Title: A subset of CD4+ effector memory T cells limit immunity to pulmonary viral infection

and prevent tissue pathology via activation of latent TGFβ

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Abstract

A rapid immune response to pathogen re-exposure underpins immunological memory, with

protection against divergent pathogens such as heterologous or novel viral strains requiring cross-

reactive memory T cells. Understanding the pathways that control memory T cell function is therefore

important for the rational design of viral vaccines and will aid the discovery of therapies to boost anti-

viral immunity. Here, we identify a sub-population of memory T cells that limit secondary immune

responses to viral re-infection, which is crucial in preventing host tissue damage. We show that a

population of $CD4^+$ effector memory T (T_{EM}) cells activate the important immunoregulatory cytokine

TGFβ, via expression of an integrin, αvβ8. Integrin αvβ8 expression marks a transcriptionally distinct

sub-population of $CD4^+$ T_{EM}, enriched for anti-inflammatory pathways. Loss of integrin αvβ8 on murine

$CD4^+$ T_{EM}, but not $Foxp3^+$ regulatory T cells (T_{REG}), led to exacerbated virus-specific $CD8^+$ T cell

responses following secondary influenza A virus (IAV) infection, which was associated with enhanced

viral clearance. However, although accelerating clearance, loss of integrin αvβ8 expression on $CD4^+$

T_{EM} resulted in enhanced lung pathology following secondary IAV infection, which was completely

reversed by adoptive transfer of $αvβ8^+$ $CD4^+$ T_{EM} cells. These data highlight a new pathway by which a

distinct $CD4^+$ memory T cell subset restrains anti-viral immunity to prevent host tissue damage during

secondary viral infection. Such pathways could be targeted therapeutically to either boost memory T-

cell-mediated immunity or restrain host tissue damage during viral infection.

Main text

Whether induced by natural infection or vaccination, the development of robust

immunological memory is a cornerstone of sustained protective immunity against viruses,

either by directly targeting infected cells for killing or through the induction of high affinity,

virus-specific antibody responses. While viral surface proteins, the primary targets for

antibodies, can accumulate mutations over time leading to reduced antibody binding affinity

and neutralising efficacy, memory T cells typically recognise conserved epitopes which are

often shared between different viral strains or variants. Thus, virus-specific memory T cells

exhibit cross-reactivity to heterologous viruses, referred to as heterosubtypic immunity, and

are therefore a key component of long-lasting immunological memory, particularly as viral

variants emerge over time[1,2]. While the differentiation and maintenance of memory T cells is

highly dynamic, and functional/phenotypic plasticity between subsets has been reported[3,4],

traditionally they have been subdivided into three major subsets based on their expression of

homing markers and anatomical location. Circulating $CD44^{high}$ memory T cells can be stratified

into central or effector memory T cells (T_{CM} or T_{EM} respectively) based on the expression or

absence of markers including CD62L (L-selectin) and CCR7 (C-C Motif Chemokine Receptor

7)[5]. $CD62L^+$ $CCR7^+$ T_{CM} migrate between the circulation and secondary lymphoid structures

whereas $CD62L^-$ $CCR7^-$ T_{EM} traffic between lymphoid and peripheral tissues. In contrast, the

third major memory T cell subset reside predominantly in non-lymphoid peripheral tissues

including the gastrointestinal tract, skin and lung and are referred to as tissue-resident

memory T cells (T_{RM})[6], although recent data do suggest that T_{RM} populations can also leave

the tissue and circulate[7]. Given their importance in sustained, cross-reactive protective

immunity against common pathogens, understanding how memory T cells function is of

fundamental importance, not only to aide rational vaccine design, but also to identify

targetable pathways for anti-viral immunotherapies.

Here we show that a sub-population of CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ control secondary immune responses to

respiratory viral infection by restraining the host T cell response. These cells are specialised

to activate the key immunoregulatory cytokine transforming growth factor-β (TGFβ) via

expression of the integrin αvβ8, exhibit an immune suppressive transcriptional profile, and

limit the frequency and cytotoxic potential of IAV-specific CD8$^+$ effector T cells during a

memory recall response. CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ expressing integrin αvβ8 directly suppress CD8$^+$ T cells in a

TGFβ-dependent manner and are vital in preventing tissue pathology during secondary

infection. Additionally, we find that integrin αvβ8 is expressed by human CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$, but no

other memory or naïve human CD4$^+$ or CD8$^+$ T cells, highlighting the potential of targeting this

pathway clinically to boost cytotoxic CD8$^+$ T cell responses in the context of anti-viral or cancer

immunotherapy. Together, our study uncovers a new suppressive role for a sub-population

of CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ which express integrin αvβ8 and can activate latent TGFβ. These properties make

integrin αvβ8$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ key regulators of anti-viral memory T cell responses and function to

prevent inflammation-induced pathology following respiratory viral infection.

113 **CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ express *Itgb8* and activate latent TGFβ.**

114 A crucial cytokine in the regulation of many different immune cells, especially T cells, is TGFβ[8].

115 TGFβ is initially secreted as a latent pro-form, consisting of the active moiety bound non-

116 covalently and encased by latency associated peptide (LAP), from which the active cytokine

117 must be liberated to function[9]. However, the role of TGFβ and its activation in controlling the

118 function of memory T cell responses is poorly understood.

119

120 To investigate whether TGFβ activation may play a role in regulating memory T cell function,

121 we first determined whether any memory T cell populations have the potential to activate

122 TGFβ. To this end, we assessed the expression of integrin αvβ8 on memory T cell subsets, a

123 molecule we and others have previously shown facilitates the activation of latent TGFβ by

124 immune cells[10]. To this end, we sorted multiple CD4$^+$ and CD8$^+$ splenic T cell populations from

125 Foxp3-YFP reporter mice[11] to assess expression of the gene encoding the integrin β8 subunit

126 (*Itgb8*) across several subsets by qRT-PCR (gating strategy shown in Figure S1a). As the

127 integrin β8 subunit uniquely pairs with the αv subunit, this approach enabled us to determine

128 relative expression of integrin αvβ8. Interestingly, in addition to the expected high levels of

129 expression of *Itgb8* by CD4$^+$ Foxp3$^+$ T$_{REG}$[12], we also found for the first time that CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$

130 (CD44^{hi} CD62L$^-$) also expressed high levels of the gene (Figure 1a). In contrast, *Itgb8* was not

131 detected in naïve CD4$^+$ T cells (CD44^{lo} CD62L$^+$) nor CD4$^+$ T$_{CM}$ (CD44^{hi} CD62L$^+$). Similarly, all CD8$^+$

132 T cell subsets lacked expression of *Itgb8* (Figure 1a).

133

134 Next, to assess the expression of *Itgb8* at the single cell level, we utilised a novel dual reporter

135 mouse expressing GFP and tdTomato under control of the *Foxp3* and *Itgb8* promoters

136 respectively[13] (hereafter referred to as *Itgb8* reporter mice). We observed expression of *Itgb8*

in a subset of CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$, accounting for ~30% of the total CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ pool (Figure 1b-c). In

contrast, no expression was detected in CD4$^+$ naïve or T$_{CM}$ cells, or any CD8$^+$ T cell subsets

(Figure 1b-c), consistent with our qRT-PCR data (Figure 1a). Additionally, we also observed

the presence of *Itgb8*-expressing CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ at other anatomical locations, including within

non-lymphoid tissues such as the lung (Figure S1b-c) and intestine (Figure S1d-e). Thus, the

expression of *Itgb8* is unique to CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ amongst the circulating memory T cell pool.

