Aberrant immune regulation and enrichment of stem-like CD8[+] T cells in the pancreatic lymph node during type
1 diabetes development

Running title: Stem-like CD8[+] T cell phenotypes enriched in T1D

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Summary

Effector CD8[+] T cells are key cellular drivers of type 1 diabetes (T1D) pathogenesis, yet questions remain

regarding the molecular defects leading to altered cytotoxicity, their signature in peripheral tissues, and

their receptor specificity. Thus, we analyzed human pancreatic lymph nodes (pLN) using mass cytometry

and single cell RNA sequencing (scRNAseq) with combined proteomic and T cell receptor (TCR) profiling.

Cytometric analysis revealed an enriched population of T stem-cell memory (TSCM)-like cells

(CD8[+]CD45RA[+]CD27[+]CD28[+]CCR7[+]CXCR3[+] T cells) in T1D pLNs. scRNAseq profiling indicated an elevated

inflammatory cytokine gene signature (*IFITM3*, *LTB*) along with regulators of terminal differentiation

(*BCL6*, *BCL3*), coupled with reduced expression of exhaustion-associated genes (*DUSP2*, *NR4A2*, *TSC22D3*)

in CD8[+] T cells in T1D pLN. Additionally, effector CD8[+] T cells expressed features of progenitor exhausted

cells (*BCL2*) in T1D pLN. Immune Response Enrichment Analysis (IREA) indicated IL-15 signaling as a

significant driver of these phenotypes. Integrated TCR and transcriptomic analysis revealed a cluster of

diverse naïve-like CD8[+] T cell clones in T1D pLN. When comparing pLN and pancreatic slice cellular isolates,

we observed sharing of effector CD8[+] T cells, with upregulation of terminal effector signatures detected

within the pancreas relative to paired pLN samples. Multiplex imaging revealed differential localization of

TCF1 and TOX expressing T cells in the pancreas, with TCF1[+]TOX[+] cells located in closer proximity to the

islets and displaying a mixture of activation and exhaustion-associated phenotypes. Thus, we provide

multimodal cellular profiles enriched in T1D tissues for consideration in therapeutic targeting.

Keywords: type 1 diabetes, human, pancreas, lymph node, CD8 T cell, single cell RNA sequencing

Introduction

Genetic fine mapping studies have identified that type 1 diabetes (T1D)-associated risk variants

preferentially localize to enhancer regions within immune cells, namely T and B cells[1]. However,

inaccessibility of the pancreas from living individuals mandates that studies examining immune cell

function in T1D largely be derived from peripheral blood, which may not accurately reflect phenotypes

within the target organ during disease pathogenesis. Identifying the molecular basis for T1D-associated

immune dysregulation within the pancreas and pancreatic draining lymph nodes (pLN) is highly valuable

in the process of developing targeted therapies.

The role of the pLN in promoting T1D progression is incompletely characterized, but murine and

human studies have implicated the pLN as an important priming site for immune activation[2-4]. In the non-

obese diabetic (NOD) mouse model of T1D, pLN self-renewing autoreactive T cells were found to be an

important source of islet antigen-specific cytotoxic lymphocytes[5]. Human studies indicate that patients

with T1D possess skewed T cell subset distributions within the pLN, with reduced T follicular regulatory

(TFR) cell frequency reported in one study[6] and increased Th17 cells noted in another[7]. Although there

are conflicting reports as to whether deficits in circulating regulatory T cell (Treg) number and function

are present in T1D patients[8, 9], multiple studies have demonstrated deficits in suppressive capacity[7] and

migration toward the pancreas[10] in Tregs derived from T1D pLN.

Though peripheral blood signatures do not always correlate with those from tissues[11], there have

been many important knowledge gains linking peripheral immunological signatures to clinical outcomes.

Interestingly, many of the signatures associated with immunotherapeutic response have converged

around CD8$^+$ T cell subsets. For example, an exhausted-like CD8$^+$ population expressing negative

regulatory molecules, including TIGIT and PD-1, together with exhaustion markers KLRG1 and CD57, was

associated with C-peptide preservation post-treatment with alefacept (LFA3-Ig)[12]. Similarly, expansion of

TIGIT$^+$KLRG1$^+$CD8$^+$ T cells was found preferentially in those who responded to teplizumab (α-CD3)[13].

Moreover, studies in mice[5] and humans[14, 15] have implicated CD4[+] and CD8[+] stem cell memory T cells

(TSCM) as a potentially important reservoir for promoting pathogenic antigen-specific responses in T1D.

Although clinical studies have shown that exhausted-like populations are clonally related to a different

CD8[+] memory population expressing more activation markers relative to exhaustion markers[12], there is a

paucity of information in T1D regarding the distribution of these subsets in secondary lymphatic organs

and pancreas, their receptor profiles, or the pathways driving these phenotypes.

Our lab has previously generated sorted T cell receptor (TCR) profiles from donor-matched pLN,

spleen, and peripheral blood samples, revealing cell type-dependent repertoire sharing across tissues,

with CD8[+] T cells demonstrating the greatest degree of sharing[16]. The advent of single cell profiling

technologies enables the examination of sharing between lymph node and pancreas T cell populations

with greater resolution. To understand the phenotypic and transcriptomic profile of immune cell

populations in disease-relevant tissues, we performed single cell multi-omic analysis of the pLN as well as

pancreatic T cells from donors with and without T1D. In this study, we show that circulating phenotypic

signatures previously identified to correlate with T1D status or immunotherapeutic response are shared

across tissue immune phenotypes. Moreover, we offer evidence that human CD8[+] T cells possess fewer

differentiated phenotypes in the pLN in T1D and that effector populations differentiate further upon

trafficking to the pancreas.

Methods

Sex as a biological variable

Male and female organ donors were accepted in this study.

Human Organ Donors

Tissues were recovered from T1D donors, donors possessing islet autoantibody positive (AAB+), as well as

donors without diabetes and negative for islet autoantibodies (ND) according to the Network for

Pancreatic Organ donors with Diabetes (nPOD) inclusion criteria[17]. Demographic information used to

stratify subjects for analyses was obtained from the nPOD datashare (https://npoddatashare.coh.org/)

and nPOD data portal (https://portal.jdrfnpod.org) websites. See **Table S1** for a description of cases and

corresponding experiment information.

Organ Processing

Tissues were processed as previously described[16]. Briefly, pLN were dissociated in HBSS + 10% human

(male, type AB) serum (Atlanta Biologicals) using a gentleMACS tissue processor (Miltenyi), followed by

subsequent homogenization and filtering steps using a tissue douncer (40 mL; loose pestle; Wheaton) and

100-μm, 70-μm, and 30-μm filters (Miltenyi) to obtain a single cell suspension. Cells were freshly analyzed

by flow cytometry as described below, and remaining cells were cryopreserved using CryoStor CS10

(Stemcell). Live pancreatic slices were prepared from nPOD organ donors as previously described[18] and

freshly digested with 1X collagenase IV (Stemcell) diluted in DMEM for 30 minutes at 37°C and 5% CO_2.

Remaining tissue was gently mechanically dissociated with frosted slides and filtered using 70-μm filters

(Miltenyi) to obtain a single cell suspension. Cells were enriched for CD45$^+$ cells using CD45 Microbeads

(Milltenyi) and processed for scRNAseq (10X Genomics) as below.

