Non-canonical activation of IRE1α during *Candida albicans* infection enhances

macrophage fungicidal activity

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Abstract

Infection by intracellular pathogens can trigger activation of the IRE1α branch of the unfolded protein response (UPR), which then modulates innate immunity and infection outcomes during bacterial or viral infection. However, the mechanisms by which infection activates IRE1α have not been fully elucidated. While recognition of microbe-associated molecular patterns can activate IRE1α, it is unclear whether this depends on the canonical role of IRE1α in detecting misfolded proteins. Here, we report that *Candida albicans* infection of macrophages results in IRE1α activation through C-type lectin receptor signaling, reinforcing a role for IRE1α as a central regulator of host responses to infection by a broad range of pathogens. However, IRE1α activation was not preceded by protein misfolding in response to either *C. albicans* infection or lipopolysaccharide treatment, implicating a non-canonical mode of IRE1α activation after recognition of microbial patterns. Investigation of the phenotypic consequences of IRE1α activation in macrophage antimicrobial responses revealed that IRE1α activity enhances the fungicidal activity of macrophages. Macrophages lacking IRE1α activity displayed inefficient phagolysosomal fusion, enabling *C. albicans* to evade fungal killing and escape the phagosome. Together, these data provide mechanistic insight for the non-canonical activation of IRE1α during infection, and reveal central roles for IRE1α in macrophage antifungal responses.

Introduction

Intracellular infection by diverse pathogens triggers cell stress programs that influence infection outcomes through regulation of innate immunity, cellular metabolism and homeostasis, and cell differentiation or cell death pathways[1,2]. For example, infection with diverse pathogens can trigger activation of the unfolded protein response (UPR), whose three branches (IRE1α, PERK, and ATF6) have broad consequences for host antimicrobial defenses[3,4]. Canonically, accumulation of misfolded proteins in the ER lumen triggers activation of the UPR[5]. As proteostasis is required for cellular function, UPR activation can restore cellular homeostasis by modulating gene expression to promote protein folding and expansion of the ER network. Alternatively, failure to overcome proteotoxic stress leads to cell death[5]. Therefore, initiation of the UPR during infection may be critical to circumvent the effects of pathogen virulence factors, or to support the production of secreted proteins such as cytokines[4,6]. Still, the utility and effects of UPR activation during infection are not fully understood and differ in response to individual pathogens, which may differentially exploit UPR activation for pathogenesis[7–14].

Generally, IRE1α activation is triggered by its assembly into small oligomers that allow its *trans*-autophosphorylation[15]. Autophosphorylation of IRE1α results in activation of its

endonuclease domain, allowing IRE1α to remove a short intronic sequence from the *Xbp1*

transcript in a non-canonical mRNA splicing reaction, orthologous to the Ire1-*Hac1* splicing

reaction that drives the UPR in yeast[16–18]. *Xbp1* splicing results in a frameshift within the open

reading frame, allowing translation and protein synthesis of the transcription factor XBP1S, which

promotes the transcription of genes involved in ER quality control[19]. Interestingly, the IRE1α

branch of the UPR can be selectively triggered by infection or detection of microbe-associated

molecular patterns (MAMPs) by pattern recognition receptors (PRRs), such as Toll-like receptors

(TLRs)[6,20]. Previous reports suggested that protein misfolding-independent activation of IRE1α

may occur following TLR stimulation, although this model has not been directly tested[6,20]. Overall,

the mechanisms by which IRE1α activation occurs during infection and MAMP exposure are

incompletely understood.

IRE1α has broad regulatory roles and consequences for infection and immunity. For

example, the IRE1α-XBP1S axis can promote the expression of proinflammatory cytokines[6,21],

modulate metabolic plasticity[22], and promote ER homeostasis[23] during infection. Additionally,

IRE1α can facilitate intra-organelle communication for ER-mitochondria calcium signaling and

promotion of reactive oxygen species (ROS) generation[11,12,24]. Importantly, through its regulatory

effects on gene expression, metabolism, and redox balance, IRE1α can promote bacterial killing

or inflammasome activation in phagocytic cells[9,11]. Despite these known roles of IRE1α in bacterial

and viral infection, mechanistic understanding of IRE1α activation during infection is lacking.

Further, our understanding of the role of IRE1α during fungal infection is only beginning to

emerge.

Given its many functions in host responses to infection, we sought to understand the role

of IRE1α in macrophage interactions with *Candida albicans*. Interestingly, a recent report found

that IRE1α can be activated in neutrophils upon *C. albicans* infection, and IRE1α activity

contributes to the immunopathology of systemic *C. albicans* infection[13], revealing the importance

of regulation of this pathway during infection. *C. albicans* is a common fungal member of the

human mucosal microbiota and an opportunistic pathogen[25]. Phagocytic cells are an important

early line of defense against systemic infection by *C. albicans*[26]. Neutrophils and macrophages

can recognize and phagocytose *C. albicans* and eliminate infection through fungicidal activity or

secretion of cytokines to orchestrate antifungal immunity[27–30]. Studies investigating *C. albicans*

interactions with macrophages showed that *C. albicans* hyphal growth can allow it to escape the

phagosome and kill macrophages through lytic or programmed cell death through pyroptosis[31–36].

However, the mechanisms by which macrophages contain and kill *C. albicans* are incompletely

understood. Indeed, levels of microbicidal effectors, such as ROS, are not reliable predictors of

phagocyte fungicidal activity[37,38]. However, recent work reported that lysosome fusion with the

expanding *C. albicans*-containing phagosome is crucial to maintain phagosome integrity,

preventing phagosomal rupture and allowing fungicidal activity[38–41], thus suggesting that

phagosome maturation is a critical component of antifungal responses by macrophages.

Here, we report that IRE1α is activated in macrophages following infection by *C. albicans*.

Importantly, IRE1α activation was dependent on C-type lectin receptor (CLR) signaling, but did

not depend on detectable accumulation of misfolded proteins, suggesting a non-canonical

mechanism of activation. Additionally, we found IRE1α is dispensable for phagocytosis of *C.*

albicans by macrophages, but contributes to their fungicidal activity. Macrophages lacking IRE1α

activity failed to efficiently recruit lysosomes to the phagosome, which was followed by increased

phagosome rupture and more hyphal growth by *C. albicans*. These results reveal a role for IRE1α

in the fungicidal capacity of macrophages, advancing our understanding of the emerging role of

IRE1α in antifungal immunity.

