Title: Inflammasomes primarily restrict cytosolic *Salmonella* replication within human

macrophages

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Abstract

Salmonella enterica serovar Typhimurium is a facultative intracellular pathogen

that utilizes its type III secretion systems (T3SSs) to inject virulence factors into host

cells and colonize the host. In turn, a subset of cytosolic immune receptors respond to

T3SS ligands by forming multimeric signaling complexes called inflammasomes, which

activate caspases that induce interleukin-1 (IL-1) family cytokine release and an

inflammatory form of cell death called pyroptosis. Human macrophages mount a

multifaceted inflammasome response to *Salmonella* infection that ultimately restricts

intracellular bacterial replication. However, how inflammasomes restrict *Salmonella*

replication remains unknown. We find that caspase-1 is essential for mediating

inflammasome responses to *Salmonella* and restricting bacterial replication within

human macrophages, with caspase-4 contributing as well. We also demonstrate that

the downstream pore-forming protein gasdermin D (GSDMD) and Ninjurin-1 (NINJ1), a

mediator of terminal cell lysis, play a role in controlling *Salmonella* replication in human

macrophages. Notably, in the absence of inflammasome responses, we observed

hyperreplication of *Salmonella* within the cytosol of infected cells as well as increased

bacterial replication within vacuoles, suggesting that inflammasomes control *Salmonella*

replication primarily within the cytosol and also within vacuoles. These findings reveal

that inflammatory caspases and pyroptotic factors mediate inflammasome responses

that restrict the subcellular localization of intracellular *Salmonella* replication within

human macrophages.

Introduction

Intracellular bacterial pathogens create and maintain replicative niches within host cells. To survive inside the host, these pathogens must remodel the host cellular landscape and overcome immune defenses. *Salmonella enterica* serovar Typhimurium (*Salmonella*) is a facultative intracellular pathogen and a major cause of food-borne illness worldwide (Majowicz et al., 2010). Following ingestion, *Salmonella* colonizes the intestinal tract, where it can invade, replicate, and survive in host cells, including macrophages (Crowley et al., 2016; R. L. Santos & Bäumler, 2004). *Salmonella* employs type III secretion systems (T3SSs) that act as molecular syringes to inject virulence factors, or effectors, into the host cell cytosol . Specifically, *Salmonella* relies on two distinct T3SSs encoded on *Salmonella* Pathogenicity Islands 1 and 2 (SPI-1 and SPI-2) to invade and replicate within host cells, respectively (Mills et al., 1995; Shea et al., 1996; Hensel et al., 1998; Galan & Zhou, 2000; Galán, 1999; Galán & Collmer, 1999; Galan & Curtiss, 1989; Ochman et al., 1996; Cirillo et al., 1998). The SPI-2 T3SS translocates effectors to facilitate biogenesis and maintenance of the *Salmonella*-containing vacuole (SCV), wherein *Salmonella* resides and replicates (Cirillo et al., 1998; Takeuchi, 1967; Takeuchi & Sprinz, 1967; Kihlström & Latkovic, 1978; Garcia-del Portillo et al., 1993; Garcia-del Portillo & Finlay, 1995; Steele-Mortimer et al., 1999; Hansen-Wester et al., 2002; Steele-Mortimer, 2008; Jennings et al., 2017; Brumell, Goosney, et al., 2002; Brumell, Tang, et al., 2002; Beuzón et al., 2000; Hensel et al., 1998). In epithelial cells, *Salmonella* escapes its vacuolar niche and hyperreplicates in the host cell cytosol (Knodler, Crowley, et al., 2014; Knodler et al., 2010; Knodler, Nair, et al., 2014; Malik-Kale et al., 2012). While the activity of T3SSs are essential for

Salmonella to infect and replicate within host cells, they also inject bacterial ligands that

enable innate immune sensing of *Salmonella* (E. A. Miao, Mao, et al., 2010; Rayamajhi

et al., 2013; Sun et al., 2007; Yang et al., 2013).

The mammalian innate immune system detects violations of cytosolic sanctity,

such as the presence of intracellular bacterial pathogens, through cytosolic pattern

recognition receptors (PRRs) (Janeway, 1989; Lamkanfi & Dixit, 2009; Medzhitov &

Janeway, 2002). A subset of these PRRs includes the nucleotide-binding domain,

leucine-rich repeat (NLR) family proteins. NLRs respond to their cognate stimuli by

oligomerizing and inducing the assembly of multiprotein complexes termed

inflammasomes, which activate inflammatory caspases (Broz & Dixit, 2016; Lamkanfi &

Dixit, 2009, 2014; Martinon et al., 2002). Canonical inflammasomes recruit and activate

caspase-1, which cleaves and activates pro-inflammatory interleukin-1 (IL-1) family

cytokines and the pore-forming protein gasdermin D (GSDMD) (Kuida et al., 1995; Li et

al., 1995; Agard et al., 2010; Thornberry et al., 1992; Shi et al., 2015; Kayagaki et al.,

2015). Alternatively, noncanonical inflammasomes are formed by caspase-11 in mice

and two orthologs in humans, caspase-4 and caspase-5, in response to cytosolic

lipopolysaccharide (LPS) (Casson et al., 2015; Hagar et al., 2013; Kayagaki et al., 2011,

2013; Lagrange et al., 2018; Schmid-Burgk et al., 2015; Shi et al., 2014). These

caspases directly process and activate GSDMD (Kayagaki et al., 2015; Shi et al., 2015).

Liberated GSDMD N-terminal fragments oligomerize to create pores in the host plasma

membrane, through which IL-1 family cytokines and other alarmins are released to

promote a lytic form of inflammatory cell death termed pyroptosis (Agard et al., 2010;

Ding et al., 2016; Kayagaki et al., 2015; Shi et al., 2015).

Salmonella activates several inflammasomes in human macrophages. One such

inflammasome is the NLR family, apoptosis inhibitory protein (NAIP)/NLR family, CARD

domain-containing protein 4 (NLRC4) inflammasome (Bierschenk et al., 2019; Gram et

al., 2021; Naseer, Egan, et al., 2022). NAIP detects the cytosolic presence of T3SS

structural components and flagellin (Grandjean et al., 2017; Kofoed & Vance, 2011;

Kortmann et al., 2015; E. A. Miao, Mao, et al., 2010; Molofsky et al., 2006; Rauch et al.,

2016; Rayamajhi et al., 2013; Ren et al., 2006; Reyes Ruiz et al., 2017; Sun et al.,

2007; Yang et al., 2013; Zhao et al., 2011, 2016). Upon ligand recognition, NAIP

recruits NLRC4, which oligomerizes to form the active NAIP/NLRC4 inflammasome

(Diebolder et al., 2015; Z. Hu et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2015). *Salmonella* also activates

the NLR pyrin domain-containing protein 3 (NLRP3) inflammasome and the

noncanonical caspase-4/5 inflammasome in human macrophages (Bierschenk et al.,

2019; Casson et al., 2015; Gram et al., 2021; Naseer, Egan, et al., 2022). NLRP3

responds to diverse stimuli, including ionic fluxes as a result of host plasma membrane

damage (Franchi et al., 2007; Hornung et al., 2008; Mariathasan et al., 2006; Muñoz-

Planillo et al., 2013; Perregaux & Gabel, 1994), and can be secondarily activated by the

noncanonical inflammasome (Baker et al., 2015; Casson et al., 2015; Kayagaki et al.,

2013; Pilla et al., 2014; Rathinam et al., 2012; Rühl & Broz, 2015; Schmid-Burgk et al.,

2015; Shi et al., 2014).

Inflammasome activation is critical for host defense against *Salmonella*. In mice,

the NAIP/NLRC4 inflammasome is required to control *Salmonella* infection (Carvalho et

al., 2012; Franchi et al., 2012; Hausmann et al., 2020; E. A. Miao et al., 2006; E. A.

Miao, Mao, et al., 2010; Rauch et al., 2016, 2017; Sellin et al., 2014; Zhao et al., 2016).

In murine intestinal epithelial cells (IECs), NAIP/NLRC4 inflammasome activation triggers pyroptosis and expulsion of infected cells, and is both necessary and sufficient in IECs to restrict *Salmonella* replication and prevent bacterial dissemination to distal organ sites (Hausmann et al., 2020; Rauch et al., 2017; Sellin et al., 2014). Unlike murine IECs, human epithelial cells do not rely on NAIP/NLRC4 or caspase-1, but instead rely on caspase-4 to control *Salmonella* replication, in part through pyroptosis and cell extrusion (Holly et al., 2020; Knodler, Crowley, et al., 2014; Knodler et al., 2010; Naseer, Zhang, et al., 2022). Moreover, in murine macrophages, inflammasome activation controls the replication of a mutant strain of *Salmonella* that aberrantly invades the cytosol, but only slightly limits replication of wild-type (WT) *Salmonella* (Man, Ekpenyong, et al., 2014; Thurston et al., 2016). In contrast, we found that human macrophages rely on NAIP/NLRC4- and NLRP3-dependent inflammasome responses to control intracellular WT *Salmonella* replication (Naseer, Egan, et al., 2022). However, how inflammasome signaling restricts *Salmonella* replication in human macrophages remains unknown.