Flow Cytometry

Fresh tissues were dissociated as above and stained with Live/Dead yellow viability dye (Invitrogen) and incubated with TruStain FcX (Biolegend) according to the manufacturer's instructions prior to staining with a panel of antibodies broadly examining memory, effector, and naïve immune cell phenotypes (**Table S2**) consistent with previously published methods[19]. Data were acquired on an LSRFortessa (BD). To assess expression of transcription factors TCF1 and TOX in CD8$^+$ T cell populations, cryopreserved pLN cell suspensions were thawed, stained with Zombie Aqua viability dye (Invitrogen), incubated with TruStain FcX (Biolegend), and stained with antibodies (**Table S3**). After extracellular staining, cells were washed with stain buffer (PBS, 2% FBS, 0.05% NaN3) twice prior to fixation and permeabilization using the True Nuclear Transcription Factor Buffer Set (Biolegend) according to manufacturer instructions. Cells were blocked with normal rat serum prior to staining for transcription factors overnight at 4°C in permeabilization buffer. Cells were washed with stain buffer prior to reading on a Cytek Aurora 5L cytometer. For analysis of cytokine expression, cryopreserved pLN suspensions were thawed and incubated at a concentration of 1e6/mL with Cell Stimulation Cocktail (Invitrogen) in the presence of 0.66μL/mL GolgiStop (BD) for four hours. Cells were stained with Zombie Aqua (Invitrogen), incubated with TruStain FcX (Biolegend), and stained with a panel of antibodies (**Table S4**). After extracellular staining, cells were fixed with BD cytofix and permeabilized with Intracellular Staining Perm Wash Buffer (Biolegend). Staining for cytokines was conducted overnight at 4°C in perm wash buffer. Cells were washed with perm wash buffer prior to reading on a Cytek Aurora 5L cytometer. Data were analyzed using FlowJo V10.8.2 software.

Mass Cytometry

Cryopreserved cells from pLN of ND (n=12) and T1D donors (n=10) were stained with a 35-marker panel (**Table S5**) of MAXPAR metal-chelating polymers and run on a CyTOF mass cytometer by the Human

Immune Monitoring Center at Stanford University, as reported previously[20].

Mass Cytometry Analysis Pipeline

Data were normalized between batches using premessa[21] in R based on internal bead controls. After this,

FCS files were loaded into FlowJo (BD Biosciences), beads were excluded, and live single CD45+ cells were

used for downstream analysis (**Figure S1**). Data analysis involved importing FCS files into R and creating a

flowset using the flowCore package[22]. Data were arcsinh transformed with a cofactor of 5 prior to using

the expression data and cell metadata to create a Seurat object. Principal component analysis (PCA) was

run using all panel markers, after which K nearest neighbors (KNN) were calculated using FindNeighbors(),

and initial clustering using the lovain algorithm was performed (resolution=0.2). PCA was re-run on

subsetted data with markers not associated with the lineage of interest removed. Nearest neighbors were

calculated as above, and subclustering was performed as above for each subset using the Louvain

algorithm (resolution=0.2). Cell counts per cluster per individual were determined and normalized by the

total number of cells to allow for comparison of cluster proportions. Differential abundance analysis was

performed using propeller[23] with age and batch as covariates in a linear model designed with

model.matrix(~0 + group + age + Batch). Design matrix and contrasts (T1D-ND) were incorporated into

the propeller.ttest function with arguments robust=T, trend=F, sort=T. Significantly altered cluster

proportions were defined as Bonferroni adjusted p-value <0.05.

Single Cell RNA Sequencing

Cryopreserved single cell suspensions were thawed and stained with a cocktail of 7 oligo-barcoded

TotalSeq antibodies (Biolegend, **Table S6**) and peptide-MHC dextramers (Immudex, **Table S6**) to aid in

clustering naïve and memory CD8+ and CD4+ T cell phenotypes and to aid in identification of antigen-

specific cells. Prior to use, Totalseq antibodies were centrifuged at 14000x*g* for 10 minutes at 4°C to avoid

antibody aggregates, as recommended by the manufacturer. Cell viability was assessed using acridine

orange and propidium iodide (AO/PI) staining on a Nexcelom Cellometer or CellDrop. For six samples with

viability <70% (**Table S7**), the Dead Cell Removal Kit (Stemcell) was used. 1×10^6 cells per sample (viability

>70%) were resuspended in 100μL volume of PBS + 1% BSA prior to incubation with 2μL of each pMHC

dextramer according to manufacturer's instructions for 10 minutes at room temperature (RT), followed

by incubation with TruStain FcX (5μL/test) to block Fc receptors for 10 minutes at 4°C, and incubation with

the antibody master mix (0.5μL of each antibody/test) for 30 minutes at 4°C. Cells were washed four times

with 3mL of chilled PBS + 1% BSA, after which live cells were counted using AO/PI on a Nexcelom

Cellometer or CellDrop, and volumes adjusted to obtain a targeted recovery of 10,000 cells. Single cell

suspensions were loaded into the Chromium Controller (10X Genomics) and libraries prepared according

to the 5' v1.1, 5' v2, and 5' HT v2 kit protocols (10x Genomics). Libraries were sequenced on an Illumina

Novaseq or Novaseq X instrument with a target of 50,000 paired reads for gene expression, 10,000 paired

reads for surface protein, and 5,000 paired reads for TCR libraries. Median gene expression library

sequencing saturation was 80.9%.

Single Cell Read Processing

BCL files were processed to fastq files using the cellranger mkfastq pipeline (10X Genomics). Fastq files

from gene expression, surface protein, and TCR libraries were processed to matrices using the cellranger

multi (10X Genomics) count pipeline in order to maximize counting of cells with all three modalities.

Single Cell RNAseq Normalization and Analysis Pipeline

scRNAseq data were subject to quality control (QC) by removing doublets using the doubletfinder

package[24], and cells were removed based on cutoffs of reads/cell ≤2000 and percent mitochondrial reads

≤10%, then normalized using the DSB package[25] to remove background noise and ambient signal from

RNA and protein libraries. After this initial filtering, data were log-normalized with NormalizeData() and

scaled with ScaleData(), then variable features were calculated, and dimensionality reduction was

performed in Seurat[26]. Due to a lack of observed pMHC dextramer signal, we excluded these from future

analysis. For the antibody-derived tag data, variable features were set to all antibodies included, data

were scaled[26], and PCA was run. Data were integrated in Seurat using IntegrateLayers() with RPCA as the

integration method. After integration of gene expression data by patient ID, we observed no significant

batch effects (**Figure S2**). After subsetting T cell clusters, data were renormalized, PCA was rerun, and

RPCA integration with IntegrateLayers() was run again on this subset. Integration of TCR with gene

expression data was performed using scRepertoire[27] in R. For pancreas and pLN clone comparison, clones

were defined as sequences sharing an identical complementarity determining region 3 (CDR3) amino acid

sequence for both TCRα and TCRβ. Differentially expressed genes (DEGs) were calculated using MAST[28]

with sex as a latent variable with a minimum expression threshold of 0.10 and reported when false

discovery rate (FDR) corrected $p<0.05$ and log2 fold change (FC)$\geq$0.26. Pathway enrichment analyses were

performed using the top 100 most differentially expressed genes (other than for the exhausted CD8 T cell

cluster for which only 53 genes met our significance thresholds) between T1D and ND donors, with FDR

$p<0.05$ per cluster ranked by log2FC, as input into the ReactomePA[29] package for pLN. The R package

escape[30] was used to perform single-sample Gene Set Enrichment Analysis (ssGSEA) using the integrated

pancreas and pLN dataset and normalized with nFeature RNA as the scale factor. Results were reported

when Benjamini-Hochberg corrected $p<0.1$ as noted in figure legends. IREA analysis was performed by

inputting the top ($p<0.05$, log2FC >0.26) DEGs between T1D and ND donors per cluster using the IREA web

tool (https://www.immune-dictionary.org/app/home) with cell type of "T_cell_CD8", species of "Human"

and Method parameter of "Score".

Clonotype Neighbor Graph Analysis (CoNGA)

The RNA assay from the integrated pLN Seurat object was exported in h5ad format for Python. Filtered

contig annotation data from each sample were merged using make_10x_clones_file_batch from the

conga package in Python. The resulting merged TCR data were used along with the gene expression data

as input for run_conga.py[31] with the –all flag and batch keys set to status and nPOD identification number

(ID) in order to compare the composition of clusters by clinical status and across all donors. Gene

expression data were also batch corrected using the argument batch_integration_method harmony with

batch_integration_key batch. For CONGA analyses, the cellranger VDJ clonotype definition of identical

CDR3 nucleotide sequence was used. Clones that possessed a conga score<1, indicative of significant

overlap between gene expression and TCR neighborhoods beyond what would be expected by chance[31],

were used as input to evaluate enrichment in cluster composition by clinical status using two-sided

Fisher's exact test as reported in the figure legend.