Results

***C. albicans* infection results in activation of macrophage IRE1α**

While the ER stress sensor IRE1α is activated in response to bacterial and viral infection,

its role and activation in response to fungal infections is only beginning to emerge. To determine

whether macrophage IRE1α is activated during *C. albicans* infection, we measured splicing of

Xbp1 mRNA in immortalized bone marrow-derived macrophages (iBMDM) infected with *C.*

albicans, or treated with known IRE1α activating stimuli, bacterial lipopolysaccharide (LPS) or

thapsigargin, as positive controls. Using semi-quantitative RT-PCR analysis of *Xbp1* mRNA, we

observed that *C. albicans* infection induces *Xbp1* splicing in wild-type iBMDM (WT), albeit to a

lesser extent than the positive controls LPS and thapsigargin (Fig. 1A). *Xbp1* splicing did not occur

in response to any of the treatments in a clonal iBMDM cell line lacking exons 20 and 21 of IRE1α

(IRE1[ΔR]), which are required for its endonuclease activity[42] (Fig. 1A, 1B). Analysis of *Xbp1* splicing

by RT-qPCR following a timecourse of *C. albicans* infection showed induction of *Xbp1-S* at 4

hours post-infection (hpi) with *C. albicans* (Fig. 1C). As the SC5314 reference strain can be an

outlier in virulence and hyphal formation[25,43], we measured *Xbp1-S* induction following infection

with a selection of commensal *C. albicans* isolates previously isolated from healthy donors[25] and

demonstrated that all isolates resulted in comparable *Xbp1* splicing to the reference strain

SC5314 (Fig. 1D).

Xbp1 splicing leads to translation of the transcription factor XBP1S to induce the

transcription of ER quality control responsive genes following unfolded protein stress. However,

while LPS and thapsigargin treatment led to accumulation of XBP1S by 4 hpi, infection with *C.*

albicans did not lead to induction of XBP1S protein expression at 4, 6, or 8 hours post-infection

(Fig. S1). Thus, IRE1α function during *C. albicans* infection of macrophages is likely independent

of the transcription factor XBP1S. Together, these results indicate that *C. albicans* infection results

in mild activation of IRE1α in macrophages.

Figure 1: *C. albicans* infection results in activation of macrophage IRE1α. (A) iBMDM cell

lines (WT or IRE1$^{\Delta R}$) were infected with *C. albicans* (MOI=1), treated with LPS (100 ng/mL), or

thapsigargin (5 µM), or mock treated for 4 hours. *Xbp1* mRNA splicing was measured by semi-

quantitative RT-PCR amplification of the *Xbp1* transcript as a readout of IRE1α activity. **(B)**

Immunoblot analysis of lysates from WT or IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ iBMDM cell lines to confirm IRE1α truncation

in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ cells resulting from removal of floxed exons 20 and 21. **(C)** Expression of the short

isoform of *Xbp1* was measured using RT-qPCR over a timecourse following *C. albicans* infection

of iBMDM (MOI=1). **(D)** Expression of the short isoform of *Xbp1* at 4 hours post-infection with

commensal *C. albicans* isolates as well as the lab strain SC5314 (MOI=1) was measured using

RT-qPCR. Data are representative of 3-4 individual experiments. Graphs show the mean ± SEM

of biological replicates. *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.005$ by 2-way ANOVA of log-transformed

data with Sidak's multiple comparisons test (C and D).

A

B

Figure S1: Related to Figure 1. (A) Immunoblot analysis of XBP1S and XBP1U expression from
WT iBMDM lysates following infection with *C. albicans* (MOI=1), or treatment with positive controls
LPS (100 ng/mL) or thapsigargin (5 uM). **(B)** Quantification of 3 independent experiments, as
shown in (A).

C-type lectin receptor signaling drives TRAF6-independent IRE1α activation during *C.
***albicans* infection.**

C-type lectin receptors, which detect components of the cell wall of *C. albicans*[28], are the
major pattern recognition receptor for recognition of *C. albicans* in macrophages[44]. To determine
whether C-type lectin receptor (CLR) signaling contributes to IRE1α activation during *C. albicans*
infection, we measured *Xbp1* splicing in iBMDM lacking the CLR signaling adaptor protein CARD9
(CARD9 KO), compared to WT iBMDM. CARD9 was required for *Xbp1* splicing in response to *C.*
albicans, but dispensable for *Xbp1* splicing in response to LPS, which activates a distinct signaling
pathway through Toll-like receptor 4 (TLR4)[45,46] (Fig. 2A). These results suggest CLR signaling is
required for IRE1α activation in response to *C. albicans*. Next, we addressed whether CLR
agonism is sufficient to stimulate IRE1α activity by treating WT or IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ iBMDM with a Dectin-1
specific agonist, depleted Zymosan (d-Zymosan). We found that depleted Zymosan treatment

was sufficient to trigger IRE1α-dependent *Xbp1* splicing, demonstrating that CLR agonism

triggers IRE1α activity (Fig. 2B). Similar to results with *C. albicans* infection, *Xbp1* processing by

IRE1α was more strongly stimulated by LPS than by depleted Zymosan (Fig. 2B). Despite CLRs

being the major pattern recognition receptors for *C. albicans,* TLRs can also respond to fungal

cells[47]. To test whether TLR engagement is necessary for IRE1α activation in response to *C.*

albicans, we measured *Xbp1* splicing in BMDM lacking TLR2, TLR4, and TLR9 (TLR2/4/9 KO).

We observed a similar level of *Xbp1* splicing to WT iBMDM in response to *C. albicans* and

depleted Zymosan, although *Xbp1* splicing was ablated in response to LPS, as expected (Fig.

2C). Together, these results suggest CLR signaling is necessary and sufficient for IRE1α

activation in response to *C. albicans*.

TRAF6 is a crucial E3 ubiquitin ligase involved in innate immune signaling for both TLR

and CLR pathways[48,49]. This ubiquitin ligase can directly ubiquitinate IRE1α and facilitates the

ubiquitination and activation of IRE1α after LPS treatment[6,20]. Therefore, we tested whether

TRAF6 is involved in IRE1α activation in response to *C. albicans* infection. While knockout of

TRAF6 resulted in the expected decrease in *Xbp1* splicing in response to LPS, we observed that

Xbp1 splicing in response to *C. albicans* infection was not affected by TRAF6 deletion (Fig. 2D).

Therefore, CLR-mediated IRE1α activation is TRAF6-independent. These data reveal that CLR

signaling through the adaptor protein Card9 triggers IRE1α activation independently of TLR

signaling or TRAF6, and suggests a distinct mechanism of IRE1α activation during *C. albicans*

infection.

