
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Figure 7: Rapamycin injection into rodents prior to challenge with SARS-CoV-2 intensifies
viral disease. (A) Schematic of intraperitoneal injections and intranasal SARS-CoV-2 challenge
in hamsters. Golden Syrian hamsters were injected with 3 mg/kg Rap, Rid, or equivalent amounts
of DMSO (4 animals per group). Four hours later, hamsters were infected intranasally with 6×10^3
plaque forming units of SARS-CoV-2. At 2 days post-infection, oral swabs were taken and used
for measurement of oral viral RNA load by qPCR. At 10 days post-infection (or earlier, if more
than 20% of weight loss occurred), hamsters were euthanized, and lungs were harvested for
determination of infectious virus titer by $TCID_{50}$ assay in Vero-TMPRSS2 cells (B) Mean body
weight and standard error for each treatment group is plotted by day post-infection. (C) Kaplan-
Meier survival curves were generated according to the dates of euthanasia (or in one case, when
an animal was found dead). (D) Viral RNA copy number was determined by qPCR from oral swab
at 2 days post-infection. Data is depicted as box and whiskers plots. (E) Infectious virus titers in
lungs were determined by $TCID_{50}$ in Vero-TMPRSS2 cells. Data is depicted as floating bars and
is grouped by brackets according to hamsters that survived until 10 days post-infection and those
that were euthanized at 7 days post-infection. Statistical analysis in (B) was performed by student's
T test and asterisks indicate significant difference from DMSO (gray asterisks for Rap and black
asterisks for Rid). Statistical analysis in (C) was performed by comparing survival curves between
Rap and DMSO or Rid and DMSO using the Log-rank (Mantel-Cox) test. (F) Schematic of
intraperitoneal injections and intranasal mouse-adapted (MA) SARS-CoV-2 challenge in mice.
C57BL/6 mice were injected with 3 mg/kg of Rap or an equivalent amount of DMSO (6 or 7 mice

per group, respectively). The following day, mice were infected intranasally with 6×10^4 TCID$_{50}$
MA SARS-CoV-2. Mice received second and third injections of Rap or DMSO on the day of
infection and day one post-infection, respectively. (G) Lungs were harvested from infected mice
upon euthanasia at day 2 post-infection and infectious viral loads were determined by TCID$_{50}$ in
Vero-TMPRSS2 cells. Geometric mean TCID$_{50}$ per gram was calculated per treatment group and
data is depicted as box and whiskers plots. Statistical analysis was performed with Mann-Whitney
test and asterisks indicate significant difference from DMSO. *, $p < 0.05$; **, $p < 0.01$. Illustration
created with BioRender.com.
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Figure 8: Model for rapalog-mediated enhancement of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Rapamycin and
rapalogs everolimus and temsirolimus potently inhibit the phosphorylation of TFEB by mTOR,
while ridaforolimus does not. As a result, TFEB translocates into the nucleus and induces genes
functioning in lysosomal activities, including autophagy-related pathways. Nuclear TFEB triggers
a microautophagy pathway that results in accelerated degradation of membrane proteins IFITM2
and IFITM3. Loss of IFITM2/3 promotes SARS-CoV-2 entry into cells by facilitating fusion
between viral membranes and cellular membranes. Illustration created with BioRender.com.
Supplemental Figure 1: (A) Primary HSAEC were treated with 20 µM Rap, Eve, Tem, Rid, or
an equivalent volume of DMSO for 4 hours and whole cell lysates were subjected to SDS-PAGE
and Western blot analysis. Immunoblotting was performed with anti-IFITM2 (not detected), anti-
IFITM3, anti-IFITM1, and anti-actin. (B) Primary HSAEC were transfected with siRNA targeting
IFITM3 or control siRNA for 48 hours. VSV-CoV-2 (50 µL) was added to cells and infection was
measured by GFP expression at 24 hours post-infection using flow cytometry. siRNA-transfected
cells were subjected to SDS-PAGE and Western blot analysis. Immunoblotting was performed
with anti-IFITM2 (not detected), anti-IFITM3, anti-IFITM1, and anti-actin. (C) Semi-transformed
nasal epithelial cells (UNCNN2TS) were treated with 20 µM Rap, Eve, Tem, Rid, or an equivalent
volume of DMSO for 4 hours and whole cell lysates were subjected to SDS-PAGE and Western
blot analysis. Immunoblotting was performed with anti-IFITM2 (not detected), anti-IFITM3, anti-
IFITM1, and anti-actin. Immunoblots are representative of 3 independent experiments. Means and
standard error were calculated from 3 experiments. Statistical analysis was performed with
student's T test and asterisks indicate significant difference from control siRNA. *, $p < 0.05$; **,
$p < 0.01$. Rel.; relative.
Supplemental Figure 2: (A) HeLa-ACE2 were treated with 20 µM Rap, Eve, Tem, Rid, or an
equivalent volume of DMSO for 24 hours and whole cell lysates were subjected to SDS-PAGE
and Western blot analysis. Immunoblotting was performed with anti-IFITM2/3 and anti-actin. (B)
HeLa-ACE2 were treated with 20 µM Rap, Eve, Tem, Rid, or an equivalent volume of DMSO in
the presence or absence of 1 µM Bafilomycin A1 for 4 hours and whole cell lysates were subjected
to SDS-PAGE and Western blot analysis. Immunoblotting was performed with anti-IFITM2, anti-
IFITM1, anti-IFITM3, and anti-actin (in that order) on the same nitrocellulose membrane. (C)
HeLa-ACE2 cells were transected with FYVE-GFP for 24 hours followed by treatment with 100
nM SAR405 or an equivalent volume of ethanol (vehicle) for 3 hours. Cells were fixed and imaged
by confocal immunofluorescence microscopy. For each condition, a Z-stack of 25 slices is shown
as a maximum intensity projection. (D) HeLa-ACE2 were treated with 20 µM Rap, Eve, Tem, Rid,
or an equivalent volume of DMSO in the presence or absence of 100 nM SAR405 for 4 hours and
whole cell lysates were subjected to SDS-PAGE and Western blot analysis. Immunoblotting was