Phenocycler multiplex imaging

Immunofluorescence of pancreas with embedded lymph node was performed using the PhenoCycler-

Fusion System (Akoya Biosciences/Quanterix) according to the vendor's recommended protocol for

formalin fixed paraffin embedded (FFPE) tissue. Deparaffinization was performed by baking at 60°C

followed by xylene washes. Tissue rehydration was accomplished by moving the slide through graded

ethanol/DI-H_2O washes (100%x2, 90%, 70%, 50%, 30%, DI-H_2Ox2). Antigen retrieval was performed by

immersing sections in 1X antigen retrieval buffer under high pressure in a pressure cooker. Tissue was

then washed in Hydration Buffer and then Staining Buffer. Primary antibody staining was performed using

175μL of antibodies (**Table S7**), blocking reagents (N, G-v3, J, S), and blocking buffer cocktail at RT. The

tissue was then rinsed in Staining Buffer and sequentially post-fixed, followed by PBS washes, in 1.6%

paraformaldehyde, then ice-cold methanol, and finally Fixative Solution. Tissue was then kept overnight

in Storage Buffer at 4°C. The following day, a 96-well reporter plate was prepared with either cycle-specific

cocktails of complementary oligonucleotide-conjugated fluorescent secondaries, Nuclear Stain (DAPI),

and Reporter Stock Solution for cyclic protein detection or only Reporter Stock Solution for blank cycle

autofluorescence detection. Finally, a Flow Cell was press-sealed to the face of the slide for microfluidic

delivery of reagents.

Automated detection and imaging were performed by first generating an experiment file specifying

target-barcode pairs and exposure times for each cycle (Experiment Designer software, Akoya

Biosciences/Quanterix). Phenocycler Buffer and dimethyl sulfoxide solutions (20% and 90% in 1X

Phenocycler Buffer) were prepared and loaded in the Phenocycler-Fusion instrument bottles. Following

automated calibration and equipment checks, tissue was auto-detected, and images were acquired with

16-bit precision at 20x magnification, automatically processed for stitching and autofluorescence

subtraction, and saved in the proprietary 'qptiff' format.

Phenocycler data analysis

Semantic segmentation was performed in QuPath[32]v6.0 T on the qptiff file for donor 6551. Objects

(pLN/Pancreas tissue area and islets) were classified using the pixel classifier with default settings. Cell

and nuclear boundaries were generated with the Instanseg[33]v0.1.5 extension's default model

"fluorescence_nuclei_and_cells-0.1.1" using all channels as input, default cell measurements, and default

outputs. Statistics for each cell's shape and marker intensity, as well as centroid coordinates and signed

distance to nearest islet, were exported as a csv file for analysis in a custom Python Jupyter notebook[34].

Statistics

Data were analyzed using R v4.2.3, python v3.9 and GraphPad Prism v9. Statistical tests and p-values are

reported in the figure legends.

Study approval

The study was conducted in accordance with federal guidelines and the University of Florida (UF)

Institutional Review Board approved protocol IRB201600029, as previously described[35].

Data and code availability

Mass cytometry and flow cytometry data are available at ImmPort (https://www.immport.org, accession

number: SDY3066). Supporting Data Values associated with this manuscript are provided in the

supplement. Gene expression and TCR data are available on GEO with accession: GSE298811. Phenocycler

data are available upon request, and code used for Phenocycler analysis can be accessed at

https://github.com/smith6jt-cop/Panc_pLN_Analysis.

Results

Mass cytometry reveals a population of CD8$^+$CXCR3$^+$ T cells enriched in T1D pLN

The diverse nature of immune cell phenotypes mandates the use of high-parameter technologies, such as

cytometry time of flight (CyTOF)[36, 37][12], to deep-phenotype multiple immune subsets. We applied high-

parameter CyTOF to pLN derived from 10 T1D and 12 ND nPOD organ donors (**Table S8, Figure 1A**).

Clustering total CD45$^+$ immune cells revealed 11 unique populations spanning B cells, CD4$^+$ T cells, CD8$^+$ T

cells, myeloid, and natural killer (NK) cells (**Figure S3A**). We observed no significant differences in cluster

abundance globally between T1D and ND donors (**Figure S3B**);

We performed subclustering to obtain a finer resolution of immune cell subsets from the CyTOF

data. As one batch demonstrated slight, non-significant differences in age (**Figure S4**), we chose to

examine differences in cluster proportions using a linear model with age and batch incorporated as

covariates. Subsetting and reclustering of B cells and CD4 T cells yielded no significant changes in cluster

abundance or marker expression by clinical status (**Figure S5**). However, CD8[+] T cell subclustering yielded

eight proteomic clusters (**Figure 1B**), with a T1D-associated increase in the proportion of CD8[+] T cell cluster

0, expressing the naïve T cell markers CD45RA and CCR7, costimulatory molecules CD27 and CD28, as well

as low levels of the chemokine receptor CXCR3, which confers migratory capacity towards CXCL10[38]

(**Figure 1C-D**). Though we observed more variability due to the small number of donors, this finding was

also confirmed in an independent flow cytometry cohort consisting of 23 nPOD pLN cell isolates from ND,

autoantibody positive (AAB+) and T1D donors (**Table S9**) (**Figure 1E, Figure S6**), where T1D donors

possessed a significantly increased proportion of CXCR3[+] cells within the naïve (CD45RA[+]CCR7[+]) CD8[+] T cell

compartment as compared to both ND (p=0.0114, FC=2.50) and AAB+ donors (p=0.0090, FC=4.91).

Importantly, we did not observe an association of the frequency of this cluster or the related flow

cytometry phenotype with age or disease duration (**Figure S7A-D**). These phenotypic signatures are

clinically relevant in peripheral blood studies: we recently reported a T1D-associated increase in CXCR3[lo]

naïve CD8[+] T cells[19], and circulating CD8[+] T cells with a more terminally differentiated/exhausted profile

have been previously correlated with preservation of C-peptide and response to teplizumab[12, 13].

IL-15 drives memory maintenance and averts the exhaustion program in T1D CD8[+] T cells

To explore the transcriptomic profile of the cell populations previously identified by both CyTOF and

fluorochrome-based flow cytometry, we performed single cell RNA sequencing (scRNAseq) analysis with

TCR-seq on donor pLN (**Figure 2A**). After QC, we obtained 122,300 cells across 16 individuals (9 T1D, 7 ND)

(**Table S10**) that comprised 38 clusters spanning CD4[+] T cells, CD8[+] T cells, B cells, NK cells, innate lymphoid

cells (ILCs), monocyte/macrophages, and dendritic cells (DCs) (**Figure 2B**, **Figure S8A-B**). No significant

differences in global cluster abundance across clinical status were detected (**Figure S8C-D**). We performed

subclustering to more deeply examine alterations in T cell phenotype, yielding 19 subclusters spanning

naïve, memory, and exhausted T cells, as well as Tregs (**Figure 2C**). Differential expression analysis of T1D

compared to controls identified conserved signatures across multiple CD4 T cell clusters, such as a

reduction in genes responsible for negative regulation of cytokine signaling (e.g., *TNFAIP3*[39] within naïve

CD4, T follicular helper [TFH], Th1/17, thymic Treg [tTreg] clusters) and activation/proliferation (e.g.,

JUND[40] within TFH, tTreg, Th1/17, Th17 clusters), as well as a broad increase in interferon signaling genes

(e.g., *IFITM3*[41] within Th17, naïve CD4, exhausted CD4, activated naïve CD4, TFH, Th1/17) (**Table S11**).