Figure 2: C-type lectin receptor signaling activates IRE1α during *C. albicans* infection. (A) Expression of the short isoform of *Xbp1* was measured using RT-qPCR following *C. albicans* infection (MOI=1) or LPS treatment (100 ng/mL) of WT or CARD9 KO iBMDM. **(B)** Expression of the short isoform of *Xbp1* was measured using RT-qPCR following *C. albicans* infection (MOI=1), depleted Zymosan treatment (d-Zymo; 100 ug/mL) to stimulate Dectin-1, or LPS treatment (100 ng/mL) of WT or IRE1^ΔR iBMDM. **(C)** Expression of the short isoform of *Xbp1* was measured using RT-qPCR following *C. albicans* infection (MOI=1), LPS treatment (100 ng/mL), or depleted Zymosan treatment (d-Zymosan; 100 ug/mL) of WT or TLR2/4/9 KO iBMDM. **(D)** Expression of the short isoform of *Xbp1* was measured using RT-qPCR following *C. albicans* infection or LPS treatment of two pairs of clonal iBMDM (WT or TRAF6 KO; MOI=1). Closed symbols are data from WT-1 and KO-1; open symbols are data from WT-2 and KO-2. Graphs show the mean ± SEM of biological replicates. *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.005 by 2-way ANOVA of log-transformed data with Sidak's multiple comparisons test. ns, not significant.

Supplemental Figure 2

Figure S2: Confirmation of TRAF6 knockout. Immunoblotting validation of clonal TRAF6 WT controls (WT-1 and WT-2) and TRAF6 knockout iBMDM (KO-1 and KO-2).

PRR-mediated activation of IRE1α occurs independently of misfolded protein stress.

We hypothesized that innate immune receptor engagement and subsequent cytokine induction could activate IRE1α by overwhelming the protein folding capacity of the ER, leading to protein misfolding and thus IRE1α activation. To determine whether new gene synthesis is required for IRE1α activation during *C. albicans* infection, we inhibited transcription or translation during infection with *C. albicans* or during treatment with thapsigargin. Surprisingly, neither inhibition of transcription nor translation, using actinomycin D or cycloheximide treatment, respectively, inhibited *Xbp1* splicing during *C. albicans* infection (Fig. 3A-B). Translation inhibition using cycloheximide was sufficient to alleviate *Xbp1* splicing specifically in response to thapsigargin, likely by reducing the nascent protein folding burden (Fig. 3B). These data indicate that new gene synthesis does not contribute to IRE1α activation during *C. albicans* infection, and presented the intriguing possibility that infection does not induce unfolded proteins. Indeed, this possibility has been suggested for TLR-driven IRE1α activation, but was not directly tested[6,20]. To specifically test this, we measured whether misfolded proteins accumulate to drive IRE1α activation during PRR-mediated activation of IRE1α by either *C. albicans* infection or LPS treatment. Thioflavin T (ThT) is widely used to detect protein misfolding, as it exhibits increased fluorescence in the presence of misfolded proteins[50]. While ThT intensity showed an expected increase at 2 hours-post thapsigargin treatment, neither *C. albicans* infection nor LPS treatment increased ThT intensity over mock treatment (Fig. 3C-D). Further, neither *C. albicans* infection nor LPS treatment led to increased ThT intensity at 4 hpi, suggesting IRE1α activation occurs without accumulation of misfolded proteins during these responses (Fig. 3E). Even at 8 hpi, *C. albicans* infection did not induce protein misfolding (Fig. 3F). While LPS treatment did lead to increased protein misfolding at 8 hours post-treatment (Fig. 3F), this occurred after the robust IRE1α activation observed at 4 hours post-treatment (Fig. 1A). Together, these data suggest that

 while protein misfolding can occur in response to microbial patterns, it is not needed to trigger

IRE1α activation during innate immune responses.

Figure 3: PRR-mediated activation of IRE1α occurs independently of misfolded protein

stress. (A-B) Expression of the short isoform of *Xbp1* was measured using RT-qPCR following

C. albicans infection (MOI=1) of iBMDM or treatment with thapsigargin (TG; 5 µM) as a control,

compared to Mock treatment. Actinomycin D (ActD; 20 µM) was used to inhibit new transcription

during treatments (A), and cycloheximide (CHX; 10 µM) was used to inhibit translation during

treatments (B), and relative fold changes were measured over matched mock samples. **(C)**

Representative graphs showing fluorescence intensity of Thioflavin T (ThT) measured by flow

cytometry to quantify protein misfolding in iBMDM following infection by *C. albicans* (MOI=1), or

treatment with LPS (100 ng/mL) or thapsigargin (TG; 5 µM) as a positive control. **(D-F)**

Quantification of ThT fluorescence intensity at 2 hours (D), 4 hours (E), or 8 hours post-indicated

treatment, shown as fold change over mock. Graphs show the mean ± SEM of biological

replicates. *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.005 by 2-way ANOVA with Sidak's multiple comparisons

test of log-transformed data (A, B) or one-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test (D-

F).

IRE1α activity suppresses the expression of a subset of interferon-stimulated genes.

To better understand how IRE1α activity contributes to macrophage responses to

infection, we investigated its impact on gene expression during *C. albicans* infection or mock

treatment using RNA sequencing. Despite not observing robust XBP1S induction during *C.*

albicans infection (Fig. S1), we reasoned that IRE1α activity could modulate gene expression by

XBP1S-independent mechanisms. For example, the RNase activity of IRE1α can cleave other

transcripts or microRNAs in a process known as regulated IRE1-dependent decay (RIDD)[51–53].

Additionally, IRE1α interacts with ER-localized RNA species under homeostatic or ER stress

conditions[54], therefore IRE1α may have broad consequences in gene expression regulation. As

expected, we found many differentially regulated genes in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages during *C.*

albicans infection (Table S1.1) compared with WT macrophages at 4 hpi. Importantly, the IRE1$^{\Delta R}$

macrophages had broadly similar expression of ER stress-related genes as WT control

macrophages, suggesting that lack of IRE1 does not result in chronic ER stress during infection

(Fig. 4A). Interestingly, IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages had increased expression of interferon- and

infection-responsive genes, which was observed after mock treatment and exacerbated by *C.*

albicans infection (Fig. 4B; Table S1.2, S2.2). Analysis of 84 "core" ISGs[55], showed that IRE1$^{\Delta R}$

macrophages have basally increased expression of a specific subset of ISGs, and that this

difference is increased further during *C. albicans* infection (Fig. 4C, D).

