Bacteriophage cooperation suppresses CRISPR-Cas3 and Cas9 immunity

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SUMMARY

Bacteria utilize CRISPR-Cas adaptive immune systems for protection from bacteriophages (phages), and some phages produce anti-CRISPR (Acr) proteins that inhibit immune function. Despite thorough mechanistic and structural information for some Acr proteins, how they are deployed and utilized by a phage during infection is unknown. Here, we show that Acr production does not guarantee phage replication, but instead, infections fail when phage population numbers fall below a critical threshold. Failing infections can be rescued by related phages that act as Acr donors, demonstrating that infections succeed if a sufficient Acr dose is contributed to a single cell by multiple phage genomes. The production of Acr proteins by phage genomes that fail to replicate leave the cell immunosuppressed, which predisposes the cell for successful infection by other phages in the population. This "cooperative" phage mechanism for CRISPR-Cas inhibition demonstrates inter-virus cooperation that may also manifest in other host-parasite interactions.

INTRODUCTION

Bacteria and the viruses that infect them (phages) are engaged in an ancient evolutionary arms race, which has resulted in the emergence of a diversity of CRISPR-Cas (clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats and CRISPR-associated genes) adaptive immune systems (Koonin et al., 2017). CRISPR-Cas immunity is powered by the acquisition of small fragments of phage genomes into the bacterial CRISPR array, the subsequent transcription and processing of these arrays to generate small CRISPR RNAs, and the RNA-guided destruction of the phage genome (Barrangou et al., 2007; Brouns et al., 2008; Garneau et al., 2010; Levy et al., 2015). The destruction of foreign DNA by CRISPR-Cas has been shown to prevent the acquisition of plasmids, DNA from the environment, phage lytic replication, and prophage integration (Barrangou et al., 2007; Bikard et al., 2012; Cady et al., 2012; Edgar and Qimron, 2010; Garneau et al., 2010). In bacterial populations, these systems provide a fitness advantage to their host microbe during times of phage presence in the environment (van Houte et al., 2016; Westra et al., 2015).

To combat the potent action of RNA-guided CRISPR-Cas nucleases, phages have developed inhibitor proteins called anti-CRISPRs (Acrs). Acr proteins have been

discovered in phages, prophages, mobile islands, and core genomes across many
distinct bacteria and archaea (Borges et al., 2017; He et al., 2018; Pawluk et al., 2017).
Specific Acr proteins inhibit the Type I-F, I-E, and I-D CRISPR-Cas3 have been identified
(Bondy-Denomy et al., 2013; He et al., 2018; Pawluk et al., 2014; 2016b), and also other
Acr proteins that inhibit Type II-A and II-C (Hynes et al., 2017; Pawluk et al., 2016a;
Rauch et al., 2017) CRISPR-Cas9 systems. Phylogenetic studies indicate that these
proteins are likely ubiquitous in coevolving populations of bacteria and phages (Pawluk
et al., 2017) and provide a significant replicative advantage to phages in the presence of
CRISPR immunity (van Houte et al., 2016).
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Anti-CRISPRs were first identified in phages that neutralize the *Pseudomonas*
aeruginosa type I-F system (<u>a</u>nti-<u>CR</u>ISPR type <u>I</u>-<u>F</u>, AcrIF1-5)(Bondy-Denomy et al.,
2013), and five more I-F anti-CRISPRs (AcrIF6-10) were subsequently identified in
various mobile genetic elements (Pawluk et al., 2016b). The I-F Csy surveillance
complex (also called I-F Cascade) is comprised of four proteins (Csy1-4) and a *trans*-
acting nuclease/helicase protein, Cas2/3 (Rollins et al., 2017; Wiedenheft et al., 2011).
Anti-CRISPR proteins function by interacting directly with the Csy complex and inhibit
DNA binding or bind to Cas2/3 and prevent nuclease-mediated degradation (Bondy-
Denomy et al., 2015). The structures of type I-F Acr proteins AcrIF1, AcrIF2, and AcrIF3
have been solved in complex with their target proteins, revealing mechanistically distinct
inhibitors that bind tightly to their target Cas protein (Chowdhury et al., 2017; Guo et al.,
2017; Maxwell et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2016). Together with the recent identification
and characterization of proteins that inhibit Cas9, a common theme in Acr function has
been revealed; all characterized Acr proteins block phage DNA binding or cleavage
(Dong et al., 2017; Harrington et al., 2017; Pawluk et al., 2016a; Rauch et al., 2017).
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Despite a detailed mechanistic understanding, however, it is unknown how anti-CRISPR
proteins protect a phage during infection. Where phage DNA cleavage has been
assessed *in vivo*, it occurs in as little as 2 minutes (Garneau et al., 2010), suggesting
that CRISPR attack may outpace the ability of *de novo* Acr synthesis and action. During
phage infection, we hypothesized that successful inhibition of CRISPR-Cas immunity by
Acr proteins would be challenging, as all components of the *P. aeruginosa* immune
system are expressed prior to phage infection (Bondy-Denomy et al., 2013; Cady et al.,
2012).