Having determined that CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ express *Itgb8*, we next investigated whether this enabled

these cells to activate latent TGFβ. To test this, we isolated CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ from mice lacking *Itgb8*

expression on T cells (*Itgb8*$^{flox/flox}$ x CD4-Cre, hereafter called *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4} mice[14]) or their

littermate controls, and co-cultured them with an active TGFβ reporter cell line as previously

described[12]. We observed that CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ activated latent TGFβ to levels comparable with CD4$^+$

Foxp3$^+$ T$_{REG}$ (Figure 1d). This ability to activate latent TGFβ was entirely dependent on integrin

αvβ8, as TGFβ activation was completely abrogated in CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ cells isolated from *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4}

mice (Figure 1d). Taken together, these data show for the first time that CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ uniquely

express *Itgb8* amongst the circulating memory T cell pool and can activate latent TGFβ in an

integrin αvβ8-dependent manner.

Itgb8$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ exhibit a transcriptional profile associated with immune suppression.

Although CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ express *Itgb8* and can activate latent TGFβ, it is noteworthy that *Itgb8*

expression was not ubiquitous but rather restricted to a sub-population of CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ (Figure

1b-c). These data could indicate stochastic expression within the population, or that

expression of *Itgb8* by CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ is linked to a distinct phenotype or function compared to their

Itgb8-negative (*Itgb8*$^-$) counterparts. To investigate further, we purified *Itgb8*$^+$ and *Itgb8*$^-$ CD4$^+$

T_{EM} from *Itgb8* reporter mice and performed bulk RNA-seq to directly compare the

transcriptome of the two populations. We found that the two populations showed a

profoundly different transcriptional profile, with 1599 significantly differentially expressed

protein coding genes (DEGs) between *Itgb8*$^+$ and *Itgb8*$^-$ CD4$^+$ T_{EM} with a Log_2 fold change

greater than 0.5 (Figure 1e, Figure S2a-b, and Table S1). Amongst these DEGs were a number

of genes known to be associated with immune suppression or regulatory function, including

Lag3, *Tigit*, *Il10, Rnf128* and *Pdcd1*, which showed increased expression in *Itgb8*$^+$ T_{EM} relative

to the *Itgb8*$^-$ subset (Figure 1f). These data suggest *Itgb8*$^+$ CD4$^+$ T_{EM} may represent a

suppressive population of memory T cells. Such a function would fit with previous findings

demonstrating that other immune cells capable of activating TGFβ via integrin αvβ8, including

dendritic cells (DCs)[14-18] , T_{REGS}[12] and monocytes and macrophages[19], are associated with

immune suppressive or regulatory functions.

When sorting *Itgb8*$^+$ and *Itgb8*$^-$ CD4$^+$ T_{EM} from *Itgb8* reporter mice for RNA-seq analysis, Foxp3$^+$

T_{REGS} were excluded based on their expression of GFP. However, as several of the genes found

to be up-regulated in *Itgb8*$^+$ CD4$^+$ T_{EM} are also associated with regulatory immune responses,

we performed a four-way bulk RNA-seq experiment to directly address whether *Itgb8*$^+$ Foxp3$^-$

CD4$^+$ T_{EM} were transcriptionally similar to CD4$^+$ Foxp3$^+$ T_{REG}. Principle component analysis

(PCA) revealed each of the four CD4$^+$ T cell subsets to be transcriptionally distinct from one

another (Figure 1g and Table S2). Unexpectedly, we observed more variance based on *Itgb8*

expression status (60%) than the difference between T_{EM} and T_{REG} (Foxp3$^-$ and Foxp3$^+$; 30%)

(Figure 1g), a feature confirmed by correlating gene expression across groups (Figure S2c).

Notably, expression of specific suppressive genes was enriched in both *Itgb8*$^+$ Foxp3$^-$ T_{EM} and

Itgb8$^+$ Foxp3$^+$ T_{REG} relative to each of their respective *Itgb8*$^-$ counterparts (Figure 1h).

However, although sharing some suppression-related gene expression, there were clear

differences in expression of other T cell-associated genes (Figure S2d). Thus, these data show

Itgb8$^+$ Foxp3$^-$ T$_{EM}$ are transcriptionally distinct from *Itgb8*$^+$ Foxp3$^+$ T$_{REG}$ and identifies a Foxp3$^-$

memory T cell subset with an immune-suppressive transcriptional profile.

Itgb8$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ suppress IAV-specific CD8$^+$ memory T cell responses.

Next, we sought to determine the functional importance of *Itgb8* expression by CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ *in*

vivo, in the context of an antigen-specific recall response following secondary infection. To

this end, we utilised the well-characterised secondary influenza challenge model using

heterologous strains of IAV. Briefly, *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ and littermate control mice were infected

intranasally with the IAV strain X31 (H3N2), allowed to recover for ~6 weeks, and then re-

challenged with the IAV strain A/PR/8 (H1N1, PR8) (Figure 2a). The magnitude of the anti-viral

T cell responses was tracked using major histocompatibility complex (MHC) class I- and class

II-restricted tetramers, which facilitated identification of IAV nucleoprotein (NP)-specific CD8$^+$

and CD4$^+$ T cell responses, respectively (representative gating strategy shown in Figure S3a).

We found that, in comparison to littermate controls, by day 8 post-infection *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice

had significantly enhanced IAV-specific CD8$^+$ T cell responses in the lung following re-

challenge with PR8, both in terms of frequency (Figure 2b-c) and absolute cell numbers

(Figure 2d), with similar increases observed in the lung-draining lymph nodes (Figure S3b-c).

In contrast, IAV-specific CD4$^+$ T cell responses were unaffected (Figure S3d-e). Notably, no

differences in the abundance of IAV-specific CD8$^+$ T cells were observed following primary

infection (Figure S3f-g), indicating *Itgb8* serves to restrain cytotoxic T lymphocyte (CTL)

responses following reactivation, rather than regulating their differentiation following

primary infection.