performed with anti-IFITM2/3 and anti-actin on the same nitrocellulose membrane. All
immunoblots are representative of three independent experiments.
824
Supplemental Figure 3: (A) HeLa WT and HeLa *IFITM1-3* KO cells were transiently transfected
with ACE2 for 24 hours. Whole cell lysates were subjected to SDS-PAGE and Western blot
analysis. Immunoblotting was performed with anti-IFITM2, anti-IFITM3, anti-IFITM1, anti-
ACE2, and anti-actin (in that order) on the same nitrocellulose membrane. (B) HeLa *IFITM1-3*
KO were transfected with IFITM2 or IFITM2 and IFITM3 and SDS-PAGE and Western blot
analysis was performed. (C) HIV-CoV-2 was added to transfected cells from (B) and infection was
measured by luciferase activity at 48 hours post-infection. Luciferase units were normalized to 100
in HeLa WT cells treated with DMSO. Means and standard error were calculated from 5
experiments. Statistical analysis was performed with one-way ANOVA and asterisks indicate
significant difference from nearest DMSO condition. *, $p < 0.05$; **, $p < 0.01$. Rel.; relative.
835
Supplemental Figure 4: (A) HeLa-ACE2 were treated with 20 μM Rap, Eve, Tem, Rid, or Tac
for 4 hours and whole cell lysates were subjected to SDS-PAGE and Western blot analysis.
Immunoblotting was performed with anti-IFITM2/3 and anti-actin. (B) HIV-CoV-2 was added to
HeLa-ACE2 treated as in (A) and infection was measured by luciferase activity at 48 hours post-
infection. Luciferase units were normalized to 100 in the DMSO condition.

Supplemental File 1: Spreadsheet of proteomics data obtained by mass spectrometry.

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1059

Figure 1

Sirolimus (Rapamycin)

Everolimus

Temsirolimus

Ridaforolimus

Figure 3

A SARS-CoV-2
   HeLa-ACE2

B SARS-CoV-2
   HeLa-ACE2

C HIV-CoV-2 Spike
   HeLa-ACE2

D HeLa-ACE2 – 4 hr

E

F

Figure 4

No virus — HIV-BlaM-CoV-2 Spike —

DMSO 2.4 Rap 9.1

Cleav. CCF2

HIV-BlaM-CoV-2 Spike

Eve 8.0 Tem 11.7 Rid 3.5

Rel. Entry (%)

D Rap Eve Tem Rid

Rapalog (20 uM)

B HIV-CoV-1 Spike HeLa-ACE2

Rel. Infection (% of DMSO)

** ** **

D Rap Eve Tem Rid

Rapalog (20 uM)

C HIV-MERS-CoV Spike HeLa-DPP4

Rel. Infection (% of DMSO)

** ** **

D Rap Eve Tem Rid

Rapalog (20 uM)

HIV-IAV HeLa-ACE2

Rel. Infection (% of DMSO)

**

**

D Rap Eve Tem Rid

Rapalog (20 uM)

Rel. (% of DMSO)

* **

D Rap Eve Tem Rid

Rapalog (20 uM)

Figure 5

Figure 6

A HeLa-ACE2

Tem Rid Tac

pTFEB (S211)

TFEB

B

pTFEB (S211) / TFEB (% of Tac)

Tem Rid Tac

C Temsirolimus

HeLa-ACE2

TFEB-GFP

Ridaforolimus Tacrolimus

D

TFEB-GFP nuc / cyto ratio

Tem Rid Tac

E

HeLa-ACE2

TFEBΔ30-GFP IFITM2/3

F

Mean IFITM2/3 Intensity (a.u.)

TFEBΔ30-GFP − +

G HIV-CoV-2 Spike

Rel. Infection (% of Untransfected)

Untransfected TFEBΔ30-GFP

Figure 7

Figure 8

Supplemental Figure 1

Supplemental Figure 2

A

B

C

D

Supplemental Figure 3

HIV-CoV-2 Spike

Supplemental Figure 4

A

B