Increased expression of proinflammatory gene expression observed in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$

macrophages in response to *C. albicans* infection was supported by ELISA analysis of

proinflammatory cytokines in supernatants of cultured cells. We observed that IL-1β and TNF

secretion were increased in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages compared with IRE1 WT cells (Fig. 5A-C). As

an orthogonal method to test for the impact of IRE1α on cytokine responses, we used a chemical

inhibitor of IRE1α endonuclease activity, 4μ8C. Chemical probes provide an opportunity for fine-

grained dose and temporal control over the perturbation, and previous work using 4μ8C resulted

in a decrease in inflammatory cytokine outputs by macrophages in response to multiple

stimuli[20,56]. However, when we examined the effects of 4μ8C, we saw that this treatment

suppressed cytokine secretion in both WT and IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages, suggesting that it has off-

target effects that would account for its immunosuppressive activity (Fig. 5A-C). Indeed, previous

research showed that 4μ8C has potent cellular antioxidant activity[57]; this may explain the effects

on proinflammatory gene expression or ER stress[58]. These results highlight the importance of

cautious interpretation of the effect of 4μ8C treatment during infection.

Figure 4: IRE1α suppresses interferon-stimulated gene transcription during *C. albicans* infection. (A) Heatmap differential gene expression in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ iBMDM of genes in the GO category "Response to ER stress". **(B)** Gene ontology analysis of upregulated transcripts in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ iBMDM (adjP<0.01, fold-change >2; n=615) reveals enrichment of interferon-stimulated genes. **(C-D)** Volcano plot of differential expression of "core" interferon-stimulated genes[55] in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ iBMDM compared to IRE1 WT iBMDM during mock treatment (C) or *C. albicans* infection (MOI=1) (D).

Figure 5: IRE1α suppresses early proinflammatory cytokine secretion during *C. albicans*
infection. (A-C) Expression of proinflammatory cytokines (IL-1β (A), TNF (B), and IL-6 (C)) were
measured by ELISA following 3 h of LPS priming and 5 h of *C. albicans* infection (MOI=1) in IRE1
WT and IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ iBMDM. Graphs show the mean ± SEM of 3 biological replicates. *p < 0.05, **p
< 0.01, *** p < 0.001, by one-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test.

IRE1α contributes to fungal containment in the macrophage phagosome. Given the
broad roles of IRE1α in macrophage antimicrobial functions[6,9,11], we next assessed the role of
IRE1α in macrophage antifungal capacity with consideration of differential gene expression in
IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages. Interestingly, gene ontology analysis of downregulated genes in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$
macrophages revealed that endocytosis and calcium signaling were enriched among these
downregulated genes (Table S1.3). Therefore, we reasoned that endosomal maturation may be
altered. Further, IFN-γ has previously been shown to alter phagosome maturation and
downregulate the degradative capacity of the phagosome, perhaps to promote antigen
presentation [59–61]. These findings are consistent with our observation that the expression of many
interferon-responsive transcripts was increased in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages (Fig. 4). Importantly,
lysosome fusion with the expanding *C. albicans* containing phagosome is crucial for maintenance
of the phagosomal membrane, which is needed to enable fungal killing [38,39]. To determine the role
of IRE1α in the endocytic pathway during *C. albicans* infection, we first tested the ability of IRE1
WT and IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages to ingest *C. albicans* through phagocytosis. Interestingly, IRE1$^{\Delta R}$

macrophages showed increased efficiency of *C. albicans* phagocytosis (Fig. 6A-B). We then

tested whether IRE1^ΔR macrophages showed impaired phagolysosomal fusion during *C. albicans*

infection by measuring recruitment of the lysosomal protein LAMP1 to the phagosome containing

C. albicans (Fig. 6C-D). IRE1 WT macrophages recruited LAMP1 to the phagosome by 2 hpi, but

IRE1^ΔR macrophages infected with *C. albicans* failed to efficiently recruit LAMP1 to the

phagosome (Fig. 6C-D). However, overall lysosome biogenesis did not appear to be impaired in

IRE1^ΔR macrophages, as labeling acidic cellular compartments with LysoSensor Blue/Yellow dye

showed IRE1^ΔR macrophages had similar acidity as IRE1 WT macrophages, and *C. albicans*

infection or ammonium chloride treatment led to the expected alkalinization of both cell lines [41,62–

64] (Fig. 6E). These data suggest that IRE1α activity is specifically required for efficient

phagolysosomal fusion during *C. albicans* infection.

Figure 6: IRE1α contributes to fungal containment in the macrophage phagosome. (A) Representative phagocytosis assay micrographs show total *C. albicans* (intracellular and extracellular; magenta) and extracellular *C. albicans* (yellow) following 30 minutes of phagocytosis by iBMDM (IRE1 WT or IRE1$^{\Delta R}$). Scale bar 10 μm. **(B)** Quantification of 3 independent phagocytosis experiments. Relative phagocytosis was calculated as fold change over IRE1 WT. **(C)** Representative images showing LAMP1 (yellow) recruitment to phagosomes containing iRFP-expressing *C. albicans* (magenta) in IRE1 WT or IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ iBMDM at indicated times post-infection. **(D)** Quantification of LAMP1 recruitment to phagosomes containing *C. albicans* in IRE1 WT or IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ iBMDM, as measured by LAMP1 mean fluorescence intensity associated with *C. albicans*-expressed iRFP. **(E)** The relative acidity of IRE1 WT or IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ iBMDM following infection with *C. albicans* or treatment with NH_4Cl as a control, shown as the relative ratio of LysoSensor intensity at acidic (Excitation 384 nm, Emission 540 nm) and basic (Excitation 329 nm, Emission 440 nm) conditions. Values are the mean ± SEM from 3 biological replicates. *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$, by unpaired Student's t-test (B) or one-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test (D, E).

IRE1α promotes phagolysosomal fusion to constrain *C. albicans* hyphal growth and increase fungicidal activity.

As lysosome recruitment maintains the integrity of the expanding phagosome during *C. albicans* infection[39], we reasoned that *C. albicans* may escape the phagosome more readily in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages. To test this, we used a previously-established pulse-chase assay to measure phagosome leakage in which endosomes are pre-labeled with sulforhodamine B (SRB), allowing fusion with *C. albicans* containing phagosomes and monitoring of phagosome rupture[39,65] (Fig. 7A). Measuring SRB association with the *C. albicans*-containing phagosome over time revealed that SRB was lost from the phagosome more rapidly in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages, supporting the hypothesis that IRE1α activity contributes to maintenance of the *C. albicans*-containing phagosome by promoting phagolysosomal fusion (Fig. 7B). As the phagolysosomal environment restricts *C. albicans* hyphal growth[66], we also measured hyphal growth over time in WT and IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages and found that *C. albicans* hyphal growth is increased at 4 hpi in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages (Fig. 7C).