As both Foxp3$^+$ T$_{REG}$ and CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ express *Itgb8* (Figure 1a-c and [12]), a caveat of the

experiments using *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice is that expression of the integrin is ablated on both T cell

subsets. Crucially however, the hyper-responsive IAV-specific CD8$^+$ T cell phenotype we

observed following secondary IAV infection of *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice is not due to a lack of *Itgb8*

expression in CD4$^+$ T$_{REG}$, as deletion of *Itgb8* expression exclusively on Foxp3$^+$ T$_{REG}$ (*Itgb8*$^{flox/flox}$

x Foxp3-Cre^{12}, herein called *Itgb8*$^{\Delta Foxp3}$ mice) exhibited no such phenotype after IAV re-

infection (Figure S3h-i).

Next, we analysed the effector profile of IAV-specific CD8$^+$ T cells in *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice following

secondary influenza challenge. In addition to being more abundant after secondary infection,

IAV-specific CD8$^+$ T cells from *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice exhibited heightened effector properties,

including enhanced production of granzyme B in the lung (Figure 2e-g) and lung-draining LN

(Figure S3j-k) and increased expression of genes encoding molecules associated with

cytotoxic T cell responses such as granzyme A (*Gzma*), granzyme B (*Gzmb*), perforin (*Prf1*) and

interferon gamma (*Ifng*) (Figure 2h-k).

Additionally, recent evidence suggests TGFβ is crucial in the formation of CD8$^+$ T$_{RM}$, and that

activation of TGFβ by DCs and epithelial cells in an αv integrin-dependent manner promotes

the formation of T$_{RM}$ at barrier sites such as the skin and intestine[20-22]. However, when we

analysed the development of IAV-specific CD8$^+$ T$_{RM}$ in the lung following secondary infection

(see materials and methods, and Figure S3a for gating strategy), this remained intact, and was

even elevated, in *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice (Figure S3l).

Thus, taken together, these data suggest *Itgb8*$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ have a suppressive phenotype and

dampen CD8$^+$ T cell numbers and effector function *in vivo* during secondary viral infection.

Additionally, this cellular pathway of TGFβ activation is not involved in induction of CD8$^+$ T$_{RM}$

in the lung, pointing to a dichotomy in functional outcomes depending on the cell type

responsible for the activation of TGFβ.

Itgb8$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ directly suppress Influenza virus-specific CD8$^+$ memory T cell responses via

activation of TGFβ.

Thus far, we have shown that deletion of *Itgb8* on T cells in *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4} mice results in enhanced

CD8$^+$ T cell responses during secondary IAV infection. Furthermore, T cell expression of *Itgb8*

appears to be limited to CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ and CD4$^+$ Foxp3$^+$ T$_{REG}$ (Figure 1a-c and [12]), and mice lacking

expression of *Itgb8* on Foxp3$^+$ T$_{REG}$ do not show any phenotype during secondary IAV infection

(Figure S3h-i). This strongly suggests that the enhanced IAV-specific CD8$^+$ T cell responses

observed in *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4} mice is due to lack of *Itgb8* expression by CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$. To prove this

unequivocally and directly test the suppressive capacity of *Itgb8*$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ *in vivo*, we

designed an experiment to assess whether *Itgb8*$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ were sufficient to reverse the

enhanced IAV-specific CD8$^+$ T cell responses in *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4} mice following secondary IAV

infection. To this end, we isolated *Itgb8*$^+$ and *Itgb8*$^-$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ from *Itgb8*-reporter mice

following resolution of primary X31 infection and adoptively transferred them into

convalescent *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4} mice prior to secondary PR8 infection (Figure 3a). We found that

although transfer of *Itgb8*$^-$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ had no effect, transfer of *Itgb8*$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ completely

reversed the enhanced NP-specific CD8$^+$ T cell response to IAV re-challenge seen in *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4}

mice, to levels observed in littermate controls (Figure 3b-c). In addition, such an effect was

not limited to NP-specific CD8$^+$ T cells, as transfer of *Itgb8*$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ also efficiently attenuated

IAV polymerase (PA)-specific CD8$^+$ T cell responses in $Itgb8^{\Delta CD4}$ recipient mice to levels seen

in littermate controls, whereas transfer of $Itgb8^-$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ had no such effect (Figure S4a-b).

Thus, these data show that $Itgb8^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ cause suppressive effects *in vivo* and are sufficient

to reverse enhanced IAV-specific CD8$^+$ T cell responses in $Itgb8^{\Delta CD4}$ mice.

In light of these findings, we next sought to elucidate the mechanism(s) by which $Itgb8^+$ CD4$^+$

T$_{EM}$ can suppress CD8$^+$ T cell responses after viral re-infection. As expression of $Itgb8$ by CD4$^+$

T$_{EM}$ enables them to activate TGFβ (Figure 1d), and TGFβ can directly inhibit CD8$^+$ T cells[23], we

postulated that $Itgb8^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ could directly suppress CD8$^+$ T cell responses via their ability

to activate TGFβ. To investigate this hypothesis, we performed an *ex vivo* CD8$^+$ T cell

proliferation assay and tested the ability of $Itgb8^+$ and $Itgb8^-$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ to modulate the

proliferative response. To this end, we isolated $Itgb8^+$ and $Itgb8^-$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ from $Itgb8$ reporter

mice and co-cultured each of these subsets separately with Cell Trace Violet (CTV)-labelled

CD8$^+$ T cells that were activated with anti-CD3ξ and anti-CD28 antibodies. We found that CD8$^+$

T cell proliferation was significantly inhibited when responder cells were co-cultured with

$Itgb8^+$, but not $Itgb8^-$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ (Figure 3d-e). Furthermore, the inhibition of CD8$^+$ T cell

proliferation by $Itgb8^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ was wholly dependent on active TGFβ, as this inhibition was

completely reversed when the cells were co-cultured in the presence of a TGFβ blocking

antibody (Figure 3d-e). Moreover, addition of exogenous, active TGFβ to co-cultures of $Itgb8^-$

CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ with CD8$^+$ responders also significantly reduced CD8$^+$ T cell proliferation (Figure 3f-

g), further implicating TGFβ as a key factor involved in immune suppression mediated by

$Itgb8^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$.

Taken together, these data show that *Itgb8*⁺ CD4⁺ T$_{EM}$ restrain IAV-specific CD8⁺ T cells *in vivo*,

a function facilitated via their ability to activate TGFβ in an integrin αvβ8-dependent manner,

which can act directly on CD8⁺ T cells to inhibit their proliferation.

Itgb8⁺ CD4⁺ T$_{EM}$ slow viral clearance but are vital in preventing lung pathology following

viral re-infection.

We next sought to determine the physiological relevance of *Itgb8*⁺ CD4⁺ T$_{EM}$–mediated

control of anti-viral memory T cell responses. To this end, we first analysed the ability of

Itgb8$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice and their littermate controls to clear the virus after secondary IAV infection.