We next focused more deeply on CD8$^+$ T cell subsets as these phenotypes were significantly

altered in our CyTOF and flow cytometry data. When comparing DEGs (defined as FDR corrected p<0.05

and Log2FC≥0.26) between T1D and ND pLN, we observed within the naïve CD8$^+$ T cell cluster (**Figure 2D**)

an upregulation of genes involved in autophagy (*MAP1LC3B*[42], *SQSTM1*[43]), migration (*VIM*), proliferation

(*IMPDH2*[44]), and cytokine production (*TAGLN2*[45]). CD8 TCM cells from T1D donors showed upregulation

of inflammatory cytokine signaling (*IFNAR2*[46], *IFITM3*, *LTB*[47], *SOCS3*[48], *IL32*[49], *IL27RA*[50]) as well as regulators

of terminal differentiation (*BCL3*[51], *BCL6*[52], *BATF*[53]). Moreover, both naïve and TCM CD8$^+$ T cells from T1D

donors also downregulated genes involved in negative regulation of cytokine signaling (*TNFAIP3*[39],

SOCS1[54]) and genes associated with T cell exhaustion (*DUSP2*[55], *NR4A2*[56], *TSC22D3*[57]) as compared with

ND. In the CD8 effector T cell (Teff) cluster (**Figure 2D**), we observed an upregulation of genes involved in

effector function (*SLC3A2*[58], *NKG7*[59]), as well as migratory genes (*VIM*[60], *ITGA1*[61]) in T1D relative to ND

donors. We also noted upregulation of the anti-apoptotic factor *BCL2*, which is important for the

maintenance of long-lived memory subsets[62, 63], within CD8 Teff in T1D. Moreover, within this cluster, we

observed downregulation of genes associated with terminal differentiation and exhaustion (*CXCR4*[64],

DUSP2[55]), indicative of restraining of terminal differentiation in T1D as compared to controls. Similarly, in

the exhausted CD8 T cell cluster (CD8 Texh) (**Figure 2D**), we observed upregulation of genes involved in

migration (*VIM*[60]), calcium signaling (*S100A6*, *S100A11*[65]), inflammatory cytokine response (*SOCS3*,

IFITM1, *IFITM3*, *IFITM2*[41, 66]), and cytotoxicity (*HMGN2*[67], GZMM), while genes associated with terminal

differentiation and exhaustion (*TSC22D3, DUSP2*, *HLA-DQB1*[68]) were downregulated in T1D. We did not

detect differential expression of other canonical markers of stemness or exhaustion (i.e., *TCF7*, *LEF1*,

CD122, *CXCR3*, *PD1*), potentially due to data sparsity or differential regulation of protein and RNA

expression.

Pathway analysis using the Reactome database revealed that naïve CD8 T cells (**Figure S9A**) in T1D

were enriched for autophagy and mitophagy. Additionally, CD8 TCM cells in T1D were enriched for

interleukin signaling and interferon signaling (**Figure 2E**), while CD8 Teff (**Figure 2F**) were enriched for

interleukin signaling and smooth muscle contraction, the latter likely reflective of increased calcium

signaling (*ANXA1*, *ANXA2*)[69]. Lastly, CD8 Texh (**Figure 2G**) were enriched for interferon signaling,

interleukin signaling, and signal transduction through growth factor receptors (*TGFB1*, *FLT3LG*[70]*)* and

second messengers (*PIM1*[71]). We then performed Immune Response Enrichment Analysis (IREA), which

uses an extensive database of specific gene sets induced by cytokine treatment[72], to infer the cytokine

milieu driving these CD8 phenotypes. Across the trajectory of CD8$^+$ T cell differentiation, IL-15 signaling

was notably enriched in T1D (**Figure S9B**; **Figure 2H-J**), a pathway that is known to promote stemness and

restrain exhaustion-like phenotypes[73] and can synergize with other inflammatory cytokines to promote

effector function[74]. Collectively, these data and our prior peripheral blood findings[75] suggest Tc1 skewing

as an immunological feature of T1D shared across tissues.

CD8$^+$ T cell clones possessing naïve-like and *TCF7*$^+$*TOX*$^+$ phenotypes are more prevalent in T1D pLN

Separate analyses of receptor or transcriptomic data may preclude insights into the relationships between

repertoire characteristics and phenotype. Thus, recent methods have been developed to enable joint

analysis of these modalities, namely Clonotype Neighbor Graph Analysis (CoNGA)[31], which has shown

utility in revealing transcripts associated with specific TCR genes and features. We applied CoNGA to our

pLN dataset, which identified 35 groups with significant (CoNGA score <1) overlap in TCR and gene

expression neighborhoods and a minimum of 4 cells per group (**Figure S10**). In accordance with the

original CoNGA publication[31], we found a stronger relationship between receptor and phenotypes in CD8$^+$

T cells and invariant T cells, with the majorityof our CoNGA hit clusters being comprised of CD8$^+$ T cells,

including naïve, effector, and mucosal-associated invariant T (MAIT) cell clusters (**Figure S10**). Among

these clusters, we found 10 that were overrepresented to some degree in T1D donors (**Figure 3A**,

indicated by leftmost orange bar). In particular, we observed that CoNGA clone hits belonging to CoNGA

gene expression (GEX) cluster 8 and TCR cluster 4 were found in several T1D donors, the highest frequency

being found in new-onset donor 6550, while 37/38 clones detected in ND donors (97%) were found in a

single ND donor possessing high risk HLA alleles (HLA A*0201, HLA DRB1*0401) (**Table S12**). Thus, clones

belonging to these clusters were more often found in T1D (p=0.0012, OR=1.988) (**Figure 3B**). The enriched

GEX cluster 8/TCR cluster 4 is comprised of CD8$^+$ T cells with high TCR diversity (113 unique clonotypes

and 113 total cells, indicative of no clonal expansion) and with high expression of *CCR7*, *SELL*, *LEF1*, *TCF7*,

and *IL7R*. We also noted that this cluster possessed some features suggesting prior activation, namely

KLRK1[76], costimulatory molecule *HCST*[77] encoding DAP10, and low *CXCR3* expression. The TCRs within this

cluster possessed a diverse TCR beta chain (*TRB*) repertoire, while alpha chain (*TRA*) gene usage was

restricted to TRAV14/DV4, TRAV38-2/DV8, and TRAV38-1 (**Figure 3A**). Additionally, this cluster also

possessed a low Atchley factor 4 score (blue af4 logo, TCRseq features panel, **Figure 3A**), which has

previously been associated with larger, more hydrophobic residues[31]. In addition to this naïve-like cluster,

we also noted enrichment of a less frequent cluster (GEX cluster 11, TCR cluster 13), which possessed a

more terminally differentiated profile, expressing cytotoxicity markers (*GZMA*, *GZMK*, *NKG7*),

costimulatory molecule *HCST*, as well as *CXCR3* and both *TCF7* and *TOX* (**Figure 3A**). Though infrequent,

this cluster was also present in multiple T1D donors, with only 2/18 clones being found in ND donors. We

searched for known T1D clones[78] in these T1D-associated CoNGA clusters based on similarity to known

alpha chain complementary determining region 3 (CDR3) sequence, given recent data on potential alpha

chain biases in autoreactive clones in T1D[79]. We found within the naïve-like cluster several clones which

share CDR3a (allowing for one amino acid mismatch) with known T1D clones, namely four GAD65 reactive

clones, three preproinsulin reactive clones, and a clone which possessed a CDR3a chain shared across

multiple specificities in a new onset T1D donor. We also found three clones with matching CDR3a to clones

with GAD65, $ZNT8_{186-194}$ and PPI_{16-25} specificities in a control donor with high-risk HLA alleles (**Table S12**).

In the more terminally differentiated cluster, we found an expanded clone (clone size of 6) matching a PPI

reactive clone, as well as sharing an alpha chain motif "AGGYQKVTF" present in the previously published

22.A10[80] PPI_{1-11} reactive clone (**Table S12**). Thus, these enriched clusters may contain autoreactive

specificities. Interestingly, we also noted an increase (p=0.0007, OR=2.153) in a group of expanded TCRs

(CoNGA gene expression cluster 16 paired with TCR cluster 13) comprised of MAIT and semi-invariant T

cells (*TRAV1-2* gene usage paired with a more diverse set of *TRB* chains) in T1D pLN (**Figure S11**).

Shared memory T cell populations demonstrate enhanced effector phenotype in pancreatic slices

To investigate receptor sharing and gene expression across tissues, we performed scRNAseq on isolated

immune cells from fresh pancreatic slices[81, 82] and paired pLN (**Figure 4A**) from 2 recent-onset T1D donors

(nPOD 6551, duration 0.58 years; nPOD 6536, duration 4 years) with independently confirmed insulitis[83].