Escape from the phagosome likely allows *C. albicans* to evade fungicidal effectors in addition to allowing for more rapid growth. To determine whether IRE1α contributes to macrophage fungicidal activity, we measured the ability of IRE1α WT and IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages to kill phagocytosed *C. albicans*, using a dual fluorescence assay in which iRFP-expressing *C.*

albicans is pre-labeled with calcofluor white (CFW) prior to macrophage infection (Fig. 7D). Live

C. albicans express iRFP and are CFW labeled (iRFP$^+$ CFW$^+$), while killed *C. albicans* lose iRFP

fluorescence but can be identified by CFW labeling (iRFP$^-$ CFW$^+$). Using this assay, we found that

IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages were defective at killing phagocytosed *C. albicans*, demonstrating that

IRE1α activity contributes to the fungicidal activity of macrophages (Fig. 7E).

To determine whether failure to recruit lysosomes to the phagosome is responsible for the

fungicidal defect observed in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages, we tested the effect of Bafilomycin A (BafA),

which inhibits vacuolar ATPase activity and thus phagosome-lysosome fusion, on the ability of

IRE1 WT and IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages to kill *C. albicans* (Fig. 7F). BafA treatment suppressed the

fungicidal activity of both IRE1 WT and IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages, reinforcing the importance of

phagolysosomal fusion for killing of *C. albicans*. Additionally, BafA treatment ablated the

difference between IRE1 WT and IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages in fungicidal capacity, demonstrating that

defective phagolysosomal fusion in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages is responsible for their compromised

fungicidal activity (Fig. 7F). Together, these data support a model in which IRE1α activity supports

phagolysosomal fusion during *C. albicans* infection of macrophages to maintain phagosome

integrity and allow killing of ingested *C. albicans*.

Figure 7: IRE1α promotes phagolysosomal fusion to constrain *C. albicans* hyphal growth.

(A) Representative images of SRB recruitment to the phagosome containing *C. albicans*, indicated by white arrows, and loss of SRB association following phagosomal rupture at 3 hpi,

indicated by white asterisk. **(B)** Quantification of 3 independent experiments measuring the loss

of SRB from *C. albicans* over time in IRE1 WT or IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ iBMDM. **(C)** Quantification of the area

occupied (pixels) by *C. albicans* hyphae at 1, 2, and 4 hpi in IRE1 WT or IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ iBMDM. **(D)**

Representative micrographs of live intracellular *C. albicans* and killed intracellular *C. albicans*

within IRE1 WT iBMDM at 7 hpi. Endogenous expression of iRFP by *C. albicans* indicates viability

(CFW+ iRFP+); loss of iRFP expression indicates killed *C. albicans* (CFW+ iRFP-). Scale bar 5

μm. **(E)** Quantification of 3 independent *C. albicans* killing experiments (CFW+ iRFP- / CFW+

iRFP+), relative to WT. **(F)** Graphs show the mean ± SEM of 3 biological replicates. *p < 0.05, **p

< 0.01, by unpaired Student's t test (B, E), one-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons

test (C), or two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test (F).

Discussion

Cell and organelle stress responses are crucial regulators of innate immunity and infection

outcomes during bacterial and viral infection[1,2], however, the role of these stress responses in

antifungal innate immunity have not been explored in depth. Here, we show that *C. albicans*

infection of macrophages results in activation of the IRE1α branch of the mammalian ER stress

response. This activation is not dependent on misfolded protein stress, but instead requires

signaling through the CLR pathway. Interestingly, macrophages lacking IRE1α activity have

impaired fungicidal activity due to inefficient lysosome recruitment to the phagosome containing

C. albicans, allowing phagosomal escape by *C. albicans* and likely evasion of fungicidal effectors.

Together, these results demonstrate roles for IRE1α in the antifungal responses of macrophages.

IRE1α is activated by bacterial and viral infections, but the mechanisms driving its

activation are incompletely understood. While it has been suggested that innate immune signaling

may trigger IRE1α activation independently of misfolded protein stress, this hypothesis has not

been thoroughly tested. Here, we determined that CLR signaling through CARD9 triggers IRE1α

activation during *C. albicans* infection. Notably, measurable protein misfolding did not precede

IRE1α activation in response to *C. albicans* infection or LPS treatment, suggesting a potential

protein misfolding-independent shared mechanism of IRE1α activation downstream of innate

immune signaling. However, neither TLR signaling nor TRAF6 activity were required for IRE1α

activation during *C. albicans* infection, demonstrating that TLR and CLR signaling activate IRE1α

through distinct mechanisms and that *C. albicans* triggers non-canonical activation of IRE1α.

A potential route of IRE1α activation in the absence of misfolded protein accumulation is

post-translational modification, such as ubiquitination or phosphorylation [20,67]. Ubiquitination of

IRE1α by E3 ubiquitin ligases such as TRAF6 and CHIP contribute to IRE1α activation in response to LPS treatment or geldanamycin-induced ER stress, respectively[20,68]. Additionally, the endonuclease activity of IRE1α depends on its phosphorylation status, which is governed by its own kinase activity, or in certain contexts may be triggered by other kinases[67]. While CLR-mediated IRE1α activation occurred independently of TRAF6 activity, the CARD9-BCL10-MALT1 complex forms a filamentous scaffold for the assembly and activation of additional post-translational modifiers, such as the kinase TAK1 and the E3 ubiquitin ligase TRAF2, which interacts with IRE1α but is thought to act downstream of IRE1α[69]. Therefore, CARD9 activation could facilitate interaction of IRE1α with a post-translational modifier to enable its activation. Alternatively, the filamentous nature of the CARD9-BCL10-MALT1 complex could provide a structural scaffold for the formation of IRE1α oligomers, which are required for its activation[15]. Indeed, deletion of BCL10 has previously been shown to dampen IRE1α activation in response to thapsigargin-induced ER stress[70] and to be required for the pyroptotic response to *C. albicans* [65]. As CARD family proteins and IRE1α have broad and overlapping functions in innate immune activation and immune cell function[71,72], future work interrogating the molecular mechanisms by which CARD9 triggers IRE1α activation will be of interest.