Here, we utilize the diverse array of AcrIF proteins encoded by phages to demonstrate

that CRISPR-Cas inactivation is a challenge, and that the sufficient concentration of Acr

proteins necessary to inactivate CRISPR-Cas is contributed by multiple phage genomes.

While initial phage infections may fail, due to the rapid action of the CRISPR-Cas

system, immunosuppression can result due to the production of Acr proteins, which

leads to a population-level benefit for other phages. We propose that pathogens can

contribute to the "remodeling" of their host cell via rapid protein production, even if the

initial infecting genomes are cleared, opening the door for their clones .

RESULTS

Anti-CRISPR proteins are imperfect CRISPR-Cas inhibitors

We utilized the diversity of *acr* genes encoded by phages infecting *P. aeruginosa* to

determine the mechanism of CRISPR-Cas neutralization during infection. Five natural

phages, each encoding a single *acrIF* gene, were selected to represent *acrIF1-IF4* and

acrIF7 (*acrIF5* does not exist as the sole *acrIF* gene on any phage, *acrIF6, F8-F10* are

not encoded by this phage family). Three of the five phages exhibited reduced efficiency

of plaquing (EOP) on *P. aeruginosa* strain PA14, possessing a type I-F CRISPR-Cas

system (Figure 1A, WT:pEmpty normalized to plaquing on ΔCRISPR). Overexpression of

a targeting crRNA (WT:pSp1) exacerbated anti-CRISPR inefficiency, limiting the

replication of all anti-CRISPR phages by at least one order of magnitude. This suggests

that anti-CRISPR proteins are unable to fully protect their associated phage genome.

To assess anti-CRISPR strength directly, an isogenic phage panel was generated by

replacing the *acrIE3* gene of phage DMS3m with single *acrIF* genes *F1-F7* (DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$-

DMS3m$_{acrIF7}$, Figure S1). WT PA14 (1 spacer targeting DMS3m, "1sp") and a laboratory

evolved strain (5 spacers targeting DMS3m, "5sp") were challenged with the

recombinant phages, revealing that all anti-CRISPRs are imperfect during infection

(Figure 1B). For phages encoding *acrIF1, F2, F3, F6* or *F7*, >90% of phage in the

population failed to replicate (EOP=10^{-1}) when faced with 5 targeting spacers. *acrIF4*

and *F5* were very weak, with 99.0-99.99% of phages failing to replicate, depending on

the CRISPR spacer content. We conclude that phages encoding *acrs* remain sensitive to

CRISPR-Cas immunity, suggesting that anti-CRISPR deployment and action is an

imperfect process.

The observation above identified groups of "strong" and "weak" Acr proteins. We

selected one representative from each group, and a third Acr that does not target the I-F

CRISPR system (i.e. AcrIE3), as a negative control. AcrIF1 was selected as a model

strong inhibitor, as its mechanism and binding affinity are known (Csy complex binding,

K_D = 2.5 x 10^{-11} M (Bondy-Denomy et al., 2015; Chowdhury et al., 2017)). In contrast,

AcrIF4 is a weak inhibitor that also binds the Csy complex (Bondy-Denomy et al., 2015),

but with a significantly slower on-rate and faster off-rate compared to AcrIF1 (Figure 1C,

Figure S2).