We found that *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice showed significantly more robust expulsion of the virus, with

reduced copies of viral RNA detected at days 5 and 8 post-secondary infection compared to

littermate controls (Figure 4a). In contrast, we did not observe any difference in the ability of

Itgb8$^{\Delta Foxp3}$ mice to clear viral load after secondary infection compared to littermate controls

(Figure S5a), providing strong evidence that the lack of *Itgb8* expression on Foxp3⁺ T$_{REG}$ is not

responsible for the enhanced viral clearance in *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice. Taken together, our data

indicate that *Itgb8*⁺ CD4⁺ T$_{EM}$-mediated restraint of CD8⁺ T cells during secondary IAV infection

limits the ability of mice to rapidly clear the virus.

Our studies demonstrated a novel role for *Itgb8*-expressing CD4⁺ T$_{EM}$ in restraining anti-viral

CTL responses and slowing clearance of the virus. We next wanted to determine the

functional importance of a pathway that essentially limits host immunity to pathogenic

challenge. Based on the potent cytotoxic profile of IAV-specific CD8⁺ T cells in *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice

(Figure 2e-k), we hypothesised that this pathway may be important in limiting infection-

induced inflammation and lung pathology. Indeed, *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice exhibited significantly

enhanced lung inflammation compared to littermate control animals after secondary

infection, with inflammatory cells locating around airways and blood vessels and infiltrating

the parenchymal area (Figure 4b-c). There was no difference in lung pathology between

Itgb8$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice and littermate controls after primary IAV infection (Figure S5b-c), again

indicating a role for *Itgb8*$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ in controlling T cell responses during re-infection rather

than primary infection.

We next determined whether enhanced pathology observed after secondary IAV infection in

Itgb8$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice was directly due to the absence of *Itgb8*$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$. To this end, we analysed

lung pathology following secondary IAV infection of *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice that received either *Itgb8*$^+$

or *Itgb8*$^-$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$. Transfer of *Itgb8*$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$, but not *Itgb8*$^-$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$, completely reversed

the enhanced lung pathology seen in *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice after secondary infection (Figure 4d-e),

restoring histology and inflammation scores to that seen in control mice (Figure 4b-c). Taken

together, these data strongly indicate that although *Itgb8*$^+$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ slow the ability of the

host to clear viral load, they are essential in restraining pathogenic anti-viral CD8$^+$ T cell

responses to prevent tissue pathology following re-infection.

Having discovered that integrin αvβ8 expression identifies a sub-population of immune

suppressive murine CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$, which can restrain effector recall responses and prevent overt

inflammatory sequelae, we sought to determine whether a similar population might be

present in humans. To test this, we isolated human peripheral blood mononuclear cells

(PBMCs) and assessed expression of integrin αvβ8 on human T cell subsets by flow cytometry

using a monoclonal antibody specific for human αvβ8[15] (gating strategy shown in Figure S6).

In agreement with our pre-clinical data, expression of integrin αvβ8 was restricted primarily

to CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ in human PBMCs (Figure 4f-g).

Together, our data for the first time show that a subset of cells classed as CD4$^+$ memory T cells

can be suppressive during re-infection. This suppressive function is reliant on their expression

of an integrin, αvβ8, which enables them to activate TGFβ. We find that these cells are crucial

in restraining CD8$^+$ T cell responses during re-infection with IAV in the lung but are also

present in the intestine. Thus, important future work will determine if these cells have a

broader function in regulating secondary immunity in other organs to a wide range of

challenges, or if the cells are specific to pulmonary immunity.

Our findings have important implications to how the immune system balances responses to

re-infection. Although immunological memory has evolved to promote more robust

responses to subsequent infections, it now appears that memory T cell subsets can also limit

the robustness of this response. In situations where re-infection is proving hard to irradicate,

it could be beneficial to inhibit the function of these suppressive memory T cells, via blocking

integrin αvβ8 and therefore the ability of these cells to activate TGFβ, to boost CD8$^+$ T cell

responses.

However, caution would be required with any such approaches, as these suppressive memory

T cells appear critical in limiting host pathology during re-infection. Thus, strategies would

have to balance the beneficial effects of promoting immunity to re-infection, with potential

tissue damage associated with an exacerbated response. A phase I clinical trial is already

underway in cancer using an antagonist of integrin αvβ8 to block TGFβ activation, based on

successful pre-clinical studies[24-26]. Based on our findings that this molecular pathway is

important in limiting tissue pathology to re-infection, attention to the infection status of the

patients during treatment periods may be prudent.

Materials and methods

Mice

Conditional deletion of *Itgb8* (β8 integrin) expression specifically in T cells or T~REG~ was achieved by crossing mice with a conditional floxed allele of *Itgb8* with CD4-Cre[14] or Foxp3-YFP-Cre[12] mice. All mice were used for experiments at 8 to 12 weeks of age, with littermates used as control. *Itgb8*-IRES-TdTomato mice, generated as previously described[13], were provided by Dr. H. Paidassi and bred at the University of Manchester. All experiments were approved under a project license granted by the Home Office UK, reviewed by the University of Manchester Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body and were performed in accordance with the UK Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act of 1986. Mice were bred and maintained in specific pathogen–free conditions at Bio Safety Level 2 with a 12-hour light/dark cycle and food and water *ab libitum*.

Influenza A Virus Infections

Itgb8 conditional knockout mice and their littermate controls were anaesthetised with 2.5% inhalable isoflurane and inoculated with 10^3 PFU of the IAV strain X31 (H3N2) or 10^1 PFU of the IAV strain A/PR/8 (H1N1, PR8) intranasally, resulting in a transient infection and mild to moderate weight loss. For secondary IAV challenge studies mice were inoculated with 10^3 PFU IAV-X31 and subsequently re-challenged ~6 weeks later with 10^1 PFU of the heterologous strain IAV-PR8 and immune responses assessed at time-points indicated in the figure legends.

Lung digest

Lungs were transferred into 7 ml bijoux tubes containing 500 μl digestion mix consisting of 5

mg/ml collagenase I (Gibco) and 10 μg/ml DNase I (Sigma) in RPMI and finely minced with

scissors. An additional 1.5 ml of digestion mix was then added to samples and incubated in a

shaking incubator at 37°C for 40 minutes. Enzymes were quenched with ice-cold 10% RPMI

medium containing 10% FCS, and cells pelleted via centrifugation at 400 x g for 8 minutes.

Cell pellets were re-suspended in 2 ml red blood cell lysis buffer (Sigma) and washed with ice-

cold 10% FCS in RPMI prior to staining for flow cytometry.