Data integration yielded 17 clusters, which included naïve, memory, and effector CD4[+] and CD8[+] T cell

populations, Tregs, B cells, and resident macrophage populations (**Figure 4B**). We first interrogated the

TCR repertoire to examine sharing of T cell clones across these tissues, and while both donors possessed

insulitis, the newer onset donor 6551 possessed more extensive insulitis than donor 6536 (**Figure 4C**). We

found that expanded clones localized mostly to clusters 0 (CD8 Teff) and 2 (CD8 CTL), respectively

corresponding to CD8[+] T cell populations with lower and higher expression of cytotoxicity-related

molecules (*GZMK*, *CST7*, *LTB*) (**Figure 4D-E**). Clone sharing across pancreas and pLN was minimal, with

morisita horn (MH) values of 0.007 and 0.002 for cross-tissue overlap for donors 6536 and 6551,

respectively (**Figure 5F**). However, even with our limited sample size, we were able to detect 6 unique

clonotypes shared across tissues and clusters, with 2 clones shared across tissues (**Figure 4G, Table 1**). We

detected an expanded CD4$^+$ T cell clone in donor 6536, which was shared between tissues (cluster 9, ICOS^{hi}

TCM), as well as an expanded CD8$^+$ T cell clone in donor 6551, which was shared between tissues (clusters

0/2 CD8 Teff and CTL). The majority of sharing was detected between the effector CD8 clusters 0 and 2,

especially within donor 6551, as compared to donor 6536, perhaps due to reduced infiltration as a result

of increased disease duration.

We next investigated tissue-specific phenotypic differences in these clusters. We noted that CD8$^+$

Teff clusters 0 and 2, defined by expression of NK cell receptors (*KLRK1*[84]*, KLRB1*[85]*)*, Th1 related chemokine

receptors and ligands (*CXCR3*, *CXCR6*, *CCL5*[86]), and markers of terminally differentiated memory subsets

(*LAG3*, *KLRD1*, *EOMES*[87]), were the most commonly shared clusters across tissues, while less differentiated

subsets, such as naïve T cells, were expectedly more prevalent in pLN. Additionally, inflammatory

macrophages expressing *IL1B* were more prevalent in pancreas (**Figure 5A**). Examining DEGs of total CD8

T cells between tissues revealed increased expression of genes involved in promoting naïve/stem-like

phenotypes, *LEF1* (Log2FC=4.8, p_{adj}=1.6e^{-7}) and *SELL* (Log2FC=4.0, p_{adj}=1.4e^{-7}), in pLN relative to pancreas

(**Figure 5B**). As this could partially be explained by the increased proportion of naïve cells in pLN relative

to pancreatic slice, we sought to compare gene expression of shared populations across tissues. We found

that cells from cluster 0 (CD8 Teff) derived from pancreatic slices expressed enhanced markers of

cytotoxicity, such as *GZMB* (Log2FC=5.46, p_{adj}=1.4e^{-46}) as well as exhaustion marker *DUSP4*[88] (Log2FC=6.6,

p_{adj}=1.3e^{-57}) alongside reduced expression of common gamma chain cytokine receptors *IL7R (*Log2FC=-1.9,

p_{adj}=2.5e^{-10}) and *IL2RG* (Log2FC=-2.0, p_{adj}=4.1e^{-5}) (**Figure 5C**). Cluster 2, which possessed a similar

transcriptomic profile to cluster 0 but with enhanced expression of cytotoxicity and memory markers (CD8

CTL), demonstrated similar transcriptomic expression differences as cluster 0 across tissues (**Figure 5D**).

GSEA of cluster 0 revealed upregulation of inflammatory signaling pathways, namely IL-6-JAK-STAT3

(Log2FC=2.3, p_{adj}=1.5e^{-19}) and TNFα signaling (Log2FC=0.34, p_{adj}=1.7e^{-7}), as well as downregulation of Wnt-

Beta catenin signaling (Log2FC=-0.6, p_{adj}=2.3e^{-3}) (**Figure 5E**) in pancreatic slices compared to pLN,

altogether suggesting that this cluster acquired a more differentiated transcriptomic program in pancreas

relative to pLN. We observed similar upregulation of inflammatory pathways in cluster 2, representing an

activated effector phenotype (**Figure 5F**). Notably, while Wnt-Beta catenin signaling was not significantly

enhanced in pLN for this cluster, we did observe upregulation of *GIMAP5*[89] (Log2FC=-3.3, p_{adj}=1.5e^{-8}) in

pLN, which is an important negative regulator of GSK3β and thus, potentially enhances Wnt-signaling. In

line with prior observations of IL-15 signaling in the pancreas, IREA analysis of DEGs from CD8$^+$ T cell

clusters 0 and 2 between pLN and pancreas revealed enriched IL-15 signaling as a driver of differential

tissue phenotypes (**Figure S12**).

CXCR3$^+$ naïve T cells show features of stemness and polyfunctionality in the pLN

In order to more deeply understand the phenotype and function of the naïve CXCR3$^+$ cells (cluster 0) we

identified as being enriched in T1D pLN, we examined the expression of canonical exhaustion and TSCM

markers on pLN CD8 T$^+$ cells in a cohort of 5 T1D and 5 control donors by flow cytometry. We confirmed

that CXCR3$^+$ naïve CD8$^+$ T cells, along with the remainder of the naïve cells (CXCR3- naïve), express

significantly more TCF1 (p=0.0003, FC=2.04), and possess a significantly greater fraction of TCF1$^+$ cells than

memory cells (**Figure 6A-B**, **Figure S13**). We also observed that TSCM (CD45RA$^+$CD45RO$^-$CXCR3$^-$

CD95$^+$CD27$^+$) and CXCR3$^+$ naïve CD8$^+$ T cells express similar levels of TOX, with both populations displaying

increased expression of TOX relative to naïve cells (TSCM: p=0.0130, FC=1.21; naïve CXCR3$^+$: p=0.0013,

FC=1.19) (**Figure 6C**). Interestingly, we also noted increased TCF1 expression on naïve CXCR3$^+$ cells from

T1D donors relative to control donors (**Figure 6D**) (p=0.0317, FC=1.81). Supporting the notion that these

cells possess a transitional phenotype, TCF1$^+$ cells expressed significantly increased expression of CD127

as compared to TCF1$^-$ cells (p=0.0107, FC=1.32), as well as reduced PD-1 expression (p=0.0003, FC=0.80),

and enhanced CD5 expression (p<0.0001, FC=1.85) (**Figure 6E-G**). Moreover, after four hours of

stimulation with PMA/ionomycin, we found that naïve CXCR3$^+$ cells upregulated IL-2 and TNFα as

compared to the remainder of naïve (CXCR3-) cells (IL-2: p=0.0002, FC=3.11; TNFα: p=0.0006, FC=3.12)

(**Figure 6H**, **Figure S13**), but had reduced IFNG expression compared to TSCM and memory cells and similar

IL-2 and TNFα expression to TSCM cells, indicative of maintained functionality and potentially a

transitional phenotype. Importantly, these data support that this subset exhibits features of stemness as

well as polyfunctionality.

TCF1$^+$TOX$^+$ T cells demonstrate tissue-specific phenotypes and localize to the islets in human T1D

As single cell RNAseq analysis precludes the investigation of cell type localization, we performed

PhenoCycler analysis of pancreas and pLN from donor 6551 to examine the tissue localization of naïve-

like and terminal effector phenotypes in insulitis (**Figure 7A**). CD3$^+$ T cells were classified as TCF1$^+$TOX$^-$

(TCF1$^+$, naïve), TCF1$^-$TOX$^+$ (TOX$^+$, memory and exhausted), and TCF1$^+$TOX$^+$ (activated transitional and

effector) populations (**Figure 7B**). TCF1$^+$TOX$^+$ cells in the pancreas were found more often near or within

the islet boundary than TCF1$^+$ or TOX$^+$ cells, with TOX$^+$ cells more proximal than TCF1$^+$ (**Figure 7C**). In

accordance with our single cell analysis of CD8$^+$ T cells across tissues, we observed enhanced inhibitory

receptor expression (namely TOX, CD57, and PD-1) in TCF1$^+$TOX$^+$ and TOX$^+$ subsets in the pancreas relative

to the pLN (**Figure 7D-E**). Thus, these data indicate a spectrum of memory CD8$^+$ T cell phenotypes in the

pancreas, which include an activated TCF1$^+$TOX$^+$ population in close proximity to the islets. Akin to recent

reports in NOD mice that precursor diabetogenic T cells are primed and maintained as a self-renewing

pool in the pLN and seed terminally differentiated cells that expand in the islets[5], our data are indicative

of distinct tissue programs allowing for maintenance of CD8$^+$ T cell populations and prevention of

exhaustion in the pLN, as well as acquisition of further effector function in the pancreas during human

T1D.