The convergence of TLR and CLR signaling on IRE1α activation in macrophages, seemingly prior to accumulation of misfolded proteins, suggests that innate immune signaling can induce anticipatory activation of IRE1α. This may serve to increase the secretory activity of macrophages prior to protein misfolding for efficient innate immune responses. IRE1α activity is crucial for the maturation and function of highly secretory cell types, such as plasma cells[73,74], pancreatic beta cells[75], macrophages[6,76], and T cells[77]. Additionally, considering the broad roles of IRE1α and XBP1S in innate immunity, including cytokine induction[6,9], metabolic plasticity[22], ROS production, and microbicidal activity[11,12], proactive strategies for IRE1α activation prior to protein misfolding may be important for innate immune regulation. Further elucidation of the mechanisms driving protein misfolding-independent IRE1α activation will identify targets for tuning of IRE1α activity, and exploration of other pathways that may trigger non-canonical activation of IRE1α will help shape our understanding of IRE1α regulation.

Our findings also reveal a role for IRE1α in phagosome maturation during *C. albicans* infection. Previous work has shown that IRE1α can be recruited to pathogen-containing autophagosomes[78], and ER-phagosome contact sites can regulate phagolysosomal fusion through calcium signaling[79]. Interestingly, IRE1α can function as a scaffold at ER-mitochondria contact sites, allowing mitochondrial calcium uptake and regulation of cellular metabolism[24]. We also observed that transcripts encoding genes involved in endocytosis and calcium signaling were

enriched among downregulated genes in IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages (Table S1.3), highlighting the

possibility that gene expression regulation by IRE1α may influence phagolysosome fusion.

Whether IRE1α has broad roles in phagosome-lysosome fusion, ER-phagosome contact sites, or

the degradative capacity of macrophages and other cell types will be an important future direction.

In summary, our work suggests that innate immune signaling can trigger non-canonical

activation of IRE1α and highlights new roles for IRE1α in the fungicidal capacity of macrophages.

These findings will help shape our understanding of the activation and function of IRE1α in

infection and other settings. Protein misfolding-independent activation of IRE1α suggests new

paradigms to explore in other contexts, such as sterile inflammation and obesity[80], and a critical

role for IRE1α as a sensor of other agents that may perturb cellular homeostasis. Dissection of

the molecular mechanisms regulating early IRE1α activation may identify new therapeutic targets

for regulation of IRE1α activity. Further, a better understanding of the role of IRE1α in the

endocytic pathway will provide fundamental understanding of communication between the ER

and endocytic compartments. Overall, these findings reveal exciting roles for a critical component

of the UPR during fungal infection with broad potential impacts for our understanding of cell

biology.

Supplemental tables

Table S1: RNA-seq data from IRE1 WT and IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages infected with *C. albicans*.

- **Table S1.1:** Differential gene expression in *C. albicans* infected IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages

compared to IRE1 WT

- **Table S1.2:** Gene ontology analysis of pathways enriched among genes upregulated in

C. albicans infected IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages compared to IRE1 WT

- **Table S1.3:** Gene ontology analysis of pathways enriched among genes downregulated

in *C. albicans* infected IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages compared to IRE1 WT

Table S2: RNA-seq data from IRE1 WT and IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages after mock treatment.

- **Table S2.1:** Differential gene expression in mock-treated IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages compared

to IRE1 WT

- **Table S2.2:** Gene ontology analysis of pathways enriched among genes upregulated in

mock-treated IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages compared to IRE1 WT

- **Table S2.3:** Gene ontology analysis of pathways enriched among genes downregulated

in mock-treated IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages compared to IRE1 WT

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Author contributions

Conceptualization: M.J.M., T.R.O., M.X.D.O., and T.R.O. Investigation: M.J.M., M.B.R., B.C.M., F.M.A. Formal analysis: M.J.M., T.R.O., M.X.D.O. Software: M.J.M., M.B.R., B.C.M, T.R.O. Writing – original draft: M.J.M., T.R.O., and M.X.D.O. Writing – review and editing: M.J.M., M.B.R., B.C.M. F.M.A., M.X.D.O., and T.R.O. Funding acquisition: M.J.M., M.X.D.O., and T.R.O.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

Methods

Plasmids. pLEX-FLAG-Cre-GFP was generated by cloning PCR-amplified N-terminal FLAG tagged Cre-GFP (from pCAG-Cre-GFP; Addgene #13776) (Forward primer: TAAAGCGGCCGCTATGGCCAATTTACTGACCG; Reverse primer: CTCTAGACTCGAGTTAACTTACTTGTACAGCTCGTCCA) coding sequence into the pLEX expression vector using NotI and XhoI restriction sites. pLEX-FLAG-GFP vector was a gift from Dr. Stacy Horner. All plasmids were verified by whole plasmid sequencing (Plasmidsaurus).

Cell lines. All cell lines were incubated at 37ºC with 5% CO_2. Bone marrow-derived macrophages (BMDM) were grown in bone marrow media (BMM), containing modification of Eagle's medium

(DMEM; Thermo Fisher Scientific) supplemented with 20% fetal bovine serum (Thermo Fisher

Scientific), 30% L929 conditioned media, and 1 mM sodium pyruvate (Thermo Fisher Scientific).

BMDM were immortalized (iBMDM) using J2 retrovirus[82]. L-929 cells were cultured in minimum

essential Eagle's medium supplemented with 2 mM l-glutamine, 1 mM sodium pyruvate, 1 mM

nonessential amino acid, 10 mM HEPES, and 10% FBS. All experiments were performed in

experimental media (RPMI supplemented with 3% FBS) unless otherwise indicated. All cell lines

were verified as mycoplasma free using the Lookout Mycoplasma PCR Detection Kit (Sigma-

Aldrich) and genetic identities were validated by PCR, western blotting, or functional assays.

IRE1$^{fl/fl\ exon20-21}$ (-/+ Cre) mice were a gift from Dr. Ling Qi, CARD9 knockout macrophages and

littermate WT mice were a gift from Dr. Stu Levitz, TLR2/4/9 knockout mice and littermate WT

mice were a gift from Dr. Tod Merkel, and TRAF6$^{fl/fl}$ mice were a gift from Dr. Scott Soleimanpour.