Flow Cytometry

Cell suspensions were transferred into 5 ml round bottom polystyrene tubes, washed in PBS

and stained with fixable viability Zombie dyes (Biolegend) diluted in PBS. Staining was

quenched by washing in FACS buffer (PBS with 2 mM EDTA and 2% FCS) after which cells were

incubated with anti-CD16/32 (Fc block, clone 2.4G2, BD Biosciences) for 15 minutes at 4°C to

prevent non-specific binding. Without washing, antibodies specific for surface markers were

diluted in FACS buffer and added 1:1 directly onto samples and incubated for a further 20

minutes at 4°C protected from light. Stained samples were then washed in PBS and either re-

suspended in FACS buffer for immediate sorting on a BD FACSAria™ cell sorter or fixed using

eBioscience™ Foxp3 / Transcription Factor Staining Buffer Set as per manufacturer's

guidelines. For experiments requiring T cell sorting, single cell suspensions underwent a

negative selection pre-enrichment using EasySep™ pan-T cell or memory CD4[+] T cell isolation

kits as per manufacturer's guidelines (Stemcell™ Technologies).

To stain for intracellular markers or cytokines, fixed/permeabilsed samples were incubated

with antibodies diluted in 1X permeabilisation buffer. Samples were washed twice and re-

suspended in FACS-EDTA prior to acquisition on a BD LSR Fortessa™ or BD Symphony™.

Antibodies used for flow cytometry and FACS were purchased from Biolegend and/or

eBioscience™ and are listed in Supplementary Table 3.

To assess T$_{RM}$ responses, intra-vascular labelling was performed as previously described[27].

Briefly, 3 µg anti-CD45.2 (104) conjugated to either FITC or APC was administered via i.v

injection into the tail vein in a final volume of 200 µl 3-5 minutes prior to performing

euthanasia. All flow cytometry data was analysed using FlowJo V10 software (Tree Star).

Tetramer Staining

For assessment of Influenza virus-specific T cell responses, cells were transferred into 5 ml

round bottom polystyrene tubes, washed and incubated with Fc block for 15 minutes at room

temperature to prevent non-specific binding. Tetramers specific for CD8$^+$ T cells (H-2D(b)

Influenza A NP$_{366-374}$ (ASNENMETM) and H-2D(b) Influenza A PA$_{224-233}$ (SSLENFRAYV)) and CD4$^+$

cells (I-A(b) Influenza A NP$_{311-325}$ (QVYSLIRPNENPAHK)) recognising immunodominant

epitopes were obtained from the NIH tetramer facility at Emory University and added at 5

µg/ml in RPMI and incubated for a minimum of 1 hour at 37°C with regular agitation. Cells

were washed in PBS and staining performed as described below thereafter.

424 *Quantitative PCR*

425 FACS-purified cells were sorted into complete media, washed in sterile PBS and re-suspended

426 in RLT buffer (Qiagen) containing 1% β-mercaptoethanol. For assessment of viral mRNA in

427 lung tissue a single lobe from the right lung was collected into a sterile 1.5 ml tube containing

428 RNA later and subsequently transferred into a 2ml tube containing RLT buffer and a single 2

429 mm stainless steel bead. Tissue was homogenised into suspension using a Qiagen Tissue

430 Lyser. RNA was extracted from both cells and lysed tissue samples using Qiagen RNeasy Mini

431 Kit as per manufacturer's instructions. Reverse transcription of RNA to cDNA was performed

432 using the High Capacity RNA-to-cDNA Kit (Thermo Fisher Scientific) and gene expression was

433 assayed using PowerUp™ SYBR™ Green Master Mix (Applied Biosystems). Reactions were run

434 on a real-time PCR system (ABI 7500; Applied Biosystems). Data for samples were normalized

435 to *Gapdh* and are shown as a fold change compared with the controls.

436 *TGF-β Activation Assay*

437 FACS-purified T cell subsets were incubated overnight with a TGF-β reporter cell line[28] and

438 luciferase activity detected via the Luciferase Assay System (Promega). TGF-β activity was

439 determined as previously described[16].

440

441 *RNA sequencing (RNA-seq)*

442 Total RNA was submitted to the Genomic Technologies Core Facility (GTCF) at the University

443 of Manchester and the quality and integrity of the RNA samples assessed using a 4200

444 TapeStation (Agilent Technologies) prior to the generation of libraries using the Illumina®

445 Stranded mRNA Prep. Ligation kit (Illumina, Inc.) according to the manufacturer's protocol.

446 Briefly, total RNA was used as input material from which polyadenylated mRNA was purified

using poly-T, oligo-attached, magnetic beads. Next, the mRNA was fragmented under

elevated temperature and then reverse transcribed into first strand cDNA using random

hexamer primers and in the presence of Actinomycin D (thus improving strand specificity

whilst mitigating spurious DNA-dependent synthesis). Following removal of the template

RNA, second strand cDNA was then synthesized to yield blunt-ended, double-stranded cDNA

fragments. Strand specificity was maintained by the incorporation of deoxyuridine

triphosphate (dUTP) in place of dTTP to quench the second strand during subsequent

amplification.

Following a single adenine (A) base addition, adapters with a corresponding, complementary

thymine (T) overhang were ligated to the cDNA fragments. Pre-index anchors were then

ligated to the ends of the double-stranded cDNA fragments to prepare them for dual indexing.

A subsequent PCR amplification step was then used to add the index adapter sequences to

create the final cDNA library. The adapter indices enabled the multiplexing of the libraries,

which were pooled prior to cluster generation using a cBot instrument. The loaded flow-cell

was then paired-end sequenced (76 + 76 cycles, plus indices) on an Illumina HiSeq4000

instrument. Finally, the output data was demultiplexed and BCL-to-Fastq conversion

performed using Illumina's bcl2fastq software (v2.20.0.422).

RNA-seq data analysis

The quality of the stranded paired-end RNA-seq reads were assessed using FastQC (v0.11.3;

https://www.bioinformatics.babraham.ac.uk/projects/fastqc/) and FastQ Screen (v0.13.0;

https://www.bioinformatics.babraham.ac.uk/projects/fastq_screen/), followed by adapter

removal and low-quality bases and reads trimming using BBDuk (BBMap suite v36.32;

http://sourceforge.net/projects/bbmap/). Processed reads were mapped against the mouse

reference genome (mm10) and gene annotation from Gencode (vM24) using STAR (v2.7.2b;

https://doi.org/10.1093/bioinformatics/bts635). The "--quantMode GeneCounts" option was

used to obtain read counts per gene from STAR.

Differential gene expression analysis was performed in the R environment using the

Bioconductor package DESeq2 (v1.30.1; https://doi.org/10.1186/s13059-014-0550-8). Genes

were considered significantly differentially expressed with a false discovery rate cut-off of

0.05. The lfcShrink function (with apeglm method) was applied to produce a more accurate

log2 fold change estimates. The counts function (with normalized = TRUE) was used to

produce normalised counts, where it uses the median-of-ratios method to determine scaling

factors. Data transformation was performed using the rlog and vst functions to obtain

regularised logarithm and variance stabilizing transformation expression values respectively.

rlog transformed values were used to produce principal component analysis plots using the

prcomp function from the R package stats. vst values were used to produce sample-to-sample

correlation using the cor function from the R package stats. Heatmaps and correlation plots

were visualised using the R package pheatmap (v1.0.12).