Discussion

Despite tremendous progress in characterizing circulating immune cells in T1D, a critical gap in knowledge remains as to alterations in tissue immune phenotypes. Large datasets derived from the pancreas have given insight into disease-related changes in endocrine composition and function[90, 91], as well as potential changes in immune:islet cell communication[90, 92], but have limited power to examine immune cell phenotype. Datasets derived from secondary lymphoid organs in T1D are lacking due to the limited availability of samples and, to date, paucity of receptor information[93]. This study begins to address these gaps using complementary methods (i.e., CyTOF, scRNAseq/TCRseq/CITEseq, spatial proteomics) to assess differences in T cell phenotypes and their potential molecular underpinnings within the pLN and pancreas.

CD8[+] T cells are classically thought to be a major mediator of islet destruction in T1D, given their abundance in the insulitic lesion[94] and cytolytic function[95-97]. Moreover, recent studies indicated that CD8[+] T cells with a self-renewing phenotype may be important for T1D pathogenesis, as they are elevated in peripheral blood, and autoreactive cells may be biased towards this phenotype[5, 14, 98]. Our study shows that CD8[+] T cells expressing markers of a TSCM population (CD45RA, CCR7, CXCR3, CD27, CD28) are increased in T1D pLN. TSCM cells play an important role in memory maintenance and in generating rapidly responding effector cells[99]. It has been shown that serum concentrations of cytokines that promote TSCM development, notably IL-15, are elevated in T1D patients[100, 101]. Moreover, circulating islet antigen-reactive T cells from T1D donors have been shown to possess stem-like features[14]. Enhanced capacity for self-renewal could be clinically detrimental, as multiple therapeutic avenues (e.g., teplizumab, anti-thymocyte globulin [ATG]) have converged on a signature of CD8 T cell exhaustion in therapeutic responders[13, 102]. Our study provides further support for the relevance of this pathway, as IREA analysis revealed an enrichment of IL-15-induced genes across the

trajectory of CD8[+] T cell differentiation in T1D. Interestingly, pathway analysis of naïve cells indicated

an enrichment of autophagy and mitophagy in cells from T1D pLN. IL-15 has recently been shown to

enable sustained autophagy during activation as compared to inflammatory cytokines[103], potentially

better enabling maintenance of memory populations. We also observed an increase in cytokine

signaling and upregulation of the anti-apoptotic factor *BCL2,* which, coupled with the downregulation

of multiple exhaustion-associated genes in this cluster in T1D, could suggest that CD8 T cells favor a

progenitor exhausted phenotype rather than a terminal exhaustion phenotype in T1D[62]. Further

studies are needed to connect IL-15 signaling in T1D to autoreactive T cell stemness and progenitor

exhausted phenotypes and to investigate if inhibiting this pathway may aid in establishing durable

tolerance. Notably, baricitinib, an inhibitor of Janus Kinase (JAK) 1/2 signaling and thus, common

gamma chain cytokine signaling (including IL-15), has recently demonstrated efficacy in preserving β-

cell function in recent-onset T1D donors[104]. Interestingly, we observed reduced expression of *IL7R*

and *IL2RG* in effector cells derived from the recent-onset T1D pancreas relative to those from paired

pLN, indicating that in the pancreas microenvironment, these cells may be more reliant on IL-15 and

other effector cytokines, such as IL-21, than IL-2 or IL-7. It remains to be seen whether baricitinib

alone could aid in targeting the autoreactive T cell reservoir or if combinatorial therapy will be

necessary with T cell exhaustion-inducing therapeutics, such as teplizumab.

Limitations of the study include donor heterogeneity and limited sample size due to the rarity

of study tissues. Notably, we were unable to obtain sufficient immune cell numbers from control

pancreatic slices to compare immune phenotypes between T1D and ND donors, and our small

sampling size from pancreatic slices likely is not representative of the full complement of immune cell

phenotypes in the target organ. Our lab is currently utilizing spatial transcriptomic[105] and proteomic

technologies to assess this without the need for immune cell isolation. Moreover, T1D is a

heterogeneous disease, and it is possible that immune phenotypes identified through our studies

may differ across different age or ancestry groups, which we were not powered to assess. Indeed,

though great strides are being made in investigating the genetic drivers of T1D in populations with

diverse genetic ancestry[106-108], there are still many knowledge gaps regarding the importance of

known genetic risk loci across groups traditionally underrepresented in biomedical research. Despite

this, we believe that the information that we have provided using paired phenotype and receptor

information for these subsets can be used by the field to identify CDR3 motifs of further interest.

As it stands, known TCR sequences that correspond to autoreactive T cell specificity are rare[78].

Moreover, matching sequences to those in curated databases such as the Manually curated database

of Pathology Associated Sequences (McPAS)[109] and Immune Epitope Database (IEDB)[110] introduces a

bias toward known specificities and epitopes of interest. Indeed, we were unable to confidently

identify a priori T1D antigen autoreactive cells using pMHC dextramer reagents. This could reflect low

sampling (10,000 cells per donor), incomplete knowledge of antigen reactivity, and/or individual

heterogeneity in autoantigen reactivity. However, utilizing a curated list of experimentally validated

T1D clones, we identified 11 putative T1D clones in the pLN based on a priori knowledge.

Nevertheless, there is a need to apply new analytical strategies to identify similarities in TCR sequence

and transcriptomic features that may indicate a common antigen specificity[111]. We utilized one such

tool, CoNGA[31], to examine joint gene expression and receptor features in T1D. This analysis revealed

a T1D-associated enrichment of a TCR cluster comprised of diverse naive CD8$^+$ T cells that display

features of prior activation (i.e., *KLRK1*, *HCST*, low *CXCR3*), further supporting our gene expression

and proteomic data. The feature of low AF4 within this cluster supports previous data wherein

autoreactive T cells were found to possess more hydrophobic residues[112], including within

autoreactive receptors detected in the pancreas[79]. Moreover, in T1D pLN we also found enrichment

of a more terminally differentiated cluster of CD8[+] T cells, which displayed expression of cytotoxicity-

related genes, *CXCR3*, and memory/exhaustion-related gene *TOX*, while retaining some *TCF7*

expression. Though infrequent, we postulated that this population may represent a transitional

memory phenotype that is poised to infiltrate the pancreas, as supported by the presence of an

expanded putative autoreactive clone in this population in a new-onset T1D donor.

We utilized paired pLN and pancreas T cell data to investigate phenotypes of shared

populations and to interrogate whether local expansion of T cells occurred in fresh pancreatic slices.

We identified the most abundant shared populations to be effector CD8[+] T cells, which were the most

clonally expanded populations. Moreover, we noted CD8[+] T cells, as a whole, had reduced expression

of genes involved in promoting stem-like/naïve phenotypes (*LEF1, SELL*) in pancreas compared to

pLN. This could, in part, be driven by the local inflammatory milieu. Indeed, we observed enrichment

of multiple inflammatory cytokine signaling pathways, namely IL-6 and TNFα, in pancreas relative to

pLN T cells, while we observed upregulation of Myc, mTORC1, and Wnt signaling pathways in pLN

relative to pancreas T cells. While sharing of TCR clones was limited between donors and difficult to

detect due to the sparsity of single cell data, we were able to detect intra-donor sharing of clones

across tissues and between clusters. Donor 6551, a 20-year-old donor with 0.58 years T1D duration,

particularly notable for insulitis severity, possessed expanded CD8[+] Teff clones that were shared

between tissues and between clusters. In the longer duration (4 years) donor with less insulitis (6536),

we were able to detect sharing of only one effector CD8[+] clone across clusters and one CD4[+] clone

across tissues.