In this study, we show that caspase-1 is required to restrict intracellular *Salmonella* replication early during infection in human macrophages, and that caspase-4 enables the restriction of *Salmonella* later during infection. We find that the cell lysis mediators GSDMD and ninjurin-1 (NINJ1) also contribute to bacterial restriction. Importantly, we observed that while human macrophages unable to undergo inflammasome responses showed slightly elevated bacterial replication within SCVs, they became permissive to hyperreplication of *Salmonella* within the cytosolic compartment. Thus, inflammasome activation appears to preferentially restrict cytosolic

Salmonella replication. Our results offer insight into how inflammasomes control

Salmonella in human macrophages and restrict the distinct intracellular spatial niches

that *Salmonella* occupies in these cells.

<u>Results</u>

<u>Caspase-1 promotes the control of *Salmonella* replication within human macrophages</u>

Human macrophages undergo NAIP/NLRC4- and NLRP3-dependent

inflammasome activation during *Salmonella* infection (Bierschenk et al., 2019; Gram et

al., 2021; Naseer, Egan, et al., 2022), which restricts intracellular *Salmonella* replication

(Naseer, Egan, et al., 2022). Nonetheless, how inflammasome activation controls

Salmonella replication in human macrophages remains unclear. Inflammasomes recruit

and activate caspase-1 in both murine and human cells (Franchi et al., 2006; Man,

Hopkins, et al., 2014; Mariathasan et al., 2004; E. A. Miao et al., 2006; Ross et al.,

2022; Zamboni et al., 2006), and caspase-1 promotes the control of *Salmonella* both *in*

vivo and *in vitro* (Broz et al., 2010, 2012; Crowley et al., 2020; Hausmann et al., 2020;

Holly et al., 2020; Lara-Tejero et al., 2006; E. A. Miao, Leaf, et al., 2010; Rauch et al.,

2017; Raupach et al., 2006; Sellin et al., 2014; Thurston et al., 2016). Thus, we sought

to test whether caspase-1 restricts *Salmonella* replication specifically in human

macrophages.

To first interrogate the impact of caspase activity on *Salmonella* replication in

human macrophages, we primed macrophages derived from the human monocytic cell

line, THP-1, with the TLR1/2 agonist Pam3CSK4 to upregulate the expression of

inflammasome components. Then, we pretreated the cells with Ac-YVAD-cmk (YVAD),

a chemical inhibitor of caspase-1 activity, or Z-VAD-FMK (ZVAD), a pan-caspase

inhibitor. Upon infection with wild-type (WT) *Salmonella*, WT THP-1 cells pretreated with

either YVAD or ZVAD had significantly reduced levels of IL-1β release and cell death

compared to infected WT cells pretreated with the vehicle control (Figure 1 – figure

supplement 1A-B). Since pretreatment with YVAD largely phenocopies ZVAD, these

data suggest that caspase-1 is the primary caspase that responds to *Salmonella*

infection in THP-1 cells. We next assessed intracellular *Salmonella* burdens by

determining bacterial colony forming units (CFUs). The increase in bacterial CFUs was

significantly higher in WT cells pretreated either YVAD or ZVAD compared to cells

pretreated with DMSO (Figure 1 – figure supplement 1C). Microscopic analysis revealed

that WT cells treated with either YVAD or ZVAD prior to infection harbored significantly

higher intracellular *Salmonella* burdens compared to cells pretreated with DMSO

(Figure 1 – figure supplement 1D). Overall, these results suggest that caspase-1 activity

primarily controls *Salmonella* burdens in human macrophages.

176   Next, to genetically test the requirement of caspase-1, we used two independent

CASP1[-/-] THP-1 single cell clones generated through CRISPR/Cas9-mediated deletion

(Okondo et al., 2017). In agreement with previous reports (Bierschenk et al., 2019;

Gram et al., 2021; Naseer, Egan, et al., 2022), WT THP-1 cells primed with Pam3CSK4

and then infected with WT *Salmonella* exhibited high levels of IL-1β, IL-18, and IL-1α

release as well as cell death at 6 hpi (Figure 1A-B; Figure 1 – figure supplement 2A-B).

In contrast, Pam3CSK4-primed *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1 cells released negligible levels of

inflammasome-dependent cytokines and did not undergo substantial cell death upon

infection (Figure 1A-B; Figure 1 – figure supplement 2A-B). Infected WT and *CASP1*[-/-]

THP-1 cells released similar levels of the inflammasome-independent cytokine TNF-α

(Figure 1 – figure supplement 2C). These results indicate that caspase-1 is required for

inflammasome responses to *Salmonella* infection in human macrophages.

We next tested whether caspase-1 is required to restrict *Salmonella* replication in

human macrophages. At 1 hour post-infection (hpi), we did not observe any significant

differences in bacterial uptake between Pam3CSK4-primed WT and *CASP1*$^{-/-}$ THP-1

cells (Figure 1 – figure supplement 2D). However, at 6 hpi, *CASP1*$^{-/-}$ cells harbored

significantly higher bacterial burdens and a significant fold-increase in bacterial CFUs

compared to WT cells (Figure 1C; Figure 1 – figure supplement 2E). To assess

intracellular bacterial burdens on a single-cell level, we quantified the number of WT

Salmonella per cell by microscopy. WT cells contained relatively low numbers of

Salmonella on average (~5 bacteria per cell), while *CASP1*$^{-/-}$ cells harbored significantly

higher numbers of *Salmonella* on average (~30 bacteria per cell) at 6 hpi (Figure 1D-E).

Overall, these data indicate that caspase-1 limits intracellular *Salmonella* replication in

human macrophages.

We next examined whether caspase-1-mediated control of *Salmonella* replication

in human macrophages requires TLR1/2 priming. At 1 hpi, we did not observe any

significant differences in bacterial uptake between unprimed WT and *CASP1*$^{-/-}$ THP-1

cells (Figure 1 – figure supplement 3A). However, at 6 hpi, unprimed *CASP1*$^{-/-}$ cells

harbored significantly higher bacterial burdens and a significant fold-increase in

bacterial CFUs compared to unprimed WT cells (Figure 1 – figure supplement 3B-C).

Since unprimed conditions phenocopy TLR1/2-primed conditions (Figure 1C; Figure 1 –

figure supplement 2D-E), these data indicate that caspase-1 promotes the restriction of

Salmonella replication within human macrophages independent of TLR1/2 priming.

In the previous experiments, we infected THP-1 cells with *Salmonella* grown

under SPI-1-inducing conditions. So, we subsequently sought to determine whether

Salmonella grown to stationary phase similarly replicated in human macrophages. At 1

hpi and at 6 hpi, we did not observe any significant differences in bacterial uptake

between WT and *CASP1*$^{-/-}$ THP-1 cells infected with stationary phase *Salmonella*

(Figure 1 – figure supplement 4A-B). Strikingly, we did not observe any fold-change in

the bacterial CFUs in both WT and *CASP1*$^{-/-}$ THP-1 cells (Figure 1 – figure supplement

4C). These data indicate that by 6 hours post-infection, *Salmonella* do not replicate

efficiently in human macrophages unless grown under SPI-1-inducing conditions (Figure

1C; Figure 1 – figure supplement 2D-E).

Next, we sought to address the possibility that the caspase-1-mediated control of

Salmonella replication we observed was due to an experimental artifact of gentamicin

entering WT macrophages through caspase-1-dependent gasdermin D pores and

subsequently killing intracellular bacteria. At 30 minutes post-infection, THP-1 cells were

treated with a lower dose of 25 µg/ml of gentamicin to kill extracellular bacteria. At 1

hour post-infection (hpi), the cells were washed to remove the gentamicin, and then the

media was replaced with fresh media containing no gentamicin. Alternatively, we

treated cells with our standard bactericidal concentration of gentamicin (100 µg/ml),

washed the cells to remove the gentamicin, and then replaced the media with fresh

media containing a bacteriostatic concentration of gentamicin (10 µg/ml). At 1 hpi, we

did not observe any significant differences in bacterial uptake between WT and *CASP1*$^{-}$

$^{/-}$ THP-1 cells treated with 25 µg/ml of gentamicin or treated with 100 µg/ml of

gentamicin (Figure 1 – figure supplement 5A). However, at 6 hpi, regardless of the

presence of absence of gentamicin, $CASP1^{-/-}$ cells harbored significantly higher

bacterial burdens and a significant fold-increase in bacterial CFUs compared to WT

cells (Figure 1 – figure supplement 5B-C). Altogether, these data indicate that

gentamicin does not contribute to tcaspase-1-mediated restriction of *Salmonella*

replication in human macrophages.

Caspase-4 contributes to the control of *Salmonella* replication within human

macrophages later during infection

Caspase-4 contributes to inflammasome responses during *Salmonella* infection

of THP-1 macrophages and primary human macrophages (Casson et al., 2015; Naseer,

Egan, et al., 2022), and caspases-4/5 are required for inflammasome responses to

Salmonella in THP-1 monocytes (Baker et al., 2015). In human intestinal epithelial cells

(IECs), caspase-4 drives inflammasome responses during *Salmonella* infection and

limits intracellular bacterial replication (Holly et al., 2020; Knodler, Crowley, et al., 2014;

Naseer, Zhang, et al., 2022). However, whether caspase-4 contributes to restriction of

intracellular *Salmonella* replication within human macrophages is unclear.