To generate IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ and control IRE1 WT macrophages, iBMDM from IRE1$^{fl/fl\ exon20-21}$ mice with

and without inducible Cre expression were treated with 4-hydroxy tamoxifen for 24 hours, followed

by clonal expansion of cell lines. IRE1$^{\Delta R}$ macrophages were confirmed by macrophages and *Xbp1*

splicing assays. To generate TRAF6 KO cell lines, first lentiviral particles encoding GFP or CRE-

GFP were generated by harvesting supernatant 72 h post-transfection of 293T cells with pLEX-

FLAG-GFP, or pLEX-FLAG-Cre-GFP, and the packaging plasmids psPAX2 and pMD2.G

(provided by Dr. Stacy Horner). These supernatants were then used to transduce TRAF6$^{fl/fl}$

iBMDM for 24 hours. Following transduction, cells were selected in 3 µg/mL puromycin (Sigma)

for 48 hours and then single cell colonies were isolated. Overexpression of FLAG-tagged proteins

in selected colonies was verified by immunoblotting, and TRAF6 deletion in CRE-GFP cell lines

was verified by immunoblotting. This yielded generation of GFP-expressing TRAF6$^{fl/fl}$ iBMDM

clonal cell lines as a control (WT-1 and WT-2) or CRE-GFP expressing TRAF6$^{fl/fl}$ iBMDM clonal

cell lines (KO-1 and KO-2).

***Candida albicans* infection and LPS treatment.** *C. albicans* cells were cultured at 30 °C in YPD

liquid media (1% yeast extract, 2% peptone, 2% dextrose) with constant agitation. All strains were

maintained as frozen stocks of 25% glycerol at -80 °C. For infection of iBMDM, macrophages

were seeded in experimental plates overnight at approximately 80% confluence. Experimental

media (RPMI (Gibco), supplemented with 3% FBS) was inoculated with log-phase *C. albicans*

cells counted for a calculated MOI of 1. LPS from *E. coli* O111:B4 (Sigma-Aldrich L2630) was

diluted to 100 ng/mL in experimental media for all experiments.

RT-qPCR. Total cellular RNA was extracted from all samples using TRIzol (Thermo Fisher Scientific), according to manufacturer protocol. RNA was then reverse transcribed using the iScript cDNA synthesis kit (Bio-Rad) as per the manufacturer's instructions. The resulting cDNA was diluted 1:5 in nuclease-free H2O. RT-qPCR was performed in triplicate using the PowerUP SYBR Green PCR master mix (Thermo Fisher Scientific) and the Bio-Rad CFX Opus 384 Real-Time RT-PCR systems. *Xbp1-S* transcript was amplified using primers Forward: GCTGAGTCCGCAGCAGGT and Reverse: CAGGGTCCAACTTGTCCAGAAT. *Gapdh* transcript was amplified using primers Forward: CATCACTGCCACCCAGAAGACTG and Reverse: ATGCCAGTGAGCTTCCCGTTCAG.

Semi-quantitative *Xbp1* Splicing Gel Analysis. Total cellular RNA was extracted using TRIzol (Thermo Fisher Scientific), according to manufacturer protocol. RNA was then reverse transcribed using the iScript cDNA synthesis kit (Bio-Rad) as per the manufacturer's instructions. The resulting cDNA was diluted 1:5 in nuclease-free H2O. *Xbp1* transcript was amplified by PCR using primers XF and XR, followed by PCR cleanup using the Qiagen PCR Cleanup Kit. The amplified *Xbp1* product was then digested using PstI, which recognizes a cleavage site within the 26 base pair intron that is removed by IRE1α activity[82]. Following digestion, *Xbp1* bands were resolved on a 2% agarose gel and visualized by ethidium bromide staining and imaging on a BioRad gel dock.

Immunoblotting. Cells were lysed in a modified radioimmunoprecipitation assay (RIPA) buffer (10 mM Tris [pH 7.5], 150 mM NaCl, 0.5% sodium deoxycholate, and 1% Triton X-100) supplemented with protease and phosphatase inhibitor cocktail (Millipore-Sigma) and post-nuclear lysates were harvested by centrifugation. Quantified protein (between 5 and 15 mg) was added to a 4X SDS protein sample buffer (40% glycerol, 240 mM Tris-HCl [pH 6.8], 8% SDS, 0.04% bromophenol blue, 5% beta-mercaptoethanol), resolved by SDS/PAGE, and transferred to nitrocellulose membranes in a 25 mM Tris-192 mM glycine-0.01% SDS buffer. Membranes were stained with Revert 700 total protein stain (LI-COR Biosciences), then blocked in 3% bovine serum albumin. Membranes were incubated with primary antibodies for 2 hours at room temperature or overnight at 4C. After washing with PBS-T buffer (1 3 PBS, 0.05% Tween 20), membranes were incubated with species-specific IRDye-conjugated antibodies (Licor, 1:5000) for 1 hour at room temperature, followed by imaging on an Odyssey imaging system (LI-COR Biosciences). The following antibodies were used for immunoblotting: rabbit anti-IRE1α (CellSignaling 3924, 1:1000); rabbit anti-XBP1 (Abcam AB-37152, 1:1000); mouse anti-ACTIN

(ThermoFisher ACTN05 (C4), 1:5000); rabbit anti-TRAF6 (Abcam ab40675, 1:1000); rabbit anti-

CARD9 (CellSignaling 12283, 1:1000).

Quantification of Immunoblots. Following imaging using the LI-COR Odyssey imager,

immunoblots were quantified using ImageStudio Lite software, and raw values were normalized

to total protein (Revert 700 total protein stain) or ACTIN for each condition.

Thioflavin T Assay. iBMDM ($2*10^5$ cells/well) were seeded in a 24-well plate overnight and then

infected with *C. albicans*, or treated with LPS or thapsigargin for indicated timepoints. Thioflavin

T (Cayman Chemical, 5 µM) was added 2 hours prior to endpoint. Cells were scraped into ice

cold PBS and thioflavin T intensity was measured on a BD LSRFortessa X-20 flow cytometer.

RNA-sequencing. iBMDM were seeded in 6-well plates overnight (10^6 cells/well) then infected

with *C. albicans* (MOI 1) or mock treated (4 h), then harvested in TRIzol reagent (Thermo Fisher)

and RNA extraction was performed according to manufacturer protocol. Samples were then

treated with Turbo DNase I (Thermo Fisher) according to manufacturer protocol and incubated at

37 ˚C for 30 min, followed by phenol/chloroform extraction and ethanol precipitation overnight.

RNA concentrations were then normalized. PolyA enrichment was performed and sequencing

libraries were prepared and sequenced on an Illumina NovaSeq 6000 with 150 bp paired-end

reads by Novogene.