Using multiplex spatial proteomic profiling, we were able to show that in the same T1D donor

with marked insulitis, case 6551, TCF1 and TOX expressing T cell populations can be found in pLN and

pancreas. Importantly, we found that TCF1[+]TOX[+] cells possess a more terminal effector phenotype in

the pancreas and can be found proximal to the islets. We also found by flow cytometry that pLN naive

CXCR3[+] T cells have similar expression of transcription factors TCF1 and TOX to TSCM cells, and

produce similar levels of proinflammatory cytokines upon activation. Akin to human peripheral blood

data, we noted that TCF1-expressing populations in the pLN tended to express less PD-1 and more

CD127[113] and CD5[114], indicative of early differentiation stage and activation potential. In accordance

with murine studies[5], these data collectively support that T cell clones are supplied from the pLN and

adopt a more effector and terminally differentiated phenotype in the pancreas during human T1D

development. Previously, our lab reported increased circulating CXCR3[lo]CD8[+] T cells in T1D[75] following

phenotyping of a cohort of over 824 cross-sectional peripheral blood samples. The present study

supports a role for these cells in the draining lymph node: a small set of related terminal effector

CXCR3-expressing cells could be found in the pLN and a larger fraction in the target organ, suggesting

that these cells share some features of stemness (TCF1 expression) and are more polyfunctional as

compared to naïve cells. Identifying subsets of interest that are relevant in both peripheral blood and

the target organ could aid in efforts to selectively inhibit autoreactivity and monitor outcomes.

Importantly, combination CXCR3 antagonism with ACT-777991 and α-CD3 treatment leads to disease

remission in the NOD mouse[115], and first-in-human trials in healthy adults have shown this compound

to be tolerable[116]. Thus, combinatorial strategies to induce tolerogenic phenotypes while targeting

pathways relevant to tissue immune phenotypes may represent an avenue to achieve durable

tolerance. Taken together, our studies indicate that memory and effector T cell programs in T1D are

maintained in the pLN and enhanced locally in the pancreas, likely driven by aberrant regulation of

cytokine signaling and impacted by genotype at T1D risk loci. Future directions validating the

functionality of clones identified herein and investigating the cellular interactions of CXCR3[+]CD8[+] T

cells across the differentiation trajectory will inform the development of therapeutics to modulate

them, providing novel avenues to delay or prevent T1D progression.

Author Contributions

LDP: Designing research studies, conducting experiments, acquiring data, analyzing data, writing the manuscript (original draft), funding acquisition

HRS: Conducting experiments, acquiring data, writing the manuscript (reviewing and editing)

JS: Conducting experiments, acquiring data, analyzing data, writing the manuscript (original draft)

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MAA: Writing the manuscript (reviewing and editing), funding acquisition

RB: Analyzing data, writing the manuscript (reviewing and editing), interpreting data

MAB: Designing research studies, interpreting data, writing the manuscript (reviewing and editing), project oversight

TMB: Designing research studies, interpreting data, writing the manuscript (reviewing and editing), funding acquisition, project oversight

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Tables

Table 1. Sequences of shared clones across pLN and pancreas slices.

Tissue(s)	Donor	Cluster number	Cluster phenotype	CDR3 sequence (amino acid)	CDR3 sequence (nt)	TCR gene usage	n
pLN, slice	6536	5,9	eTreg, ICOS[hi] TCM	CAASIGFGNVLHC_CSSKKGLDEQFF	TGTGCAGCAAGTATAGGCTTTGGGAATGTGCTGCATTGC_TGCAGTTCCAAGAAGGGGTTGGATGAGCAGTTCTTC	TRAV13-1/TRAJ35 TRBV20-1/TRBJ2-1	4
pLN	6551	0,2	CD8 Teff, CD8 CTL	CAVDSGGGADGLTF_CASSPAGAGYEQYF	TGTGCTGTCGATTCAGGAGGAGGTGCTGACGGACTCACCTTT_TGCGCCAGCAGCCCTGCGGGGGCCGGCTACGAGCAGTACTTC TGTGCTGTGGATTCAGGAGGAGGTGCTGACGGACTCACCTTT_TGCGCCAGCAGCCCGGCCGGTGCGGGGTACGAGCAGTACTTC TGTGCTGTCGATTCAGGAGGAGGTGCTGACGGACTCACCTTT_TGCGCCAGCAGCCCTGCGGGGGCCGGCTACGAGCAGTACTTC	TRAV22/TRAJ45 TRBV4-3/TRBJ2-7	4
pLN	6551	0,2	CD8 Teff, CD8 CTL	CAMRGPFRAGANNLFF_CSARGGPVSNEQFF	TGTGCAATGAGAGGCCCCTTTCGAGCTGGGGCAAACAACCTCTTCTTT_TGCAGTGCTAGGGGTGGACCCGTCTCCAATGAGCAGTTCTTC	TRAV14/DV4/TRAJ36 TRBV20-1/TRBJ2-1	3
pLN, slice	6551	0,2	CD8 Teff, CD8 CTL	CASKTGANNLFF_CASAPGQGSEQLFF	TGTGCTTCTAAAACTGGGGCAAACAACCTCTTCTTT_TGTGCCAGTGCCCCGGGACAGGGCTCCGAGCAACTGTTTTT	TRAV16/TRAJ36 TRBV19/TRBJ1-4	3
pLN	6551	0,2	CD8 Teff, CD8 CTL	CAVKDNARLMF_CASSSGEAGTNSPLHF	TGTGCTGTGAAAGACAATGCCAGACTCATGTTT_TGTGCCAGCAGCTCAGGGGAGGCAGGAACTAATTCACCCCTCCACTTT	TRAV1-2/TRAJ31 TRBV7-8/TRBJ1-6	3
pLN	6536	0,2	CD8 Teff, CD8 CTL	CAVRSPSLMDSNYQLIW_CASCRTGNYEQYF	TGCGCTGTGAGATCCCCTTCGTTAATGGATAGCAACTATCAGTTAATCTGG_TGTGCCAGCTGCCGGACAGGCAACTACGAGCAGTACTTC	TRAV1-1/TRAJ33 TRBV6-5/TRBJ2-7	3

 Figures Legends

Figure 1. Differential abundance of CXCR3^{lo} naïve CD8 T cells in T1D pLN. A) Experimental workflow

involving processing of pancreatic lymph node (pLN), staining for lineage, phenotypic, and quality

control (QC) markers, and data collection on a mass cytometer. After data acquisition, normalization

of channels to internal bead controls was performed using the premessa[21] package, and any

confounding effects of batch or donor age on cluster composition were accounted for in analysis

through incorporation as covariates in a linear model. B) UMAP of subclustered CD8$^+$ T cells. C) Z-

scored DotPlot of marker expression for each CD8$^+$ T cell subcluster. D) Significantly increased

proportion of subcluster 0 (CXCR3^{lo} naïve like) in T1D pLN as determined by linear modeling with

donor age and CyTOF batch as covariates. E) Significantly increased percentage of naïve CD8$^+$ T cells

expressing CXCR3 found in an independent cohort of pLN donors by flow cytometry. P value for (E) is

the result of an ordinary one-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple test correction.

Figure 2. IL-15 is predicted to drive signatures of memory maintenance and effector function in

T1D. A) Experimental workflow for scRNAseq of pLN. B) UMAP projection of total pLN cells, which

were subsetted to T cells, reintegrated with rpca, and reclustered, resulting in 19 T cell clusters (C).

D) Heatmap of Z-scored gene expression data showing a selection of DEGs between T1D donors and

ND donors across naïve, Teff, and Texh CD8$^+$ T cells. E) Network plot using DEGs in naïve CD8 T cells

showing enrichment of reactome pathways in T1D. F) Network plot using DEGs in CD8 Teff cells

showing enrichment of reactome pathways in T1D. G) Network plot using DEGs in CD8 Texh cells

showing enrichment of reactome pathways in T1D. H) Compass plot of IREA results using the top

genes upregulated in T1D in naïve CD8$^+$ T cells (p<0.05, log2FC>0.26) as input. I) Compass plot of IREA

results using the top genes upregulated in T1D in CD8$^+$ Teff cells (p<0.05, log2FC>0.26) as input. J)

Compass plot of IREA results using the top genes upregulated in T1D in CD8$^+$ Texh cells (p<0.05,

log2FC>0.26) as input. H-J) Bar height is indicative of enrichment score, while color corresponds to

FDR-adjusted P value (two-sided Wilcoxon rank-sum test), red or blue arcs indicate significant

positive or negative enrichment, respectively. Genes highlighted on heatmap (D) met log2FC cutoffs

of 0.26 and adjusted p-value cutoffs of 0.05. Pathway analysis was performed with the reactomePA

package and visualized if adjusted p<0.1 with the clusterprofiler package.