To genetically test the contribution of caspase-4 during *Salmonella* infection in

THP-1 macrophages, we used CRISPR/Cas9 to disrupt the *CASP4* gene. We selected

and sequence-validated two independent $CASP4^{-/-}$ THP-1 single cell clones (Figure 2 –

figure supplement 1). We observed a slight decrease in secreted IL-1β levels in *CASP4*-

$^{/-}$ THP-1 macrophages infected with WT *Salmonella* compared to infected WT THP-1

macrophages at 6 hpi (Figure 2 – figure supplement 2A). We also observed a slight

decrease in cell death at 6 hpi in infected *CASP4*[-/-] clone #2 compared to infected WT

cells, whereas cytotoxicity levels were not significantly affected in infected *CASP4*[-/-]

clone #6 (Figure 2 – figure supplement 2B). However, at 24 hpi, we observed a

significant decrease in IL-1 release and cell death in both *CASP4*[-/-] clones infected with

WT *Salmonella* compared to infected WT cells (Figure 2A-B; Figure 2 – figure

supplement 3A-B). WT and *CASP4*[-/-] cells also released similar levels of the

inflammasome-independent cytokine TNF-α upon infection with WT *Salmonella* at 24

hpi (Figure 2 – figure supplement 3C). Overall, these data indicate that caspase-4

contributes to inflammasome responses in THP-1 macrophages later during *Salmonella*

infection.

Since caspase-4 restricts *Salmonella* replication in human epithelial cells (Holly

et al., 2020; Knodler, Crowley, et al., 2014; Naseer, Zhang, et al., 2022), we asked

whether caspase-4 contributes to the control of *Salmonella* replication in human

macrophages as well. Upon examination of the fold-change in bacterial CFUs at 6 hpi,

we did not observe any significant differences between WT and *CASP4*[-/-] THP-1 cells

(Figure 2 – figure supplement 2C). However, at 24 hpi, *CASP4*[-/-] cells harbored higher

bacterial burdens and a significant fold-increase in bacterial CFUs compared to WT

cells (Figure 2C; Figure 2 – figure supplement 3D). To confirm these findings, we

enumerated the amount of WT *Salmonella* per cell by microscopy. At 6 hpi, WT and

CASP4[-/-] THP-1 cells contained comparable numbers of *Salmonella* per cell (Figure 2 –

figure supplement 2D-E). In contrast, at 24 hpi, *CASP4*[-/-] cells harbored significantly

higher burdens of *Salmonella* per cell on average (~20 bacteria per cell) compared to

WT cells (~10 bacteria per cell) (Figure 2D-E). Altogether, these results suggest that

caspase-4 plays a larger role in controlling *Salmonella* burdens later during infection.

<u>GSDMD promotes the control of *Salmonella* replication within human macrophages</u>

Inflammasome activation triggers a lytic form of cell death known as pyroptosis

(Lamkanfi & Dixit, 2014). Death of the infected host cell eliminates *Salmonella*'s

intracellular replicative niche and thus, may contribute to restricting intracellular bacterial

replication. Upon its cleavage by inflammatory caspases, GSDMD forms pores in the

host plasma membrane, resulting in pyroptosis (Ding et al., 2016; Kayagaki et al., 2015;

Shi et al., 2015). Whether GSDMD contributes to the control of *Salmonella* replication in

human macrophages is unknown.

First, we asked whether GSDMD pore formation plays a role in controlling

Salmonella replication in human macrophages. To do this, we pretreated THP-1

macrophages and primary human monocyte-derived macrophages (hMDMs) with the

chemical inhibitor disulfiram. Disulfiram prevents cleaved GSDMD from inserting into

the host plasma membrane, thereby limiting GSDMD-mediated pore formation (J. J. Hu

et al., 2020). Disulfiram treatment led to the loss of IL-1β release and cytotoxicity in

macrophages infected with WT *Salmonella*, compared to treatment with the vehicle

control, DMSO (Figure 3 – figure supplement 1A-B, D-E). Next, we examined the effect

of GSDMD-mediated pore formation on intracellular *Salmonella* burdens. The fold-

increase in bacterial CFUs at 6 hpi was significantly higher in cells treated with

disulfiram compared to cells treated with DMSO (Figure 3 – figure supplement 1C, F).

Collectively, these results suggest that GSDMD-mediated pore formation promotes the

restriction of intracellular *Salmonella* replication.

300   Consistent with our findings with disulfiram, we observed a significant decrease

in IL-1 and IL-18 release in *GSDMD*$^{-/-}$ THP-1 macrophages (Okondo et al., 2017;

Taabazuing et al., 2017) compared to WT THP-1 macrophages following *Salmonella*

infection (Figure 3A; Figure 3 – figure supplement 2A-B). Interestingly, loss of GSDMD

did not completely abrogate the release of IL-1 and IL-18, suggesting that there is also

GSDMD-independent IL-1 and IL-18 release (Figure 3A; Figure 3 – figure supplement

2A-B). Infected WT and *GSDMD*$^{-/-}$ THP-1 cells secreted similar levels of the

inflammasome-independent cytokine TNF-α (Figure 3 – figure supplement 2C).

Importantly, infected *GSDMD*$^{-/-}$ cells failed to undergo substantial cell death, in contrast

to infected WT cells, indicating that GSDMD facilitates cell death during *Salmonella*

infection (Figure 3B). Overall, these results indicate that GSDMD plays an important

role in mediating inflammasome responses during *Salmonella* infection of human

macrophages.

313   We next examined whether GSDMD controls intracellular *Salmonella* replication

in human macrophages. Notably, while there were no differences in bacterial uptake

between WT and *GSDMD*$^{-/-}$ cells at 1 hpi (Figure 3 – figure supplement 2D), we did

observe significantly higher bacterial CFUs in *GSDMD*$^{-/-}$ cells compared to WT cells at 6

hpi (Figure 3 – figure supplement 2E). Moreover, the fold-increase in bacterial CFUs at

6 hpi was significantly higher in *GSDMD*$^{-/-}$ cells than in WT cells (Figure 3C). Next, we

used microscopy to further interrogate intracellular *Salmonella* burdens. As expected,

WT cells contained low numbers of *Salmonella* per cell (~5 bacteria per cell) (Figure 3D-

E). However, $GSDMD^{-/-}$ cells harbored significantly higher numbers of *Salmonella* per

cell on average (~20 bacteria per cell) at 6 hpi (Figure 3D-E). Altogether, these data

indicate that GSDMD promotes the control of *Salmonella* replication in human

macrophages.

<u>NINJ1 contributes to the control of *Salmonella* replication within human macrophages</u>

While GSDMD pores release a subset of molecules, including IL-1 family

cytokines, the extensive release of cellular contents is mediated by plasma membrane

rupture (Ding et al., 2016; Ruan et al., 2018). Recently, NINJ1 was identified as an

executioner of terminal cell lysis (Bjanes et al., 2021; Borges et al., 2022; Degen et al.,

2023; Kayagaki et al., 2021, 2023). NINJ1 is a transmembrane protein that oligomerizes

in the host plasma membrane to induce lytic rupture of the cell after the initiation of

pyroptosis and other forms of regulated cell death (David et al., 2024; Degen et al.,

2023; Kayagaki et al., 2021). Cells can be protected from plasma membrane rupture

through treatment with the amino acid glycine (Fink & Cookson, 2006; Frank et al.,

2000; Heilig et al., 2018; Verhoef et al., 2005), which interferes with the clustering of

NINJ1 (Borges et al., 2022). Thus, upon incubation with glycine, cells can still form

GSDMD pores but cannot undergo terminal cell lysis (Fink & Cookson, 2006; Heilig et

al., 2018; Tsuchiya et al., 2021; Verhoef et al., 2005). Whether NINJ1-dependent cell

lysis contributes to control of *Salmonella* replication in human macrophages remains

unknown.

First, to determine whether glycine exerts a cytoprotective effect on THP-1

macrophages, we pretreated WT and $NAIP^{-/-}$ THP-1 cells with glycine prior to infection

with WT *Salmonella* and assayed for downstream inflammasome responses. Notably,

WT and *NAIP*[-/-] cells pretreated with glycine exhibited significantly decreased cell death

and a small defect in IL-1β release following infection compared to infected cells treated

with the vehicle control (Figure 4 – figure supplement 1A-B). Release of the

inflammasome-independent cytokine TNF-α was unaffected by glycine treatment

(Figure 4 – figure supplement 1C). Altogether, these results indicate that glycine

prevents cell lysis and limits IL-1 release in THP-1 macrophages upon *Salmonella*

infection.

Given glycine's cytoprotective effect on infected THP-1 macrophages, we next

sought to determine whether glycine impacts intracellular *Salmonella* burdens in human

macrophages. THP-1 macrophages pretreated with glycine retained significantly higher

intracellular bacterial burdens at 6 hpi compared to cells given the vehicle control

(Figure 4 – figure supplement 1D). We did not detect any significant differences in

bacterial uptake (Figure 4 – figure supplement 1E). Moreover, WT and *NAIP*[-/-] THP-1

cells pretreated with glycine exhibited a greater increase in *Salmonella* CFUs compared

to cells treated with the vehicle control (Figure 4 – figure supplement 1F), suggesting

that cytoprotection by glycine interferes with the intracellular control of *Salmonella* in

human macrophages.