We next assessed the survival of bacterial cell populations over time, when infected with

phages that must deploy Acr proteins, but where apparently only a minority of the

population actually replicates. Phages were locked in the lytic cycle for the purpose of

this experiment, by knocking out the *C repressor* gene (*gp1*) in DMS3m$_{acrIF1,}$

DMS3m$_{acrIF4,}$ and DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$, to enable the tracking of bacterial survival over time. The

virulent (vir) phages were used to infect 5sp strains in liquid culture, and bacterial growth

measured. Given the >4 order of magnitude difference in the KD of AcrIF1 and AcrIF4

for their binding partner, we reasoned that different phage concentrations may be

required to inactivate CRISPR-Cas function. In the presence of CRISPR immunity,

bacterial death only occurred at multiplicities of infection (MOI, input plaque forming units

per colony forming unit) greater than 0.02 for the strong *acrIF1* (Figure 2A) and greater

than an MOI of 2.0 (≥10^7 PFU) for the weak *acrIF4* (Figure 2B). Despite this high MOI-

dependence, no selection or evolution of phage DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ occurred throughout the

experiment, as output phages remained as sensitive to CRISPR-Cas immunity as the

input population (Figure S3). The phage encoding *acrIE3* had no impact on bacterial

survival when faced with CRISPR immunity (Figure 2C), while in the absence of

CRISPR, phages at all concentrations cleared bacterial cultures (Figure 2D-2F). These

data demonstrate for bacterial lysis to occur, a critical phage concentration threshold

exists that is inversely proportional to Acr strength.

Lytic replication requires a critical Acr protein concentration

Concentration-dependent success of CRISPR-Cas neutralization during phage infection

could be caused by an excess of phage DNA targets that overwhelm a cell by titrating

away the Csy complexes, or by the contribution of Acr proteins from multiple phage

genomes in a single cell. To experimentally address these models, we genetically

modified phages to render them non-replicative, thus allowing the independent titration

of a subset of phages in the population. The C repressor gene (gp1) and surrounding

immunity region from phage JBD30 was introduced into DMS3m phages, generating a

hybrid phage (Figure S4A), whose replication could be prevented by the overexpression

of the JBD30 C repressor (*gp1*, Figure S4B). The JBD30 C repressor does not impact

the replication of DMS3 phages, however, as they are from different immune families

(heteroimmunity). In the presence of the JBD30 C repressor, high doses of the hybrid

phage did not replicate, confirming the efficacy of *gp1* overexpression (Figure S4C). This

enabled the mixing of two independent phage populations, where the replication of one

could be experimentally blocked, rendering it a sacrificial genome and Acr "donor". This

was used to assess the Acr concentration dependency model.

In the presence of sacrificial donor phages encoding AcrIF1, we observed a striking

contribution to CRISPR-Cas neutralization. This enabled DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$ (Figure 2G) and

DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ (Figure 2H) to replicate from input MOIs that are unsuccessful in the

absence of the donor phage (Figure 2H,2G see "buffer"). Although the input

concentration of donor phages was modest (10^6 PFU, MOI = 0.2), this enabled the

replicative phage to achieve an increase of titers by 4-5 orders of magnitude. However,

this helping effect was not observed when the replicative phage did not encode an AcrIF

protein (Figure 2I), or when the donor phage produced *acrIE3* (Figure 2H-2I).

Additionally, any potential lysogens formed by the DMS3m donor phage in this

experiment would not have amplified the replicating phage, as these lysogens remain

resistant to superinfection (Figure S4D)**.** These data demonstrate that Csy complex

titration by infecting phage genomes alone does not appear to be a significant "anti-

CRISPR" factor in the outcome of phage replication or bacterial survival. Instead, the

determinant of phage replicative success is the concentration of Acr proteins reached in

single cells, which is achievable by Acr production from independent phage genomes.

This suggests that multiple phage genomes can contribute to the "immunosuppression"

of a single host by contributing separate doses of Acr protein, potentially explaining the

observed concentration thresholds and inefficiencies observed in plaquing

measurements.