T cell co-culture assays

Spleens from *Itgb8*-IRES-TdTomato mice were manually dissociated, filtered through 40 μm

cell strainers and T cells enriched by negative selection using an EasySep™ pan-T cell

enrichment kit (Stemcell Technologies) as per manufacturer's guidelines. Splenic CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$

and responder CD8$^+$ T cells from *Itgb8*-IRES-TdTomato mice were stained with cell surface

markers and further purified by FACS using a BD FACSAria™. CD8$^+$ T cells were subsequently

stained with CellTrace™ Violet proliferation dye (Thermo Fisher Scientific) and plated in a 1:1

ratio with $Itgb8^+$ or $Itgb8^-$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ in RPMI containing 0.88 mM L-Glutamine (Gibco), 0.88

mM sodium pyruvate (Gibco), 0.04 mM β-mercaptoethanol, 0.88% (v/v) MEM non-essential

amino acids (Gibco), 0.35% (v/v) 100X MEM Vitamins (Gibco), 4.4 U/ml penicillin (Gibco), 4.4

μg/ml streptomycin (Gibco) and 10% (v/v) heat-inactivated fetal calf serum (FCS) (Sigma).

Cells were added to sterile 96 well U-bottom tissue culture plates pre-coated with purified

NA/LE anti-CD3 (Clone 145-2C11) and soluble NA/LE anti-CD28 (Clone 37.51; both BD

Biosciences) added to provide co-stimulation. CD8$^+$ T cell proliferative responses were

measured after 72 hours by assessing dye dilution across cell divisions on a BD Symphony™.

Adoptive transfer studies

For adoptive transfer studies, $Itgb8^+$ or $Itgb8^-$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ were FACS-purified from the spleens

of convalescent $Itgb8$-IRES-TdTomato mice and 2 x 10^5 of either cell type administered i.v into

the tail vein of IAV-X31 convalescent control or $Itgb8^{\Delta CD4}$ mice 1 day prior to re-challenge with

IAV-PR8.

Histological Assessment of Inflammation

Mice were euthanised via intra-peritoneal injection of pentobarbitone and the thoracic cavity

opened to expose the lungs and trachea. The right lobes of the lungs were tied off and

removed for assessment of immune cell populations by flow cytometry. The remaining left

lobe was subsequently perfused with ~10 ml 1 mM EDTA in ice-cold PBS to remove

blood/circulating cells. The internal structure of the left lobe was then fixed by inflating with

1 ml 10% formalin via the trachea and the entire lobe subsequently immersed in 10% formalin

prior to transfer into 70% ethanol after 24 hours. Fixed lungs were embedded in paraffin and

sliced into 5 μm sections prior to staining with hematoxylin and eosin. Histopathology was

scored at 10x magnification of a light microscope according to a set of custom-designed

criteria to assess inflammation around airways, blood vessels and parenchyma as previously

described[29,30]. Six individual snapshots of each tissue section were analysed in a blinded

manner by two independent researchers and results collated.

Statistical Analysis

Results are expressed as mean ± SEM. All statistical analysis was performed using GraphPad

Prism software (v9.4.1) and tests used are stated in the figure legends.

Figure Legends:

Fig. 1| CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ activate latent TGFβ via integrin αvβ8 and possess an immune suppressive

transcriptional profile. a) Expression of *Itgb8* in FACS-purified murine splenic T cell subsets as

determined by RT-PCR (n=≥6). Statistical significance determined by one-way ANOVA with

Tukey's multiple comparisons ****p=≤0.0001, ns = not significant. b) Representative flow

cytometry plots of *Itgb8* expression in splenic CD4$^+$ (black) and CD8$^+$ (grey) T cell subsets from

Itgb8-reporter mice. c) Collated data of *Itgb8* expression on CD4$^+$ and CD8$^+$ splenic T cells at

steady state. Data presented as frequency of *Itgb8$^+$* cells as a percentage of each parent

population (n=8). Statistical significance determined by two-way ANOVA with Tukey's

multiple comparisons test ****p=≤0.0001, ns = not significant. d) Activation of latent TGFβ

by T$_{REG}$ (n=3, Foxp3-YFP$^+$) or CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ (n=6, CD44^{hi} CD62L^{lo} Foxp3$^-$) sorted from the spleen

of Foxp3^{YFP} mice or mice with a conditional deletion of *Itgb8* on T cells (*Itgb8^{ΔCD4}*). Luciferase

activity detected following overnight co-culture of each T cell subset with a TGFβ responsive

reporter cell line. Data from two independent experiments. Statistical significance

determined by Kruskall-Wallis with Dunn's multiple comparisons test *p=≤0.05, ns = not

significant. e) Volcano plot of relative expression from bulk RNA-seq (n=6) between *Itgb8$^-$* T$_{EM}$

(left) and *Itgb8$^+$* T$_{EM}$ (right), with differential (Log$_2$ fold change > 0.5), statistically significant

genes (adjusted p < 0.05) indicated in red. f) Condensed heatmap of immune suppressive

genes differentially expressed between *Itgb8$^+$* and *Itgb8$^-$* T$_{EM}$ from bulk RNA-seq analysis

(n=6). g) PCA of bulk RNA-seq experiment performed on flow cytometry-purified splenic

CD44^{hi} CD62L^{lo} Foxp3$^+$ T$_{REG}$ (*Itgb8$^+$* versus *Itgb8$^-$*) and CD44^{hi} CD62L^{lo} Foxp3$^-$ T$_{EM}$ (*Itgb8$^+$* versus

Itgb8$^-$) (n = 3). h) Condensed heatmap of immune suppressive genes differentially expressed

between CD4$^+$ *Itgb8$^+$* and *Itgb8$^-$* T$_{EM}$ and T$_{REG}$ (n = 3).

Fig. 2| Conditional deletion of *Itgb8* on CD4+ T$_{EM}$ enhances Influenza virus-specific CD8+ T cell responses following heterologous secondary challenge. a) Schematic of heterologous secondary Influenza A Virus challenge protocol. Littermate control and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice were infected with 10^3 PFU IAV-X31 resulting in a transient, self-resolving infection. Six weeks later, mice were re-challenged with 10^1 PFU of the heterologous virus IAV-PR8 to facilitate assessment of IAV-specific T cell responses. b) Representative flow plots of CD44^{hi} Influenza nucleoprotein (NP$_{[366-374]}$)-specific CD8+ T cells in the lungs of littermate control and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice 8 days following secondary infection with IAV-PR8 as determined by tetramer staining (see Figure S3a for gating strategy). Frequencies shown are a percentage of total, live CD45+, single cells. c) Frequency and d) total number of NP-specific CD8+ T cells in the lungs of littermate control and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice at indicated time-points following re-challenge with IAV-PR8. Data (n=3-10 biological replicates) from three independent experiments. Statistical significance determined by two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test ***p=≤0.001, *p=≤0.05, ns = not significant. e) Representative flow plots of total CD8+ T cells producing Granzyme B in the lungs of littermate control and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice 5 days following secondary infection with IAV-PR8 as determined by tetramer and intracellular staining. f) Frequency (as a percentage of total live CD45+ cells) and g) number of Granzyme B-producing NP-specific CD8+ T cells in the lungs of littermate control and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice 5 days following secondary infection with IAV-PR8 (n=8 biological replicates). Statistical significance determined by Mann-Whitney test **p=≤0.01, *p=≤0.05. h-k) 1 x 10^5 NP-specific CD8+ T cells were FACS-purified from the lungs of littermate control and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice 5 days following secondary infection with IAV-PR8 and expression of h) *Gzma*, i) *Gzmb*, j) *Prf1* and k) *Ifng* determined by RT-PCR (n=6 biological replicates from two independent experiments). Statistical significance determined by Mann-Whitney test **p=≤0.01, *p=≤0.05.