Next, to genetically test the role of NINJ1, we transfected WT THP-1

macrophages with small interfering RNA (siRNA) targeting *NINJ1*, which led to robust

knockdown of *NINJ1* ranging from 77% to 85%, or control scrambled siRNA.

Knockdown of *NINJ1* resulted in a significant decrease, yet not complete abrogation, of

IL-1β secretion and cytotoxicity in infected cells, in contrast to control siRNA treatment

(Figure 4A-B). Collectively, these data imply a critical role for NINJ1 in contributing to IL-

1 release and cell death during *Salmonella* infection in human macrophages.

Notably, while *NINJ1* knockdown did not affect bacterial uptake at 1 hpi (Figure

4C), cells treated with *NINJ1* siRNA contained higher intracellular bacterial burdens

than cells treated with control siRNA at 6 hpi (Figure 4D). Moreover, there was a greater

fold-increase in bacterial CFUs at 6 hpi in *NINJ1* siRNA-treated cells compared to

control siRNA-treated cells (Figure 4E). Together, these findings indicate that NINJ1

contributes to intracellular bacterial control.

<u>Inflammasome activation primarily controls cytosolic *Salmonella* replication in human</u>

<u>macrophages</u>

In epithelial cells, WT *Salmonella* can enter the cytosol and replicate in both

vacuolar and cytosolic compartments, specifically hyperreplicating in the cytosol

(Knodler, Crowley, et al., 2014; Knodler et al., 2010; Knodler, Nair, et al., 2014; Malik-

Kale et al., 2012). However, in murine macrophages, WT *Salmonella* appears to

replicate exclusively in vacuoles (Beuzón et al., 2002; Thurston et al., 2016). *Salmonella*

lacking the SPI-2 effector SifA (Δ*sifA*), which is required for SCV membrane stability,

frequently enter the cytosol and can replicate within epithelial cells, but cannot replicate

efficiently in murine macrophages (Beuzón et al., 2000, 2002; Brumell, Tang, et al.,

2002; Thurston et al., 2016). Whether *Salmonella* replicates within vacuoles or the

cytosol of human macrophages remains largely unknown. One study suggested that a

small but significant proportion of *Salmonella* are exposed to the cytosol in THP-1

macrophages (Fisch et al., 2020). Our recently published data and current findings

indicate that when human macrophages fail to undergo robust inflammasome

responses, *Salmonella* hyperreplicates to large numbers within these cells (Naseer,

Egan, et al., 2022). The hyperreplication that we observed in human macrophages was

reminiscent of previous reports describing *Salmonella* hyperreplication within the cytosol

of IECs (Knodler, Crowley, et al., 2014; Knodler et al., 2010; Knodler, Nair, et al., 2014;

Malik-Kale et al., 2012). Thus, we hypothesized that inflammasome activation limits

Salmonella replication in both SCVs and the host cell cytosol, and that in the absence of

inflammasome responses, *Salmonella* hyperreplicates to large numbers within the host

cell cytosol and also exhibits increased replication within SCVs.

First, to test whether inflammasome activation restricts the ability of *Salmonella*

to replicate in vacuolar and cytosolic compartments of human macrophages, we used a

chloroquine (CHQ) resistance assay. As a weak base, CHQ accumulates in endosomal

compartments, including the SCV, without entering the cytosol of host cells (Klein,

Powers, et al., 2017; Knodler, Nair, et al., 2014; Steinberg, 1994). Thus, vacuolar

bacteria are CHQ-sensitive, while cytosolic bacteria are CHQ-resistant (Knodler, Nair, et

al., 2014). We infected THP-1 macrophages with WT *Salmonella* and treated the

infected cells with CHQ. Then, we determined the bacterial CFUs at 2 hpi and 6 hpi,

quantifying the numbers of vacuolar bacteria (CHQ-sensitive) and cytosolic bacteria

(CHQ-resistant). At 2 hpi, we did not observe any significant differences in vacuolar or

cytosolic *Salmonella* between WT and *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1 cells (Figure 5A). We found that

WT THP-1 cells contained mostly vacuolar *Salmonella* while also retaining some

cytosolic *Salmonella* at 6 hpi (Figure 5B), suggesting that a subset of *Salmonella* dwells

in the cytosol of THP-1 macrophages, in agreement with a previous study (Fisch et al.,

2020). In *NAIP*[-/-] and *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1 cells, we observed slightly higher burdens of

vacuolar *Salmonella* compared to WT cells (Figure 5B). Strikingly, we also observed

significantly larger numbers of cytosolic *Salmonella* in *NAIP*[-/-] and *CASP1*[-/-] cells

compared to WT cells (Figure 5B). These data indicate that inflammasome signaling

restricts *Salmonella* primarily within the host cell cytosol but also within SCVs in human

macrophages.

The SPI-1 T3SS can damage the SCV (Roy et al., 2004), and the SPI-1 T3SS

and its effectors contribute to *Salmonella* escape from the SCV and replication in the

cytosol of epithelial cells (Chong et al., 2019; Klein, Grenz, et al., 2017; Knodler, Nair, et

al., 2014; Röder & Hensel, 2020). So, we next assessed whether the SPI-1 T3SS was

required for the cytosolic exposure of *Salmonella* in human macrophages. We infected

WT and *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1 macrophages with *Salmonella* lacking the SPI-1 T3SS

translocon protein SipB (Δ*sipB*), thus preventing SPI-1 T3SS effector translocation into

host cells. While we observed a significant increase in the amount of vacuolar and

cytosolic Δ*sipB Salmonella* in *CASP1*[-/-] cells compared to WT cells at 6 hpi, the

numbers of cytosolic Δ*sipB* were significantly lower than vacuolar Δ*sipB* in both WT and

CASP1[-/-] cells (Figure 5C). We also observed lower cytosolic Δ*sipB Salmonella* burdens

compared to WT *Salmonella* in both WT and *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1 cells at 6 hpi (Figure 5B-

C). Therefore, these results suggest that the SPI-1 T3SS contributes to *Salmonella*'s

cytosolic access in human macrophages.

Since CFU assays are population-based, we next used single-cell microscopy-

based methods to interrogate the subcellular localization of WT *Salmonella* in human

macrophages. We employed a strain of WT *Salmonella* that constitutively expresses

mCherry and maintains a reporter plasmid, pNF101, that expresses *gfp-ova* under the

control of a promoter responsive to the host cytosolic metabolite glucose-6-phosphate

(Lau et al., 2019; Spinnenhirn et al., 2014). We scored the number of GFP-

positive/mCherry-positive bacteria (cytosolic) and GFP-negative/mCherry-positive

bacteria (vacuolar) in WT, *NAIP*[-/-] and *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1 macrophages at 8 hpi by

microscopy. We observed low numbers of both vacuolar and cytosolic populations of

Salmonella in WT THP-1 cells (Figure 5D-E). In contrast, *NAIP*[-/-] and *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1

cells maintained significantly larger numbers of vacuolar *Salmonella*, with a substantial

increase in the numbers of cytosolic *Salmonella* (Figure 5D-E). Taken together, these

results suggest that inflammasome responses primarily restrict *Salmonella* replication

within the host cell cytosol and also control bacterial replication within SCVs in human

macrophages.

We next asked whether inflammasome responses also restrict the replication of

Salmonella within the cytosol and SCV in primary human monocyte-derived

macrophages (hMDMs). We pretreated hMDMs with either ZVAD, to inhibit

inflammasome responses mediated by caspase activity, or the vehicle control DMSO,

and then infected the cells with WT *Salmonella* constitutively expressing mCherry and

harboring pNF101. We observed that hMDMs treated with ZVAD contained significantly

more cytosolic *Salmonella* than hMDMs treated with DMSO at 8 hpi (Figure 5 – figure

supplement 1A-B). We observed no significant differences between the vacuolar

burdens of *Salmonella* in hMDMs pretreated with ZVAD or DMSO (Figure 5 – figure

supplement 1A-B). Thus, inflammasome responses appear to primarily control

Salmonella replication within the cytosol of primary human macrophages.

<u>Inflammasome activation modulates the cytosolic exposure of *Salmonella* in human</u>

<u>macrophages</u>

Finally, to characterize the effect of inflammasomes on the subcellular niches of

Salmonella in human macrophages at higher resolution, we used transmission electron

microscopy (TEM). In WT THP-1 cells, TEM analysis revealed that the majority of

bacteria resided in a membrane-bound compartment (vacuolar, white arrows) (Figure

6A; Figure 6 – figure supplement 1B). In *CASP1*$^{-/-}$ THP-1 cells, we observed a more

mixed population of vacuolar bacteria and bacteria that were exposed to the host cell

cytosol to varying extents (Figure 6B; Figure 6 – figure supplement 1B). We observed

Salmonella free-living in the cytosol without a vacuolar membrane (fully cytosolic, black

asterisk), as well as *Salmonella* exposed to the cytosol within discontinuous vacuolar

membranes (partially cytosolic, cyan arrows) (Figure 6B; Figure 6 – figure supplement

1B). We observed a greater proportion of cytosol-exposed *Salmonella* in *CASP1*$^{-/-}$ cells

compared to WT cells (Figure 6 – figure supplement 1A). Strikingly, these TEM results

revealed distinct intracellular populations of *Salmonella* in human macrophages,

providing further evidence that inflammasome signaling controls the replicative niches

that *Salmonella* occupies in human macrophages.