Lysogeny requires Acr proteins contributed by transient intracellular genomes

All phages encoding Acr proteins that infect *P. aeruginosa* are naturally temperate, and
can form lysogens by integrating into the bacterial genome. We therefore measured the
impact of CRISPR and Acr proteins on lysogeny establishment during a single round of
infection. While previous experiments examined cumulative phage replication in the lytic
cycle over many hours, assaying lysogen formation over a short time frame is ideal for
understanding the initial events that determine phage genome survival or cleavage.
Additionally, lysogeny provides a direct readout for phage genome survival (i.e. an
integrated prophage), while in lytic replication, phage survival leads to a dead cell that
cannot be recovered. For these experiments, we selected the weak AcrIF4 protein as it
provided the largest dynamic range of inefficiency in a single round of infection.
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We generated derivatives of DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ and DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ marked with a gentamicin
resistance cassette at the end of the genome, replacing a nonessential gene, *gp52*. This
allowed the independent titration of two distinct replication-competent phage populations
and the selection and analysis of stable lysogens after the experiment. These phages
were used to infect ΔCRISPR cells (0sp) for a time span less than a single round of
infection (50 minutes, Figure S5), and the number of gentamicin resistant lysogens was
assessed. In the absence of CRISPR selection, a linear increase in the number of
lysogens with increasing MOI was observed, over ~4 orders of magnitude (Figure 3A-
3B, circles). In the presence of spacers targeting DMS3m (5sp), CRISPR reduced the
efficiency of lysogeny (EOL, compared to 0sp) for the weak *acr* phage DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$, to
such a degree that lysogeny was undetectable at low MOIs, and impaired by 100-1000-
fold at higher MOIs (Figure 3A, triangles). DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ demonstrated concentration
dependence for successful lysogeny, with EOL values below or at the limit of detection
for lower MOIs, increasing to EOL = 0.01 at higher MOIs (Figure 3C). Phage
DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ formed no lysogens at all input concentrations tested, demonstrating that
Acr-mediated immune suppression is required to establish lysogeny (Figure 3B, 3D).
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We hypothesized that Acr concentration dependence for CRISPR neutralization during
lysogeny could also be explained by phage cooperation, and that below threshold
concentrations of DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ could be rescued by the addition of Acr donor phages *in*
trans. To test this hypothesis, we infected the 5sp strain with a mixture of 10^3 LFU
DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ *gp52::gent* and 10^7 PFU of unmarked Acr donor phages, and measured the
EOL of DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ *gp52::gent*. The EOL of DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ *gp52::gent* increased by 2

orders of magnitude with Acr donor phage DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$, while DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ donor phage

increased EOL by 1 order of magnitude (Figure 3E). No such increase in lysogeny was

observed for a phage without an *acrIF* gene, DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ *gp52::gent* (Figure 3F). The

addition of Acr donor phages DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$, or an escaper phage DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$* had no

effect on the EOL of the marked DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ phage, demonstrating that the donor

phage must be an Acr-producer.

To determine the specific mechanism of anti-CRISPR donation leading to survival

DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ *gp52::gent*, we used the resulting lysogens as a genetic record of infection

success for both the marked phage and the unmarked phage. This family of Mu-like

phages integrates randomly into the host genome, and therefore strains with multiple

prophages are possible (Bondy-Denomy et al., 2016). We assayed the lysogens

resulting from the experiment described above for the presence of the donor phage

genome in addition to the DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ *gp52::gent* prophage. All resulting lysogens tested

(n=48) possessed only the marked prophage, with none possessing the Acr donor

prophage (Figure S6). This demonstrates that the transient presence of the Acr donor

phage genome (i.e. no lysogeny) in the same cell was sufficient to generate enough Acr

protein to protect the marked phage, leading to the establishment of lysogens that would

not exist if not for the Acr donor (Figure 3E, compare "buffer" to "IF1"). The only time rare

double lysogens were isolated, was when the marked phage DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ *gp52::gent*

was used with the unmarked DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$ Acr donor phage (Figure 3F), since the

prophage encoding *acrIE3* would be unable to neutralize CRISPR-Cas after lysogenic

establishment and long-lasting protection from the donor prophage was required.