Fig. 3| *Itgb8*+ CD4+ T$_{EM}$ restrain anti-viral CD8+ T cell responses following secondary challenge and prevent CD8+ T cell proliferation via TGFβ. a) Schematic of CD4+ T$_{EM}$ adoptive transfer study. Littermate control, *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ and *Itgb8*-reporter mice were infected with 10^3 PFU IAV-X31. 6 weeks post-infection, *Itgb8*+ and *Itgb8*- CD4+ T$_{EM}$ were purified by flow cytometry from convalescent *Itgb8*-reporter mice and transferred intravenously into convalescent *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ recipients, 24 hours prior to heterologous re-challenge with 10^1 PFU IAV-PR8. b) Representative plots of NP-specific CD8+ T cells in the lungs of littermate control and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice at day 8 post re-infection with IAV-PR8, the latter separated into two cohorts based on having received either CD4+ *Itgb8*+ or *Itgb8*- T$_{EM}$. c) Frequency, as a percentage of total live CD45+ cells, of NP-specific CD8+ T cells in the lungs of littermate control and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice receiving either CD4+ *Itgb8*- or *Itgb8*+ T$_{EM}$ at day 8 post re-infection with IAV-PR8. Data (n=≥9) from three independent experiments. Statistical significance determined by Kruskall-Wallis with Dunn's multiple comparisons test **p=≤0.01, ns = not significant. d) Representative histograms of Cell Tracer Violet-labelled naïve CD8+ T cell, stimulated with anti-CD3 and anti-CD28 antibodies and co-cultured in a 1:1 ratio with *Itgb8*+ or *Itgb8*- CD4+ T$_{EM}$ for 72 hours. Grey peaks represent CD8+ T cells co-cultured with *Itgb8*- CD4+ T$_{EM}$, purple peaks signify CD8+ T cells co-cultured with *Itgb8*+ CD4+ T$_{EM}$ and green peaks represent CD8+ T cells co-cultured with *Itgb8*+ CD4+ T$_{EM}$ in the presence of a TGFβ blocking antibody. e) Pooled data for frequency of CD8+ T cells undergoing proliferation under each condition in d (n=5 biological replicates from two independent experiments). Statistical significance determined by one-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test ***p=≤0.001, **p=≤0.01, ns = not significant. f) Representative histograms and g) collated data of naïve CD8+ T cell proliferative responses following co-culture in a 1:1 ratio with *Itgb8*- CD4+ T$_{EM}$ plus or minus recombinant TGFβ for 72 hours. Grey peaks/dots represent CD8+ T

cells co-cultured with *Itgb8*⁻ CD4⁺ T$_{EM}$, blue plots/dots represent CD8⁺ T cells co-cultured 1:1

with *Itgb8*⁻ CD4⁺ T$_{EM}$ in the presence of recombinant TGFβ (n=5 biological replicates from two

independent experiments). Statistical significance determined by unpaired student's t-test

****p=≤0.0001.

Fig. 4| Conditional deletion of *Itgb8* on CD4⁺ T$_{EM}$ facilitates rapid viral clearance but induces

significant tissue pathology. a) Viral Matrix (M) protein mRNA in the lungs of littermate

control and *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4} mice at indicated time-points following re-challenge with IAV-PR8 as

determined by RT-PCR (n=≥4 biological replicates per-timepoint from two independent

experiments). Statistical significance determined by two-way ANOVA with Šídák's multiple

comparisons test ****p=≤0.0001. b) Representative images of H&E-stained lung tissue

sections from littermate control and *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4} mice 8 days following re-challenge with IAV-

PR8. c) Inflammation scores of blind-scored H&E-stained lung tissue sections from littermate

control and *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4} mice 8 days following re-challenge with IAV-PR8 (n=6 biological

replicates). Statistical significance determined by Mann-Whitney test **p=≤0.01. d)

Representative images of H&E-stained lung tissue sections from *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4} mice 8 days

following re-challenge with IAV-PR8. 24 hours prior to re-challenge, *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4} mice were

adoptively transferred with either *Itgb8*⁻ CD4⁺ T$_{EM}$ (grey) or *Itgb8*⁺ CD4⁺ T$_{EM}$ (purple) purified

from convalescent *Itgb8*-reporter mice. e) Inflammation scores of blind-scored H&E-stained

lung tissue sections from *Itgb8*^{ΔCD4} recipient mice 8 days following re-challenge with IAV-PR8.

Statistical significance determined by Mann-Whitney test **p=≤0.01. f) Frequency of integrin

αvβ8-expressing cells amongst CD4⁺ and CD8⁺ T cell subsets in human PBMCs. Frequencies

shown are a percentage of total CD3⁺ cells (n=10 individual donors). Statistical significance

determined by two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test. g) Pairwise

comparison of integrin αvβ8-expressing CD4$^+$ and CD8$^+$ T$_{EM}$ in human PBMCs. Statistical

significance determined by two-tailed, paired student's t-test ****p=≤0.0001.

Supplementary Figure Legends

Fig. S1| *Itgb8*-expressing CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ are present in non-lymphoid tissues. a) Representative gating strategy for analysing and sorting murine splenic T cell subsets. b) Representative flow plots and c) collated data showing *Itgb8* expression in lung CD4$^+$ T cell subsets of *Itgb8*-reporter mice. d) Representative flow plots and c) collated data showing *Itgb8* expression in small intestinal CD4$^+$ T cell subsets of *Itgb8*-reporter mice. Data presented as frequency of *Itgb8$^+$* cells as a percentage of each parent population (n=3 biological replicates for each tissue, representative of two independent experiments). Statistical significance determined by two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test ****p=≤0.0001, ns = not significant.