We next sought to further characterize the cytosolic exposure of *Salmonella* in

CASP1$^{-/-}$ THP-1 cells using electron tomography (ET), a technique that can reveal three-

dimensional (3D) detail about SCV membranes. Indeed, we confirmed the presence of

Salmonella in SCVs with varying degrees of vacuolar membrane discontinuities,

yielding various extents of cytosolic exposure (Figure 6C; Figure 6 – figure supplement

1C; Video 1). These discontinuities were often numerous and found in clusters.

Altogether, our TEM and ET data reveal the full spectrum of cytosolic exposure for

Salmonella in *CASP1*$^{-/-}$ cells as a result of vacuolar membrane discontinuities. Overall,

our findings indicate that inflammasome responses modulate the subcellular

populations of *Salmonella*, thereby controlling the number of *Salmonella* able to

replicate within the cytosol and SCV in human macrophages.

Discussion

Our data reveal that inflammatory caspases and downstream cell lysis mediators

are required to restrict *Salmonella* replication in human macrophages. Furthermore, our

findings indicate that inflammasomes restrict *Salmonella* hyperreplication within the

cytosol of human macrophages. Caspase-1 is required for inflammasome responses

and control of intracellular *Salmonella* replication early during infection. In contrast,

caspase-4 contributed minimally early during infection and instead played a larger role

in inflammasome responses and restriction of *Salmonella* replication at later timepoints.

We also found that GSDMD and NINJ1 were required for cell death, IL-1 cytokine

release, and control of *Salmonella* replication. Finally, in the absence of these

inflammasome components and effectors in human macrophages, we observed a

hyperreplicating population of *Salmonella* within the cytosol, as well as increased

bacterial loads within the SCV.

There are multiple downstream consequences of inflammasome activation,

including pyroptosis, cytokine secretion, phagolysosomal fusion, the formation of pore-

induced intracellular traps (PITs), and the generation of reactive oxygen species (ROS),

which could be singly or collectively responsible for the control of intracellular

Salmonella replication in human macrophages. Previous studies reported that

inflammasome activation and inflammatory caspases limit intracellular replication of WT

Salmonella in human epithelial cells and murine macrophages through ROS, actin

polymerization, and host cell death (Aachoui et al., 2013; Holly et al., 2020; Knodler,

Crowley, et al., 2014; Man, Ekpenyong, et al., 2014). Interestingly, in murine

macrophages, the restriction of a mutant strain of *Salmonella* that frequently enters the

cytosol is dependent on caspase-1/11 but independent of IL-1 signaling and host cell

death (Thurston et al., 2016). Moreover, caspase-1/11-dependent production of

mitochondrial ROS and hydrogen peroxide contributes to the control of WT *Salmonella*

replication in SCVs in murine macrophages (Man, Ekpenyong, et al., 2014). Future

studies investigating the downstream consequences of inflammasome activation will

help elucidate how inflammatory caspases and cell lysis mediators control intracellular

Salmonella replication in human macrophages.

Whereas caspase-1 is the primary caspase that mediates inflammasome

responses and control of *Salmonella* burdens in human macrophages, our data indicate

that caspase-4 also plays a role at a later stage of infection. Whether caspase-4 is

activated by vacuolar *Salmonella* or hyperreplicating cytosolic *Salmonella* remains an

open question. Other host immune factors may also contribute to caspase-4-dependent

inflammasome responses to *Salmonella*. For example, guanylate binding proteins

(GBPs) can modulate inflammasome responses to intracellular LPS and impact

intracellular bacterial replication (Degrandi et al., 2007; Fisch et al., 2020; Kim et al.,

2011; Kutsch et al., 2020; Meunier et al., 2014; Pilla et al., 2014; J. C. Santos et al.,

2020; Tietzel et al., 2009; Wandel et al., 2020).

The impact of GSDMD on the restriction of intracellular *Salmonella* replication

may be due to downstream responses, such as IL-1 release and pyroptosis. Moreover,

pyroptosis can induce PIT formation, which traps and damages intracellular bacteria,

rendering them more susceptible to immune defenses, such as neutrophil-mediated

killing (Jorgensen et al., 2016). It is possible that pyroptosis leads to the development of

PITs in human macrophages during *Salmonella* infection, thereby limiting *Salmonella*'s

intracellular replication. In addition, the cleaved N-terminal fragment of GSDMD can

directly kill bacteria (Ding et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2019), raising the

possibility that GSDMD directly targets cytosolic *Salmonella* to mediate restriction. A

recent study revealed that GSDMD binds and permeabilizes mitochondrial membranes

to mediate pyroptosis (R. Miao et al., 2023). Still, it remains unknown whether GSDMD

binds or permeabilizes the SCV, thereby affecting vacuolar integrity and influencing

intracellular *Salmonella* replication.

Our data indicate that inflammasome responses primarily control *Salmonella*

replication within the cytosol of human macrophages and also within SCVs. How

inflammasome activation inhibits *Salmonella* replication in the cytosol of human

macrophages remains unknown. *Salmonella* hyperreplicates in the cytosol of human

epithelial cells, which are unable to undergo caspase-1-dependent inflammasome

responses (Holly et al., 2020; Knodler, Crowley, et al., 2014; Knodler et al., 2010;

Knodler, Nair, et al., 2014; Naseer, Zhang, et al., 2022). Our study suggests that

CASP1[-/-] THP-1 macrophages behave similarly to human IECs, as they support

Salmonella hyperreplication in the cytosol in the absence of caspase-1. Inflammasome

activation could curtail cytosolic replication of *Salmonella* through host cell death, direct

GSDMD targeting of cytosolic *Salmonella,* and/or another effector mechanism.

Alternatively, inflammasome activation could regulate the cytosolic access of

Salmonella through host factors that directly damage the SCV, such as pore-forming

proteins like GSDMD.

The bacterial factors that facilitate *Salmonella*'s cytosolic lifestyle in human

macrophages remain largely unknown. Our findings indicate that the SPI-1 T3SS is

partially required for *Salmonella* to access the cytosol in THP-1 macrophages. In

epithelial cells, the SPI-1 T3SS SopE, SopB, and SipA enable *Salmonella* to escape the

SCV and efficiently colonize and replicate in the cytosol (Chong et al., 2019; Klein,

Grenz, et al., 2017; Röder & Hensel, 2020). Future studies will elucidate whether these

same effectors also support *Salmonella*'s escape into the cytosol and cytosolic

replication in human macrophages.

Our data also indicate that there is considerable single-cell heterogeneity in

terms of total intracellular bacterial burdens as well as proportions of vacuolar and

cytosolic *Salmonella* in human macrophages using single-cell microscopic analysis.

Several factors could account for this phenotypic heterogeneity, including expression

levels of inflammasome components, the amount of translocated *Salmonella* ligands, or

the extent of inflammasome activation, all of which might differ in individual cells and are

masked in bulk-population assays. Notably, heterogeneity in *Salmonella* gene

expression, intracellular *Salmonella* populations, and intracellular *Salmonella*

proliferation and viability has been previously observed in human epithelial cells and

murine macrophages (Helaine et al., 2010, 2014; Knodler, Nair, et al., 2014; Malik-Kale

et al., 2012; Powers et al., 2021).

In this study, we utilized tissue culture models to examine intracellular

Salmonella replication in human macrophages. These *in vitro* systems allow for precise

control of experimental conditions and, therefore, serve as powerful tools to interrogate

the molecular mechanisms underlying inflammasome responses and *Salmonella*

replication in both immortalized and primary human cells. Still, there are limitations of

tissue culture models, as they lack the inherent complexity of tissues and organs *in vivo*.

To assess whether our findings reflect *Salmonella* dynamics in the mammalian host, it

will be important to complement our studies and extend the implications of our work

using approaches that model more complex systems, such as organoids or organ

explant models co-cultured with immune cells, and *in vivo* techniques, such as

humanized mouse models.

Collectively, our results reveal that inflammasome responses restrict intracellular

Salmonella replication, particularly within the cytosol of human macrophages. These

findings are in contrast to mouse macrophages, where inflammasomes are activated

but only marginally restrict the intracellular replication of WT *Salmonella*. Our findings

provide insight into how human macrophages leverage inflammasomes to restrict

Salmonella intracellular replication. Moreover, our work offers a basis for future studies

to investigate how inflammasome activation modulates the subcellular localization of

bacterial replicative niches within host cells.

<u>Materials and Methods</u>

Ethics statement

All experiments on primary human monocyte-derived macrophages (hMDMs) were

performed in compliance with the requirements of the US Department of Health and

Human Services and the principles expressed in the Declaration of Helsinki. hMDMs

were derived from samples obtained from the University of Pennsylvania Human

Immunology Core, and they are considered to be a secondary use of deidentified

human specimens and are exempt via Title 55 Part 46, Subpart A of 46.101 (b) of the

Code of Federal Regulations.