Collectively, these data are consistent with a model where the production of Acr proteins

from a transient phage genome prior to its cleavage generates an immunosuppressed

cell that can be successfully parasitized by another phage upon re- or co-infection(s).

Stoichiometric inhibitors of Cas9 required bacteriophage cooperation

The intrinsic inefficiency of stoichiometric inhibitors is likely due to the requirement for

the rapid synthesis of a high concentration of inhibitors before phage genome cleavage.

To determine whether this model generally applies to other stoichiometric inhibitors of

bacterial immunity, we engineered a *P. aeruginosa* strain to express the Cas9 protein

from *Streptococcus pyogenes* (SpyCas9) and a DMS3m phage to express a previously

identified Cas9 inhibitor, AcrIIA4 (Dong et al., 2017; Rauch et al., 2017). With this

entirely heterologous system, we again observed inefficiency for a phage relying on an
Acr protein. Spot-titration of phage lysates on a strain expressing a single guide RNA
(sgRNA) targeting DMS3m decreased the titer of DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ by many orders of
magnitude, while DMS3m$_{acrIIA4}$ was protected (Figure 4A). However, quantification of the
efficiency of plaquing again revealed that relying on an Acr protein for replication is
imperfect, with an EOP = 0.4 (Figure 4B). In lytic replication infection experiments,
DMS3m$_{acrIIA4}$ displayed concentration-dependent bacterial lysis in the presence of
CRISPR targeting (Figure 4C), while infection with DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ did not affect bacterial
growth (Figure 4D). In the absence of CRISPR-Cas targeting, however, both phages
killed their hosts at all phage concentrations tested (Figure 4E, 4F). To determine
whether this concentration dependence for Cas9 inhibition was also a result of
insufficient intracellular Acr dose, a non-replicative hybrid DMS3m$_{AcrIIA4}$ phage was
generated and used as a donor during infection. Indeed, increased delivery of AcrIIA4 to
cells allowed DMS3m$_{acrIIA4}$ to replicated robustly from a concentration that was previously
unsuccessful (Figure 4G), demonstrating phage cooperation to neutralize CRISPR-
Cas9. Unlike CRISPR-Cas3 experiments described previously, where 5 spacers were
targeted to the DMS3m phage, here a single spacer sequence was used, which allowed
for phage escape mutations to occur. Because of this, we observed that DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$
could also be helped by increased doses of AcrIIA4 from the phage population (Figure
4H), likely protecting the genome *in trans*, enabling escaper evolution.

DISCUSSION
Here we demonstrate that the necessary intracellular concentration of an anti-immunity
protein to achieve inactivation of cellular immunity depends on the relative strengths of
both the inhibitor and the immunity pathway, which dictates the number of infecting
viruses required in the population. We conclude that a single cell can become
immunosuppressed by anti-immune protein contributions from independent infection
events. In the absence of viral replication, these infection events serve to contribute to
the inactivation of cellular immunity, thus enhancing the probability of successful
infection events in the future (Figure 5). We expect that cooperation of this sort is
necessary when the immune process acts rapidly and irreversibly on the infecting viral
genome, as CRISPR-Cas immunity does.

The ability of phages to replicate in the lytic cycle or establish lysogens is impacted
dramatically by the number of phages in the population. To demonstrate phage-phage
cooperation for the deployment of Acr proteins, three distinct genetic strategies were
used, allowing the independent titration of phages encoding a defined Acr protein: i) non-
replicative Acr donor phages, ii) marked and unmarked phages to follow the fate of only
one phage, and iii) the prophage status of lysogens, as a genetic record of phage
success. By restricting the replication of a subset of phages, we could track the lytic
replication of a low-dose of wild-type phages in the presence of DNA target or Acr
donors to determine the molecular determinants of density-dependent phage replication.
In contrast, the prophage acquisition experiment allows a more natural scenario, where
all phages are capable of replication, but an antibiotic resistance marker allows us to
track the outcome of one phage genotype, starting from a concentration below its
threshold for successful lysogeny. This demonstrated that wild-type Acr-donor phages in
the population contribute to cellular immunosuppression, enabling the formation of
lysogens that did not occur in their absence. The presence of only a single, marked
prophage in the bacterial genome proves that the donor phage neither entered the lytic
cycle (this would kill the cell), nor lysogenized (prophage would be present), but had
been present in the cell transiently.