Figure 3. Integrative receptor and gene expression analysis highlights an enriched naïve CD8$^+$ T cell

TCR cluster in T1D pLN. A) Gene expression and TCR Graph vs Graph results for CoNGA clusters with

score <1. Left half of semicircle indicates gene expression cluster, right half of semicircle indicates

TCR cluster assignment. Bar plots indicate the relative proportion of T1D (orange) and ND (blue) cells

for the given cluster (left) and for the entire dataset (right), followed by the same for nPOD ID, where

each color represents a different donor. Top 9 differentially expressed genes are shown per cluster,

as well as TCR genes, and TCR sequence features[31] (TCRseq features panel, with red indicating higher

and blue indicating lower scores relative to the rest of the dataset). A panel of manually curated

marker genes shown is shown on the far right with red dots colored by mean expression and sized by

percent of cells expressing the gene. DEGs are determined by Wilcoxon test and scaled by adjusted

p value, where full height requires p<10^{-6}. Fold changes <2 are shown in grey. Difference in cluster

proportion assessed with two-way Fisher's exact test.

Figure 4 Cross-tissue clone and phenotype sharing in human pLN and pancreas. A) Processing

workflow of pancreatic slices where pancreas was embedded in agarose and sliced using a vibratome

to yield 150μm slices[81, 82], after which cells were processed to single cell suspension, selected for

CD45[+] cells, and run on the 10X Chromium controller as described in methods. B) UMAP of integrated

gene expression data (n=2 donors, pLN and pancreatic slices). C) Histological staining (obtained from

nPOD Aperio e-slide manager) of insulin (pink), glucagon (blue), and CD3 (brown) across pancreas tail

of the two donors with paired pancreatic slice and pLN data shows increased insulitis in new-onset

donor 6551. Scale bars are included in the upper left corner of each image and correspond to 10x

magnification and 101um for donor 6551, and 20x magnification and 50um for donor 6536. D)

Dotplot showing Z-scored gene expression per cluster in (B), with dot size corresponding to percent

of cells in the cluster expressing the marker. E) Barplot illustrating distribution of expanded clones

across clusters, with the majority of expanded clones localizing to memory CD8[+] T cell clusters 0 (CD8

Teff) and 2 (CD8 cytotoxic T lymphocytes [CTL]). F) Assessment of repertoire overlap across tissues

with the Morisita-Horn metric shows limited sharing across tissues. G) Alluvial plot subsetted to only

shared clones showing clonal sharing between clusters 5 (eTreg) and 9 (ICOS[hi] TCM), and 0 (CD8 Teff)

and 2 (CD8 CTL) across both clusters and tissues.

Figure 5. Tissue-dependent gene expression programs of memory CD8[+] T cell populations.

A) Barplot of percent of each cluster per tissue illustrates differential subset abundance of innate and

adaptive immune cells. B) Violin plots illustrating differential expression of *LEF1* and *SELL* in CD8 T

cells between tissues. C) Volcano plot of differentially expressed genes in cluster 0 (CD8 Teff) between

pancreatic slices and pLN. D) Volcano plot of differentially expressed genes in cluster 2 (CD8 CTL)

between pancreatic slices and pLN. DEGs were defined as log2FC>0.26 and corrected p value<0.05.

E) GSEA analysis of cluster 0 using Hallmark genesets. F) GSEA analysis of cluster 2 using Hallmark

genesets. GSEA analysis was performed using escape, and DE genesets were identified with a

Wilcoxon test. The top 20 gene sets with adjusted p <0.05 were plotted with positive fold change

indicating upregulation in pancreatic slice (orange) and negative fold change indicating upregulation

in pLN (blue).

Figure 6. Naïve CXCR3$^+$ CD8 T cells possess features of stemness and polyfunctionality. Flow

cytometry of cryopreserved pLN cells was performed to assess expression of canonical TSCM markers

and cytokine expression. A) Naïve CXCR3$^+$ (nCXCR3+) cells resemble TSCM and naïve cells in their

expression of TCF1. n=10, p values are the result of a repeated measures one-way ANOVA with

Tukey's multiple comparison test. B) Enrichment of TCF1$^+$ cells in naïve CXCR3+ cells as compared to

memory cells. N=10, p values are the result of a repeated measures Friedman test with Dunn's

multiple comparison test.C) TSCM and nCXCR3+ cells express more TOX as compared to naïve cells.

N=10, p values are the result of a repeated measures one-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple

comparison test. D) T1D donor nCXCR3+ cells express enhanced TCF1 as quantified by stain index

[(median TCF1 expression in nCXCR3+ cells– median TCF1 expression in memory CD8 T cells)/(SD of

TCF1 in memory CD8 T cells * 2)] in nCXCR3+ cells from pLN. n=5 per group, p value is the result of a

two-tailed mann-whitney test. Upregulation of E) CD127, downregulation of PD-1 (F), and

upregulation of CD5 (G) in TCF1$^+$ compared to TCF1$^-$ cells. N=10, p values are the result of a two-tailed

t-test. H) nCXCR3+ cells possess, after 4 hours of PMA/ionomycin stimulation in the presence of

gologistop, more IL-2 and TNFα expressing T cells as compared to naive T cells, and more closely

resemble TSCM for expression of these molecules. n=10, p values are the result of a repeated

measures two-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test.

Figure 7. TCF1 and TOX co-expressing populations colocalize to the peri-islet area in human T1D. A) Schematic of phenocycler imaging of embedded pLN and pancreas from nPOD 6551. B) Representative images of pancreas and pLN, with callouts showing TCF1 and TOX expressing populations. C) Line plot illustrating the density of TCF1 and TOX expressing T cell populations across islet distance, with TCF1 and TOX co-expressing cells having greater density nearer to the islets than single positive populations. D) Representative islet images from donor 6551 showing lineage markers (CD4, CD8) as well as TCF1, TOX, CD57 and PD1 alongside nuclear stain DAPI. E) Dotplot showing expression of key memory, negative regulatory and activation related markers across TCF1 and TOX expressing populations.

A

35 marker immune panel

T1D n=10

ND n=12

1. Normalization to internal bead controls
2. Batch Correction
3. Unsupervised clustering of live intact CD45+ cells

Batch 1
Batch 2

Before normalization

After normalization

Channel intensity

Event number

B

Subclustered pLN CD8+ T cells

umap_2

umap_1

C

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CD57								
CD56								
CD103								
CD45RA								
TIGIT								
CCR6								
CXCR3								
CD27								
CCR7								
CD69								
CXCR5								
CD127								
CD28								
ICOS								
CD161								
CD226								
CD38								
PD1								
HLADR								
CD25								

Zscore (counts)
2
1
0
-1
-2

Percent
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%

CXCR3^{lo} Naïve
CXCR3- Naïve
CD103+CD69+ TRM
Activated TEM
Activated Naive
TEM
CD103+ TRM
Exhausted

D

CD8 Cluster 0 proportion

p=0.034

ND   T1D

E

CXCR3+ (% of Naive CD8)

p= 0.0114
p= 0.0090

ND   AAB   T1D

A

6551

pLN

pancreas

B Tissue region and cell segmentation

pLN

pancreas

Islet

TCF-1⁺   TCF-1⁺TOX⁺   TOX⁺

C T cell distribution in pancreas

CD3⁺ T cell density

Distance to islet (μm)

- CD3e+TCF-1
- CD3e+TCF-1+TOX
- CD3e+TOX
- Islet boundary

D T cell visualization in pLN and pancreas

CD4 CD8 TCF1 TOX

CD4 CD8 TCF1 TOX

DAPI CD57 PD1

DAPI CD57 PD1

E T cell marker expression in pLN and pancreas

T cell type

Tissue location

CD4 CD8 TOX TCF-1 ICOS CD38 HLA-DR Ki67 Bcl-2 Granzyme B CD107a FOXP3 CD57 PD-1 CD39

Mean expression

0.0 0.5 1.0

Percent expressing
- 20%
- 40%
- 60%
- 80%
- 100%