Cell culture of THP-1 cells

THP-1 cells (TIB-202; American Type Culture Collection) were maintained in RPMI

supplemented with 10% (vol/vol) heat-inactivated FBS, 0.05 nM β-mercaptoethanol, 100

IU/mL penicillin, and 100 µg/mL streptomycin at 37°C in a humidified incubator. Two

days prior to experimentation, the cells were replated in media without antibiotics in a

48-well plate at a concentration of 2 × 10^5 cells/well or in a 24-well plate at a

concentration of 3.5 × 10^5 cells per well and incubated with phorbol 12-myristate 13-

acetate (PMA) for 24 hours to allow differentiation into macrophages. Then,

macrophages were either left unprimed or primed with 100 ng/mL Pam3CSK4

(Invivogen) for 16 to 20 hours prior to bacterial infections. For fluorescence microscopy

experiments, cells were plated on glass coverslips in a 24-well plate.

Cell culture of primary human monocyte-derived macrophages (hMDMs)

Purified human monocytes from deidentified healthy human donors were obtained from

the University of Pennsylvania Human Immunology Core. The monocytes were cultured

in RPMI supplemented with 10% (vol/vol) heat-inactivated FBS, 2 mM L-glutamine, 100

IU/mL penicillin, 100 µg/ml streptomycin, and 50 ng/ml recombinant human M-CSF

(Gemini Bio-Products). Cells were cultured for 4 days in 10 mL of media in at a

concentration of 4-5 × 10^5 cells/mL in 10 cm-dishes. Then, 10 mL of fresh growth media

was added for an additional 2 days to promote complete differentiation into

macrophages. One day prior to infection, the cells were rinsed with cold PBS, gently

detached with trypsin-EDTA (0.05%) and replated in media without antibiotics and with

25 ng/mL human M-CSF in a 48-well plate at a concentration of 1 × 10^5 cells per well or

in a 24-well plate at a concentration of 2 × 10^5 cells per well. For fluorescence

microscopy, cells were replated on glass coverslips in a 24-well plate. For experiments

involving LPS, cells were primed with 500 ng/mL LPS (Sigma-Aldrich) for 3 hours prior

to bacterial infections.

<u>Inhibitor experiments</u>

Human macrophages were treated 1 hour prior to infection at the indicated

concentrations with the following inhibitors: 20 µM of the pan-caspase inhibitor Z-

VAD(OMe)-FMK (SM Biochemicals; SMFMK001), 25 µM of the caspase-1 inhibitor Ac-

YVAD-cmk (Sigma-Aldrich; SML0429), and 40 µM of the GSDMD inhibitor disulfiram

(Sigma). DMSO treatment was used as a vehicle control with these inhibitors. To

prevent cell lysis, cells were treated with 20 mM glycine (Fisher Scientific) for 30

minutes prior to infection. Distilled water was used as a vehicle control.

Bacterial strains and growth conditions

Salmonella enterica serovar Typhimurium SL1344 WT was routinely grown shaking

overnight at 37°C in Luria-Bertani (LB) broth with streptomycin (100 µg/mL). For

infection of cultured cells, the overnight culture was diluted in LB with streptomycin

(100 µg/mL) containing 300 mM NaCl and grown standing for 3 hours at 37°C to induce

SPI-1 expression (Lee & Falkow, 1990), unless otherwise noted, when the overnight

culture of *Salmonella* was grown to stationary phase and subseuqnelty used to infect

cultured cells.

SL1344 WT *glmS::Ptrc-mCherryST::FRT* pNF101 (Lau et al., 2019) was kindly provided

by Dr. Leigh Knodler. This strain constitutively expresses *mCherry* that is

chromosomally encoded. It also harbors the *PuhpT-gfpova* plasmid, pNF101, where

expression of GFP is under the control of the glucose-6-phosphate responsive *uhpT*

promoter derived from *Shigella flexneri*. SL1344 WT *glmS::Ptrc-mCherryST::FRT*

pNF101 was grown shaking overnight at 37°C in Luria-Bertani (LB) broth with

streptomycin (100 µg/mL) and ampicillin (100 µg/mL). For SPI-1 induction prior to

infection, the overnight culture was diluted in LB with streptomycin (100 µg/mL) and

ampicillin (100 µg/mL) that also contained 300 mM NaCl and then grown standing for 3

hours at 37°C (Lee & Falkow, 1990).

Bacterial infections

Overnight cultures of *Salmonella* were diluted into LB broth with streptomycin

(100 µg/mL) containing 300 mM NaCl and grown for 3 hours standing at 37°C to induce

SPI-1 gene expression (Lee & Falkow, 1990). Bacterial cultures were then pelleted at

6,010 × g for 3 minutes, washed once with PBS, and resuspended in PBS. Human

macrophages were infected with *Salmonella* at a multiplicity of infection (MOI) of 20.

Infected cells were centrifuged at 290 × g for 10 minutes and incubated at 37°C. At 30

minutes post-infection, the cells were treated with 100 µg/ml of gentamicin to kill any

extracellular *Salmonella*, unless otherwise noted when the cells were treated with 25

µg/ml of gentamicin. Then, the infection proceeded at 37°C for 6 to 8 hours, as

indicated. For all experiments, control cells were mock-infected with PBS.

<u>Bacterial intracellular burden assay</u>

Cells were infected with WT *Salmonella* as described above at an MOI of 20. Then, 30

minutes post-infection, cells were treated with 100 µg/ml of gentamicin to kill any

extracellular bacteria. 1 hour post-infection, the media was replaced with fresh media

containing 10 µg/ml of gentamicin or no gentamicin, as indicated. At the indicated time

points, the infected cells were lysed with PBS containing 0.5% Triton to collect all

intracellular *Salmonella*. Harvested bacteria were serially diluted in PBS and plated on

LB agar plates containing streptomycin (100 µg/ml) to enumerate colony forming units

(CFUs). Plates were incubated overnight at 37°C and CFUs were subsequently

counted.

<u>Chloroquine (CHQ) Resistance Assay</u>

THP-1 macrophages were infected in 48-well plates as described above. For each

timepoint, triplicate wells were incubated in the presence of CHQ (500 µM) and

gentamicin (100 ng/mL) for 1 hour to quantify the CHQ-resistant bacteria (Bârzu et al.,

1997; Fernandez et al., 2001; Klein, Powers, et al., 2017; Knodler, Nair, et al., 2014;

Zychlinsky et al., 1994). Another triplicate wells were incubated with gentamicin (100

ng/mL) only to quantify the total intracellular bacteria. At the indicated time points, the

infected cells were lysed with PBS containing 0.5% Triton to collect intracellular

Salmonella. Harvested bacteria were serially diluted in PBS and plated on LB agar

plates containing streptomycin (100 µg/ml) to enumerate colony forming units (CFUs).

Plates were incubated overnight at 37°C and CFUs were subsequently counted.

ELISAs

Harvested supernatants from infected human macrophages were assayed for cytokine

levels using ELISA kits for human IL-1α (R&D Systems), IL-18 (R&D Systems), IL-1β

(BD Biosciences), and TNF-α (R&D Systems).

LDH cytotoxicity assays

Harvested supernatants from infected human macrophages were assayed for

cytotoxicity by quantifying the loss of cellular membrane integrity via lactate

dehydrogenase (LDH) activity. LDH release was measured using an LDH Cytotoxicity

Detection Kit (Clontech) according to the manufacturer's instructions and normalized to

mock-infected cells.

<u>siRNA-mediated knockdown of genes</u>

All Silencer Select siRNA oligos were purchased from Ambion (Life Technologies).

Individual siRNA targeting *NINJ1* (ID# s9556) was used. The two Silencer Select

negative control siRNAs (Silencer Select Negative Control No. 1 siRNA and Silencer

Select Negative Control No. 2 siRNA) were used as a control. Three days prior to the

infection, 30 nM of siRNA was transfected into the human macrophages using

Lipofectamine RNAiMAX transfection reagent (Thermo Fisher Scientific) following the

manufacturer's protocol. Then, 24 hours after transfection, the media was replaced with

fresh media containing antibiotics. Finally, 16 hours before infection, the media was

replaced with fresh antibiotic-free media containing 100 ng/ml Pam3CSK4.

<u>Quantitative RT-PCR Analysis</u>

RNA was isolated using the RNeasy Plus Mini Kit (Qiagen) following the manufacturer's

protocol. Human macrophages were lysed in 350 μL RLT buffer with β-mercaptoethanol

and centrifuged through a QIAshredder spin column (Qiagen). cDNA was synthesized

from isolated RNA using SuperScript II Reverse Transcriptase (Invitrogen) following the

manufacturer's protocol. Quantitative PCR was conducted with the CFX96 real-time

system from Bio-Rad using the SsoFast EvaGreen Supermix with Low ROX (Bio-Rad).