The key result here is the observation that phages can remodel their host cell, even in
the absence of a replicating or integrated genome. It has long been known that
integrated prophages modulate host phenotypes via gene expression, including
superinfection exclusion, toxin production, and the production of Acr proteins (Bondy-
Denomy et al., 2013; Bondy-Denomy and Davidson, 2014; Bondy-Denomy et al., 2016;
Waldor and Mekalanos, 1996; Weigle and Delbruck, 1951). Although less commonly
described, there is also precedent for lytic phages to impact an interaction with other
phages during replication. The Imm protein produced by the phage T4 prevents other
phages in the environment from infecting the cell that one phage is currently replicating
within (Lu and Henning, 1989). This has been attributed to preventing superinfection and
the potential disruption of the carefully timed phage replication cycle. This supports a
conclusion that co- and/or re-infections are a common occurrence in nature. However,
here, we propose a new model of phage-induced host remodeling, whereby a transient-
unsuccessful infection produces proteins that inactivate defense, enabling future

infections. This altruism would be evolutionarily advantageous to phage clones within the
population, where all are providing Acr proteins to neutralize CRISPR.

A distinct, but notable observation from this work is that not all Acr proteins operate at
equivalent strengths. However, encoding even a weak inhibitor (e.g. AcrIF4). still
provides a significant advantage to the phage, compared to lacking them entirely. We
show that AcrIF4 binds the Csy complex with affinities that are orders of magnitude
weaker than Acr proteins like AcrIF1. We selected AcrIF1 as a model strong Acr protein
because of its comparable mechanism of action to AcrIF4 (i.e. Csy complex binding),
and consider it representative of other strong Acr proteins (AcrIF2, F3, F6, F7), based on
EOP data. Going forward, we speculate that the strongest Acr proteins would be
enzymatic in nature, allowing rapid and efficient inactivation of CRISPR complexes in a
sub-stoichiometric manner, although no such Acr mechanism has been discovered.
While not an enzyme, the recent demonstration of the AcrIIC3 protein inactivating two
Cas9 proteins at the same time would likely be a more efficient path towards CRISPR
neutralization (Harrington et al., 2017).

The challenge of neutralizing a pre-expressed CRISPR-Cas system likely explains why
stoichiometric inhibitors like Acr proteins are imperfect, and phages relying on them are
partially targeted by CRISPR. The sacrificial, population-level aspect of CRISPR
inhibition is reminiscent of the manifestations of CRISPR adaptation in populations of
bacterial cells. The majority of infected naïve host cells die, before a clone with a new
spacer emerges (Barrangou et al., 2007; Hynes et al., 2014). In the case of anti-
immunity, many phages die in order to inhibit CRISPR on a single cell level, and this
must happen at sufficient frequency within an ecosystem for phage to prevail. We
suspect that this mechanism of cellular immunosuppression and inter-parasite
cooperation may have parallels in other host-pathogen interactions, where concentration
dependence manifests at predictable levels due the strengths of immune and anti-
immune processes.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
Figures S1-S6 are provided separately.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

A.L.B. and J.B.D. designed experiments and wrote the manuscript. A.L.B. engineered

phage variants and conducted all experiments with the exception of binding affinity

measurements. J.Y.Z. assisted with experimental design and execution, phage

engineering, and data collection. B.A.O. built the Cas9 strain in *Pseudomonas*

aeruginosa. J.B.D. supervised experiments. M.R. conducted Acr binding affinity

measurements under the supervision of B.W. All authors contributed to data analysis

and edited the manuscript.

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FIGURE LEGENDS

Figure 1. Anti-CRISPRs are imperfect CRISPR-Cas inhibitors

(A) Efficiency of plaquing (EOP) of 5 related phages bearing distinct *acrIF* genes

(JBD30$_{acrIF1}$, MP29$_{acrIF2}$, JBD88a$_{acrIF3}$, JBD24$_{acrIF4}$, LPB1$_{acrIF7}$) on *Pseudomonas*

aeruginosa strain PA14. Plaque forming units (PFUs) were quantified on wild-type PA14

with 1-2 natural targeting spacers (WT + pEmpty) or on PA14 overexpressing 1 targeting

spacer (WT + pSp1), then normalized to the number of PFUs measured on a non-

targeting PA14 derivative (0sp). Data are represented as the mean of 3 biological

replicates +/- SD.