Fig. S2| *Itgb8*-expressing CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ and T$_{REG}$ possess a characteristic immune suppressive transcriptional profile. a) Heatmap of Z-scores of regularized variance stabilizing transformed read counts from bulk RNA-seq (n=6) analysing CD4$^+$ *Itgb8$^-$* T$_{EM}$ (left, black) and CD4$^+$ *Itgb8$^-$* T$_{EM}$ (right, red), with differential (Log$_2$ fold change > 0.5), statistically significant (adjusted p < 0.05) genes indicated. b) Principal component analysis (PCA) of bulk RNA-seq experiment performed on flow cytometry-purified splenic *Itgb8$^+$* T$_{EM}$ versus *Itgb8$^-$* T$_{EM}$ (n = 6). c) Sample similarity heatmap showing Pearson correlation between samples calculated using regularized logarithmic (rlog)-transformed read counts. d) Heatmap of Z-scores of regularized variance stabilizing transformed read counts of selected genes associated with T cell biology.

Fig. S3| Analysis of Influenza virus-specific T cell responses following primary and heterologous secondary challenge in *Itgb8$^{\Delta CD4}$* and *Itgb8$^{\Delta Foxp3}$* mice. a) Representative gating

strategy used to identify Influenza NP-specific CD8$^+$ T cells, as well as tissue-resident cells, in

the lung of mice. b) Representative flow plots and c) collated data for the frequency of CD44^{hi}

Influenza NP-specific CD8$^+$ T cells in the draining mediastinal lymph nodes of littermate

control and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice at indicated time-points post-secondary IAV-PR8 infection (n= ≥6

biological replicates from two independent experiments). Frequencies shown are as a

percentage of total CD8$^+$ T cells per node. Statistical significance determined by two-way

ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test **p=≤0.01. d) Representative flow plots and

e) collated data for the frequency of CD44^{hi} Influenza NP-specific CD4$^+$ T cells in the lungs of

littermate control and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice at indicated time-points post re-challenge infection with

IAV-PR8 (n=≥4 biological replicates per timepoint, from three independent experiments).

Frequencies shown are as a percentage of total, live CD45$^+$, single cells per lung. Statistical

significance determined by two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test. f)

Representative flow cytometry plots and g) collated data for the frequency of NP-specific

CD8$^+$ T cells in the lungs of littermate control and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice at indicated time-points post

primary infection with IAV-PR8 (n=≥3 biological replicates per timepoint representative of

three independent experiments). Statistical significance determined by two-way ANOVA with

Tukey's multiple comparisons test. h) Representative flow cytometry plots and i) collated data

for the frequency of CD44^{hi} Influenza NP-specific CD8$^+$ T cells in the lungs of littermate control

and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta Foxp3}$ mice at indicated time-points following secondary infection with IAV-PR8

(n=10 biological replicates from two independent experiments, n=3 for day 0 controls).

Statistical significance determined by two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons

test. j) Representative flow cytometry plots and k) collated data for frequency of Granzyme

B-producing NP-specific CD8$^+$ T cells in the mediastinal lymph nodes of littermate control and

Itgb8$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice at indicated time-points post-secondary infection with IAV-PR8. Statistical

significance determined by two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test

**p=≤0.01. (n=≥4 biological replicates from two independent experiments). Frequencies

shown are as a percentage of total CD8[+] T cells per node. l) Frequency of intra-vascular

(CD45.2 I.V+) and extra-vasculature (CD45.2-) NP-specific CD8[+] T cells in the lungs of

littermate control and *Itgb8*[ΔCD4] mice 8 days following secondary infection with IAV-PR8, as

determined by intra-vascular labelling and tetramer staining (n=5 biological replicates from

two independent experiments). Statistical significance determined by two-way ANOVA with

Tukey's multiple comparisons test ****p=≤0.0001, *p=≤0.05.

Fig. S4| *Itgb8*[+] CD4[+] T$_{EM}$ restrain anti-IAV PA-specific CD8[+] T cell responses following

secondary challenge. a) Representative flow cytometry plots of viral polymerase (PA$_{[224-233]}$)-

specific CD8[+] T cells in the lungs of littermate control and *Itgb8*[ΔCD4] mice at day 8 post re-

infection with IAV-PR8, the latter separated into two cohorts on the basis of having received

Itgb8[+] or *Itgb8*[-] CD4[+] T$_{EM}$ intravenously one day prior to re-challenge. b) Frequency, as a

percentage of total, live CD45[+] single cells, of PA-specific CD8[+] T cells in the lungs of littermate

control and both cohorts of *Itgb8*[ΔCD4] mice at day 8 post re-infection with IAV-PR8 (n=≥9

biological replicates from three independent experiments). Statistical significance

determined by Kruskall-Wallis with Dunn's multiple comparisons test *p=≤0.05, ns = not

significant.

Fig. S5| Expression of *Itgb8*[+] on Foxp3[+] T$_{reg}$ does not control viral titre and *Itgb8*[+] CD4[+] T$_{EM}$

do not control lung pathology following primary IAV challenge. a) Viral Matrix (M) protein

mRNA in the lungs of littermate control and *Itgb8*[ΔFoxp3] mice at indicated time-points following

heterologous re-challenge with IAV-PR8 as determined by RT-PCR (n=3-5 biological replicates

per-timepoint). Statistical significance determined by two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple

comparisons test. b) Representative images of H&E-stained lung tissue sections from

littermate control and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice 6 weeks following primary infection with IAV-PR8. c)

Inflammation scores of blind-scored H&E-stained lung tissue sections from littermate control

and *Itgb8*$^{\Delta CD4}$ mice 6 weeks following primary infection with IAV-PR8 (n=4 biological

replicates). Statistical significance determined by Mann-Whitney test.

Fig. S6| Gating strategy for assessment of integrin αvβ8 expression of human T cell subsets.

Representative gating strategy used to identify naïve T cells, T$_{CM}$, T$_{EM}$ and T$_{EMRA}$ in human

PBMC samples isolated from whole blood by Ficoll density gradient centrifugation.

Table S1: Differentially expressed genes between *Itgb8*$^+$ and *Itgb8*$^-$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$. List of 1599

differentially expressed protein-encoding genes between *Itgb8*$^+$ and *Itgb8*$^-$ CD4$^+$ T$_{EM}$ with a

Log$_2$ fold change greater than 0.5 and adjusted p-value of <0.05 (from RNA-seq experiment

shown in Figure 1e and Figure S2a-b).

Table S2: Differentially expressed genes between *Itgb8*$^+$ and *Itgb8*$^-$ CD4+ T$_{EM}$ and T$_{REG}$. List

of differentially expressed protein-encoding genes from all possible two-way comparisons

between *Itgb8*$^+$ and *Itgb8*$^-$ CD4+ T$_{EM}$ and T$_{REG}$, where a gene displayed a Log2 fold change

greater than 0.5 and adjusted p-value of <0.05 for any comparison (from RNA-seq experiment

shown in Figure 1g and Figure S2c-d).

Table S3: List of flow cytometry antibodies and reagents used.

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Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4