To calculate knockdown efficiency, mRNA levels of siRNA-treated cells were

normalized to the housekeeping gene *HPRT* and control siRNA-treated cells using the

$2^{-\Delta\Delta CT}$ (cycle threshold) method (Livak & Schmittgen, 2001). The following primers from

PrimerBank were used. The PrimerBank identifications are *NINJ1* (148922910c1),

CASP4 (73622124c2) and *HPRT* (164518913c1); all primers listed as 5′–3′:

NINJ1 forward: TCAAGTACGACCTTAACAACCCG

NINJ1 reverse: TGAAGATGTTGACTACCACGATG

CASP4 forward: TCTGCGGAACTGTGCATGATG

CASP4 reverse: TGTGTGATGAAGATAGAGCCCAT

HPRT forward: CCTGGCGTCGTGATTAGTGAT

HPRT reverse: AGACGTTCAGTCCTGTCCATAA

<u>Immunoblot analysis</u>

Cell lysates were harvested for immunoblot analysis by adding 1X SDS/PAGE sample

buffer to cells. All protein samples (lysates) were boiled for 5 minutes. Samples were

separated by SDS/PAGE on a 12% (vol/vol) acrylamide gel and transferred to PVDF

Immobilon-P membranes (Millipore). Primary antibodies specific for caspase-4 (4450S;

Cell Signaling) and β-actin (4967L; Cell Signaling) and HRP-conjugated secondary

antibodies anti-mouse IgG (F00011; Cell Signaling) and anti-rabbit IgG (7074S; Cell

Signaling) were used. ECL Western Blotting Substrate (Pierce Thermo Scientific) was

used as the HRP substrate for detection.

<u>Fluorescent microscopy of intracellular *Salmonella*</u>

Primary hMDMs or THP-1 cells were plated on glass coverslips in a 24-well plate as

described above. Cells were either infected with WT *Salmonella* constitutively

expressing GFP [Sl1344 harboring pFPV25.1 (Valdivia & Falkow, 1996)], or WT

Salmonella constitutively expressing mCherry with a cytosolic GFP reporter [SL1344

glmS::Ptrc-mCherryST::FRT pNF101 (Lau et al., 2019)] at an MOI of 20 as described

above. At the indicated timepoints following infection, cells were washed 2 times with

PBS and then fixed with 4% paraformaldehyde for 10 minutes. Following fixation, cells

were mounted on glass slides with DAPI mounting medium (Sigma Fluoroshield).

Coverslips were imaged on an inverted fluorescence microscope (IX81; Olympus), and

the images were collected using a high-resolution charge-coupled-device camera

(FAST1394; QImaging) at a magnification of 100×. All images were analyzed and

presented using SlideBook (version 5.0) software (Intelligent Imaging Innovations, Inc.)

and ImageJ software. For experiments with WT *Salmonella* constitutively expressing

GFP, the proportion of infected cells containing GFP-expressing *Salmonella* (green)

were scored by counting 50 infected cells per coverslip. 150 total infected cells were

scored for each condition. For experiments with WT *Salmonella* constitutively

expressing mCherry with a cytosolic GFP reporter, the proportion of infected cells

containing GFP-positive *Salmonella* (cytosolic) and GFP-negative, mCherry-positive

Salmonella (vacuolar) were scored by counting 50 infected cells per coverslip. 150 total

infected cells were scored for each condition.

<u>Transmission electron microscopy</u>

Two days prior to experimentation, 2×10^6 cells THP-1 cells were replated in 10-cm

dishes in media without antibiotics and incubated with phorbol 12-myristate 13-acetate

(PMA) for 24 hours to allow differentiation into macrophages. Then, macrophages were

primed with 100 ng/mL Pam3CSK4 (Invivogen) for 16 hours prior to bacterial infection.

Cells were infected with WT *Salmonella* at an MOI of 20 as described above. At 8 hpi,

the media was aspirated, and the cells were fixed with 2.5% glutaraldehyde, 2.0%

paraformaldehyde in 0.1M sodium cacodylate buffer, pH 7.4. Then, at the Electron

Microscopy Resource Laboratory in the Perelman School of Medicine, after subsequent

buffer washes, the samples were post-fixed in 2.0% osmium tetroxide with 1.5%

$K_3Fe(CN)_6$ for 1 hour at room temperature, and rinsed in dH_2O. After dehydration

through a graded ethanol series, the tissue was infiltrated and embedded in EMbed-812

(Electron Microscopy Sciences, Fort Washington, PA). Thin sections were stained with

uranyl acetate and SATO lead and examined with a JEOL 1010 electron microscope

fitted with a Hamamatsu digital camera and AMT Advantage NanoSprint500 software.

Electron tomography

Electron tomography was performed at room temperature on a ThermoFisher Krios G3i

TEM equipped with a 300 keV field emission gun. Imaging was performed using the

SerialEM software (Mastronarde, 2005) on a K3 direct electron detector (Xuong et al.,

2007) (Gatan Inc., Pleasanton, CA, USA) operated in the electron-counted mode. We

additionally used the Gatan Imaging Filter (Gatan Inc., Pleasanton, CA, USA) with a slit

width of 20 eV to increase contrast by removing inelastically scattered electrons

(Krivanek et al., 1995). After initially assessing the infected macrophages at lower

magnifications, tilt series were collected at a magnification of 26,000X (with a

corresponding pixel size of 3.38 Å) and a defocus of −6 µm. Precooking the target areas

with a total dosage of 1000-1500 $e/Å^2$ was required to minimize sample shrinking and

drifting during tilt series collection. A bi-directional tilt scheme was employed with 2°

increments and 120° span (−60° to +60°). The cumulative dose of each tilt-series was in

the order of ~500 $e−/Å^2$. Once acquired, tilt series were aligned (using the patch

tracking function) and reconstructed into tomograms, both using the IMOD software

package (Kremer et al., 1996). After careful assessment of the 3-dimensional (3-D)

tomograms, optimal 2-D slices were chosen for figure presentations. Color overlays

provide additional assistance with interpretation.

<u>Statistical analysis</u>

Prism 9.5.0 (GraphPad Software) was utilized for the graphing of data and all statistical

analyses. Statistical significance for experiments with THP-1 macrophages and hMDMs

was determined using the appropriate test and are indicated in each figure legend.

Differences were considered statistically significant if the *p* value was <0.05.

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 Figure Legends

 Figure 1. Caspase-1 promotes the control of *Salmonella* replication within human

 macrophages. WT and two independent clones of *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1 monocyte-derived

 macrophages were primed with 100 ng/mL Pam3CSK4 for 16 hours. Cells were then

 infected with PBS (Mock), WT *S*. Typhimurium (A, B, C), or WT *S.* Typhimurium

 constitutively expressing GFP (D,E) at an MOI = 20. (A) Release of IL-1β into the

 supernatant was measured by ELISA at 6 hpi. (B) Cell death (% cytotoxicity) was

 measured by LDH release assay and normalized to mock-infected cells at 6 hpi. (C)

 Cells were lysed at 1 hpi and 6 hpi, and bacteria were subsequently plated to calculate

 CFU. Fold-change in CFU/well was calculated. (D, E) Cells were fixed at 6 hpi and

 stained for DAPI to label DNA (blue). (D) The number of bacteria per cell at 6 hpi was

 scored by fluorescence microscopy. Each dot represents one infected cell. 150 infected

 cells were scored for each genotype. (E) Representative images are shown. Scale bar

 represents 10 μm. Bars represent the mean for each genotype, and error bars represent

 the standard deviation of triplicate wells from one experiment (A, B, C, D). ***$p < 0.001$,

 ****$p < 0.0001$ by Dunnett's multiple comparisons test (A, B, C, D). Data shown are

 representative of at least three independent experiments.

 Figure 2. Caspase-4 contributes to the control of *Salmonella* replication within

 human macrophages later during infection. WT and two independent clones of

 CASP4[-/-] THP-1 monocyte-derived macrophages were primed with 100 ng/mL

 Pam3CSK4 for 16 hours. Cells were then infected with PBS (Mock), WT *S.*

 Typhimurium (A, B, C), or WT *S.* Typhimurium constitutively expressing GFP (D, E) at

an MOI = 20. (A) Release of IL-1β into the supernatant was measured by ELISA at 24

hpi. (B) Cell death (% cytotoxicity) was measured by LDH release assay and normalized

to mock-infected cells at 24 hpi. (C) Cells were lysed at 1 hpi and 24 hpi, and bacteria

were subsequently plated to calculate CFU. Fold-change in CFU/well was calculated.

(D, E) Cells were fixed at 24 hpi and stained for DAPI to label DNA (blue). (D) The

number of bacteria per cell at 24 hpi was scored by fluorescence microscopy. Each dot

represents one infected cell. 150 infected cells were scored for each genotype. (E)

Representative images are shown. Scale bar represents 10 μm. Bars represent the

mean for each genotype, and error bars represent the standard deviation of triplicate

wells from one experiment (A, B, C, D). ns – not significant, *$p < 0.05$ by Dunnett's

multiple comparisons test (A, B, C, D). Data shown are representative of at least three

independent experiments.

1481

Figure 3. GSDMD promotes the control of *Salmonella* replication within human

macrophages. WT and *GSDMD*[-/-] THP-1 monocyte-derived macrophages were primed

with 100 ng/mL Pam3CSK4 for 16 hours. Cells were then infected with PBS (Mock), WT

S. Typhimurium (A, B, C), or WT *S.* Typhimurium constitutively expressing GFP (D,E) at

an MOI = 20. (A) Release of IL-1β into the supernatant was measured by ELISA at 6

hpi. (B) Cell death (% cytotoxicity) was measured by LDH release assay and normalized

to mock-infected cells at 6 hpi. (C) Cells were lysed at 1 hpi and 6 hpi, and bacteria

were subsequently plated to calculate CFU. Fold-change in CFU/well was calculated.