(B) EOP of isogenic DMS3m phages with *acrIF1-7* or *acrIE3* in the DMS3m *acr* locus.

EOP was calculated as PFU counts measured on WT PA14 with 1 targeting spacer

(1sp) or a laboratory evolved PA14 derivative with 5 targeting spacers (5sp) normalized

to PFU counts measured on non-targeting PA14 (0sp). Data are represented as the

mean of 3 biological replicates +/- SD. ND, not detectable.

(C) Plot of association (Ka) and dissociation (Kd) rates for AcrIF1 (data adapted from

Chowdhury et al. 2017) and AcrIF4 binding the PA14 Csy complex. See Figure S2 for

SPR AcrIF4 sensogram.

Figure 2. Anti-CRISPR success requires cooperative infections during lytic growth

(A-F) 12 h growth curves of *P. aeruginosa* strain PA14 with 5 targeting spacers

(+CRISPR, panels **A-C**) or no CRISPR-Cas function (ΔCRISPR, **D-F**) infected with

virulent variants of DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$, DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$, or DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ at multiplicity of infection

(MOI) increasing in 10-fold steps from $2x10^{-5}$ to $2x10^{1}$ (rainbow colors) or uninfected

(black). Colors correspond to the MOI legend and growth curves. OD600 is represented

as the mean of 3 biological replicates +/- SD. ND, not detectable.

(G-I) Replication of virulent DMS3m$_{acr}$ phages (target phage) in the presence of 10^{6} PFU

(MOI 0.2) hybrid phage (donor) in PA14 with 5 targeting spacers expressing the JBD30

C-repressor. Phages were harvested after 24 hours of co-culture and DMS3m$_{acr}$ phage

PFUs were quantified on PA14 0sp expressing the JBD30 C repressor. Phage output is

represented as the mean of 3 biological replicates +/- SD. ND, not detectable.

Figure 3. Immunosuppression facilitates acquisition of a marked prophage

(**A,B**) Acquisition of marked DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ or DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ prophage by PA14 with 0

spacers (0 sp, circles) or 5 targeting spacers (5 sp, triangles). This experiment was

performed in biological triplicate, and individual replicate values are displayed. LoD, limit

of detection.

(**C,D**) Efficiency of lysogeny (EOL) of DMS3m$_{acrIF4\ gp52::gentR}$ and

DMS3m$_{acrIE3\ gp52::gentR}$ in the presence of CRISPR targeting. EOL was calculated by

dividing the output lysogens forming units (LFUs) from the strain with 5 targeting spacers

(5sp) to the number of LFUs in PA14 with 0 targeting spacers (0sp). Data are

represented as the mean of 3 biological replicates +/- SD. ND, not detectable.

(**E,F**) EOL of 10^{3} LFUs of DMS3m$_{acrIF4\ gp52::gentR}$ and DMS3m$_{acrIE3\ gp52::gentR}$ in the presence

of 10^{7} PFU of the indicated DMS3m$_{acr}$ phage. Data are represented as the mean of 3

biological replicates +/- SD. ND, not detectable. See Figure S6 for lysogen genetic

analysis.

Figure 4. Cas9 anti-CRISPR AcrIIA4 requires cooperative infection to neutralize

Type II-A CRISPR immunity

(A) 10-fold serial dilutions of DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ or DMS3m$_{acrIIA4}$ plated on a lawn of

Pseudomonas aeruginosa strain PAO1 expressing *Streptococcus pyogenes* Type II-A

Cas9 (PAO1::SpyCas9) and single guide RNA (+ sgRNA) or non-targeting control (+

vector).

(B) Efficiency of plaquing of DMS3m$_{acrIIA4}$ and DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ was calculated by normalizing

PFU counts on a targeting strain of PAO1::SpyCas9 (+sgRNA) to PFU counts on a non-

targeting strain of PAO1::SpyCas9 (+vector). Data are represented as the mean of 3

biological replicates +/- SD. ND, not detectable.