RNA-seq analysis. RNA-seq analysis was performed in Galaxy (usegalaxy.org). Reads were

evaluated using FastQC and trimmed using cutadapt[83], followed by quantification of transcripts

from the GRCm38 mouse genome using Kallisto[84]. Differential gene expression between IRE1$^{\Delta R}$

and IRE1 WT macrophages following *C. albicans* infection (Table S1.1) or mock treatment (Table

S2.1) were compared using DESeq2[85]. Gene ontology analysis was performed on significantly

upregulated or downregulated genes in each data set using GProfiler.

ELISA. iBMDM ($3*10^4$ cells/well) were seeded in 96-well plates overnight, then primed with LPS

(100 ng/mL) for 3 hours prior to *C. albicans* infection (MOI 1). Supernatants were collected at 5

hpi and submitted to the University of Michigan Cancer Center Immunology Core for quantification

of secreted IL-1β, TNF, and IL-6.

Quantification of Phagocytosis of *C. albicans*. iBMDM ($3*10^4$ cells/well) were seeded in a 96-well plastic-bottom imaging plate (PerkinElmer) overnight and then infected with *C. albicans* (MOI 1) for 30 minutes. Wells were then fixed in 4% parafolmaldehyde (Electron Microscopy Sciences) for 15 minutes, washed with PBS (ThermoFisher), and blocked with PBS containing 3% bovine serum albumin (ThermoFisher) and 5% normal goat serum (Invitrogen) for 30 minutes. FITC-conjugated anti-*Candida* antibody (LSBio LS-C103355, 1:2000) was diluted in blocking buffer and added for 1 hour with agitation to label extracellular *C. albicans*, followed by 3 5 minute washes with PBS. Wells were then permeabilized in 0.1% Triton-X 100 (Sigma-Aldrich) for 15 minutes, followed by 3 washes in PBS. Calcofluor white (Sigma-Aldrich, 1:100) was diluted in blocking buffer and added to wells for 30 minutes with agitation, followed by 3 5 minute PBS washes, and images were captured on a BioTek Lionheart FX automated microscope. A CellProfiler pipeline was developed to segment extracellular (FITC+) and total (FITC+ CFW+) *C. albicans*, and the percent phagocytosed by macrophages was calculated as 100 * (1 – (FITC+ / FITC+ CFW+)).

Quantification of phagolysosomal fusion. iBMDM ($3*10^4$ cells/well) were seeded in a 96-well plastic-bottom imaging plate (PerkinElmer) overnight and then infected with *C. albicans* SC5314 cells expressing near-infrared fluorescent protein (iRFP) driven by the ENO1 promoter[86] (MOI 1) at indicated timepoints. Wells were then fixed in 4% parafolmaldehyde (Electron Microscopy Sciences) for 15 minutes, washed with PBS (ThermoFisher), and permeabilized in 0.1% Triton-X 100 (Sigma-Aldrich) for 15 minutes, followed by 3 washes in PBS. Wells were blocked with PBS containing 0.01% Triton-X 100, 3% bovine serum albumin (ThermoFisher) and 5% normal goat serum (Invitrogen) for 30 minutes. Primary antibodies rat anti-LAMP1 (DSHB 1D4B, 1:50) and rabbit anti-LC3 (MBL pM036, 1:400) were diluted in block buffer and added to wells for 1 hour, followed by 3 5 minute washes with PBS. Alexafluor-conjugated secondary antibodies goat anti-rat 594 and goat anti-rabbit 488 were diluted 1:500 in blocking buffer with DAPI (1:1000) and added to wells for 1 hour, followed by 3 5 minute PBS washes, and images were captured on a Yokogawa CellVoyager CQ1 automated confocal microscope. A CellProfiler pipeline was developed to segment *C. albicans* and measure the mean intensity of LAMP1 enriched at the *C. albicans* network.

Macrophage Fungicidal Activity Assay. iBMDM ($3*10^4$ cells/well) were seeded in a 96-well plastic-bottom imaging plate (PerkinElmer) overnight. Approximately 10^7 *C. albicans* SC5314 cells expressing iRFP from an overnight culture were stained with calcofluor white (CFW; 100 µg/mL) for 10 minutes in the dark. Cells were then washed twice with PBS prior to macrophage

647 infection at MOI = 1. Images of infected cultures were captured every 20 minutes on a BioTek
648 Lionheart FX automated microscope with incubation at 37C and 5% CO2. Fungal killing was
649 quantified at 7 hours post-infection by calculating killed *C. albicans* (iRFP$^-$ CFW$^+$) over total *C.*
650 *albicans* (iRFP$^{-/+}$ CFW$^+$), with at least 200 *C. albicans* cells counted per condition.
651

LysoSensor. iBMDM (2*10^5 cells/well) were seeded in a 24-well plate overnight and then infected
with *C. albicans* for 2 hours prior to addition of LysoSensor Yellow/Blue DND-160 (Thermo Fisher,
500 nM) for 2 minutes in experimental media. Wells were then washed 3 times in ice-cold PBS
and scraped for plate reader analysis. Suspended cells were added to a black-bottom 96-well
plate and absorbance and emission were measured at 329nm Abs, 440nm Em and 384nm Abs,
540nm Em to measure fluorescence intensity in high and low pH environments, respectively. The
intensity of the low pH measurement was divided by the intensity of the high pH measurement,
and these results were normalized to IRE1 WT Mock to determine the relative acidity of each
condition.
661

Sulforhodamine B Assay and *C. albicans* hyphal length measurement. iBMDM (3*10^4
cells/well) were seeded in a 96-well plastic-bottom imaging plate (PerkinElmer) overnight, then
sulforhodamine B (SRB) (Sigma-Aldrich, 150 ug/mL) was added to wells for 1 hour. SRB was
then washed out and wells were with *C. albicans* expressing iRFP (MOI 1) and live imaging was
performed on a Yokogawa CellVoyager CQ1 automated confocal microscope every 30 minutes
for 5 hours. A CellProfiler pipeline was developed to segment *C. albicans* and measure the total
area covered by hyphae, and the mean intensity of SRB enriched at the *C. albicans* network was
measured at each timepoint.
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672 **Lead Contact and Materials Availability**. Further information and requests for resources and
673 reagents should be directed to and will be fulfilled by the Lead Contacts, Teresa O'Meara
674 (tromeara@umich.edu) and/or Mary O'Riordan (oriordan@umich.edu)
675

676 **Data Availability.** All raw data related to RNA-seq are available through GEO (accession number:
677 GSE244303). All raw data related to microscopy are available upon request.
678

679 **Code Availability.** CellProfiler pipelines for image quantification are available as Supplementary
680 Materials (files S3-S5).

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