(D, E) Cells were fixed at 6 hpi and stained for DAPI to label DNA (blue). (D) The

number of bacteria per cell at 6 hpi was scored by fluorescence microscopy. Each dot

represents one infected cell. 150 infected cells were scored for each genotype. (E)

Representative images are shown. Scale bar represents 10 µm. Bars represent the

mean for each genotype, and error bars represent the standard deviation of triplicate

wells from one experiment (A, B, C, D). **p< 0.01, ***p < 0.001, ****p < 0.0001 by

Šídák's multiple comparisons test (A) or by unpaired t-test (B, C, D). Data shown are

representative of at least three independent experiments.

1498

Figure 4. NINJ1 contributes to the control of *Salmonella* replication within human

macrophages. WT THP-1 monocyte-derived macrophages were treated with siRNA

targeting a control scrambled siRNA or siRNA targeting *NINJ1* for 72 hours prior to

infection. Cells were primed with 100 ng/mL Pam3CSK4 for 16 hours. Cells were then

infected with PBS (Mock) or WT *S*. Typhimurium at an MOI = 20. (A) Release of IL-1β

into the supernatant was measured by ELISA at 6 hpi. (B) Cell death (% cytotoxicity)

was measured by LDH release assay and normalized to mock-infected cells at 6 hpi.

(C, D, E) Cells were lysed at 1 hpi and 6 hpi, and bacteria were subsequently plated to

calculate CFU. (C) CFU/well at 1 hpi. (D) CFU/well at 6 hpi. (E) Fold-change in

CFU/well was calculated. Bars represent the mean for each condition. Error bars

represent the standard deviation of triplicate wells from one experiment. ns – not

significant, *p< 0.05, **p< 0.01 by unpaired t-test. Data shown are representative of at

least three independent experiments.

1512

Figure 5. Inflammasome activation primarily controls cytosolic *Salmonella*

replication in human macrophages. WT, *NAIP*[-/-] (A, B), and *CASP1*[-/-] (A, B, C) THP-1

monocyte-derived macrophages were primed with 100 ng/mL Pam3CSK4 for 16 hours.

(A) Cells were then infected WT *S*. Typhimurium (A) at an MOI = 20. At 1 hpi, cells were

left untreated or treated with 500 µM CHQ for 1 hour. Then, at 2 hpi, cells were lysed,

and bacteria were subsequently plated to calculate CFU. CFU/well of vacuolar (CHQ-

sensitive) and cytosolic (CHQ-resistant) bacteria were calculated from the total bacteria.

(B, C) Cells were then infected WT *S*. Typhimurium (B) or Δ*sipB S*. Typhimurium (C) at

an MOI = 20. At 5 hpi, cells were left untreated or treated with 500 µM CHQ for 1 hour.

Then, at 6 hpi, cells were lysed, and bacteria were subsequently plated to calculate

CFU. CFU/well of vacuolar (CHQ-sensitive) and cytosolic (CHQ-resistant) bacteria were

calculated from the total bacteria. (D,E) WT, *NAIP*[-/-], and *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1 monocyte-

derived macrophages were primed with 100 ng/mL Pam3CSK4 for 16 hours. Cells were

then infected with PBS (Mock) or WT *S.* Typhimurium constitutively expressing mCherry

and harboring the GFP cytosolic reporter plasmid, pNF101, at an MOI = 20. Cells were

fixed at 8 hpi and stained for DAPI to label DNA (blue). (D) The number of GFP-positive,

mCherry-positive bacteria (cytosolic) per cell and the number of GFP-negative,

mCherry-positive bacteria (vacuolar) per cell were scored by fluorescence microscopy.

Each dot represents one infected cell. 150 total infected cells were scored for each

genotype. (E) Representative images from 8 hpi are shown. Scale bar represents 10

µm. White arrows indicate cytosolic bacteria (GFP-positive, mCherry-positive). Bars

represent the mean for each genotype (A, B). Error bars represent the standard

deviation of triplicate wells from one experiment (A, B). ns – not significant, *p< 0.05,

****p < 0.0001 by Dunnett's multiple comparisons test (A) or by Tukey's multiple

comparisons test (B). Data shown are representative of at least three independent

experiments (A, B, C).

1539

Figure 6. Inflammasome activation modulates the cytosolic exposure of

***Salmonella* in human macrophages.** (A, B) WT and *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1 monocyte-

derived macrophages were primed with 100 ng/mL Pam3CSK4 for 16 hours. Cells were

then infected with WT *S*. Typhimurium at an MOI = 20. At 8 hpi, cells were fixed and

collected to be processed for transmission electron microscopy. Representative

transmission electron micrographs are shown. *Salmonella* (green) in an SCV (maroon)

with cytosolic or vacuolar clearance (yellow). Scale bar represents 1 µm [A(i), B(i)] or

400 nm [A(ii), B(ii)]. (A) WT THP-1s, (ii) is an inset from (i). White arrows indicate

vacuolar bacteria. (B) *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1s, (ii) is an inset from (i). White arrows indicate

vacuolar bacteria, cyan arrows indicate partially cytosolic bacteria, and black asterisk

indicates a fully cytosolic bacterium. (C) *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1 monocyte-derived

macrophages were primed with 100 ng/mL Pam3CSK4 for 16 hours. Cells were then

infected with WT *S*. Typhimurium at an MOI = 20. At 8 hpi, cells were fixed and

collected to be processed for transmission electron microscopy. Representative

tomogram slices are shown, depicting *Salmonella* (green) in an SCV with a

discontinuous vacuolar membrane (maroon).

1556

Video 1. Characterization of the cytosolic exposure of *Salmonella* in *CASP1*[-/-]

human macrophages. *CASP1*[-/-] THP-1 monocyte-derived macrophages were primed

with 100 ng/mL Pam3CSK4 for 16 hours. Cells were then infected with WT *S*.

Typhimurium at an MOI = 20. At 8 hpi, cells were fixed and collected to be processed

for transmission electron microscopy. Representative tomogram shown, depicting

Salmonella in an SCV with a discontinuous vacuolar membrane.

Fig. 1

Fig. 1—Fig. Sup. 1

Fig. 1—Fig. Sup. 2

Fig. 2

A.

AATA**TCCTGCAGCTCATCCGAATA**TGGA

CASP4 Target Sequence

B. *CASP4* Clone #2

CAATTTATGTTCTGCAATATCCTGCAGCTCATCCGGATGAGCTCATATGGAGGCTGGACC

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

WT   CAATTTATGTTCTGCAATA<u>TCCTGCAGCTCATCCGAAT</u>‑‑‑‑‑‑‑‑ATGGAGGCTGGACC

CASP4⁻/⁻ CAATTTATGTTCTGCAATATCCTGCAGCTCATCCG[GAT][GAGCTCAT]ATGGAGGCTGGACC

Allele #1 — Premature stop codon

AATTTATGTTCTGCAATATCCTGCAGCTCATCCGATGATGAGCTGGACCACCTGAGTC

WT   AATTTATGTTCTGC<u>AATATCCTGCAGCTCATCCGAATATGGA</u>GGCTGGACCACCTGAGTC

CASP4⁻/⁻ AATTTATGTTCTGCAATATCCTGCAGCTCATCCGA[TGATGA]‑‑GCTGGACCACCTGAGTC

Allele #2 — Premature stop codon

C. *CASP4* Clone #6

ATCACAATTTATGTTCTGC   CT

WT   ATCACAATTTATGTTCTGC<u>AATATCCTGCAGCTCATCCGAATATGG</u>AGGCTGGACCACCT

CASP4⁻/⁻ ATCACAATTTATGTTCTGC‑‑CT

Allele #1 — Premature stop codon

TTATGTTCTGCAATATCCTGCAGCTCATCCGATATGGAGGCTGGACCACCTGAGTCAGG

WT   TTATGTTCTGC<u>AATATCCTGCAGCTCATCCGAATATGG</u>AGGCTGGACCACCTGAGTCAGG

CASP4⁻/⁻ TTATGTTCTGCAATATCCTGCAGCTCATCCGA‑TATGGAGGCTGGACCACCTGAGTCAGG

Allele #2 — Premature stop codon

D. *CASP4* — Fold Change: WT, *CASP4⁻/⁻* #2, *CASP4⁻/⁻* #6

E. *CASP4* — Relative expression to *HPRT*: WT, *CASP4⁻/⁻* #2, *CASP4⁻/⁻* #6

F. kDa — WT, *CASP4⁻/⁻* #2, *CASP4⁻/⁻* #6 — 45 Pro-caspase-4 — 42 β-actin

Fig. 2—Fig. Sup. 1

Fig. 3

Fig. 3—Fig. Sup. 1

Fig. 3—Fig. Sup. 2

Fig. 4

Fig. 4—Fig. Sup. 1

Fig. 5

A.

B.

A. WT

(i)   1 µm

(ii)

B. *CASP1⁻/⁻*

(i)

(ii)

C.

100 nm

Salmonella

Cytosolic/vacuolar clearance

SCV/SCV-like membranes

Fig. 6