(C-F) 12 hour growth curves of PAO1::spyCas9 expressing a targeting sgRNA (+

sgRNA, panels **C-D**) or a non-targeting vector control (+vector, E-F) that were infected

with virulent DMS3m$_{acrIIA4}$ or DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ at multiplicities of infection (MOI, rainbow

colors) from $2x10^{-5}$ to $2x10^{-2}$. Growth curves of uninfected cells are shown in black.

OD600 values are represented as the mean of 3 biological replicates +/- SD.

(G-H) Replication of virulent DMS3m$_{acr}$ phages (target phage) in the presence of 10^7

PFU (MOI 2) hybrid phage (donor) in PAO1::SpyCas9 + sgRNA expressing the JBD30

C-repressor. Phages were harvested after 24 hours and DMS3m$_{acr}$ phage PFUs

quantified on PAO1::SpyCas9 + vector expressing the JBD30 C repressor. Phage output

is represented as the mean of 3 biological replicates +/- SD. ND, not detectable.

Figure 5. Phage cooperation to supress CRISPR-Cas immunity

Left: Failed infections generate an immunosuppressed cell. While the phage genome

may be cleaved (dashed red line), Acr protein (small cyan circles) will be produced,

binding to some CRISPR-Cas complexes (larger purple structures, with crRNA). *Right:*

At low parasite density, it is unlikely the cell will be re-infected and the host will survive.

As high parasite density, the likelihood that the immunosuppressed cell with be re-

infected is higher. Co- or re-infection will lead to successful parasite replication and

amplification of the infectious population.

SUPPLEMENTAL FIGURE LEGENDS

Figure S1. Engineering DMS3m$_{acr}$ phages

(A) Schematic of two *acr* locus architectures used to generate an isogenic family of

DMS3m$_{acr}$ phages.

(B) Efficiency of plaquing (EOP) of DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$ with natural or synthetic locus

architecture on PA14 with 1 or 5 targeting spacers (1sp and 5 sp). Data are represented

as the mean of 3 biological replicates +/- SD.

(C) Table of DMS3m$_{acr}$ phage genotype and locus architecture, as well as the original

source of the *acr* gene and the corresponding accession number of the Acr protein.

Figure S2. Sensograms of AcrIF4 and AcrIF1 binding the Csy complex

(A) Sensogram showing real-time binding of increasing concentrations of free AcrIF4

(1.85 nM, 55.6 nM, 167 nM, 500 nM, 1.5 µM) to immobilized Csy complex. A model

describing Langmuir binding (black line) was fit to the data to calculate binding constants

(Ka, Kd, and KD; boxed inset).

(B) Sensogram showing real-time binding of increasing concentrations of free AcrIF1

(1.85 nM, 55.6nM, 167 nM, 500 nM, 1.5 µM) to immobilized Csy complex. A model

describing binding at a 2:1 stoichiometry of free analyte:immobilized ligand (black line)

was fit to the data to calculate binding constants (Ka1, Ka2,

Kd1, Kd2, and KD1, KD2; boxed inset) (Chowdhury and et al. 2017).

Figure S3. Output phages from Figure 1B are CRISPR sensitive

Efficiency of plaquing (EOP) of the original stock of virulent DMS3macr$_{IF4}$ (input) on

PA14 5 sp compared to EOP of DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ harvested from high MOI infections (MOI 2,

MOI 20 output) from figure 2B. Data are represented as the mean of 3 biological

replicates +/- SD.

Figure S4. Generating and validating Hybrid$_{acr}$ phages

(A) 10-fold serial dilutions of DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ and JBD30$_{acrIF1}$ spotted on lawns of non-

targeting (0sp) *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* PA14 expressing the DMS3m C repressor

(*gp1-DMS3m*), the JBD30 C repressor (*gp1-JBD30*) or a vector control.

(B) 10-fold serial dilutions of hybrid DMS3m$_{acrIE3\ gp1-JBD30}$ plated on lawns of non-targeting

(0sp) *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* PA14 expressing the DMS3m C repressor (*gp1-*

DMS3m), the JBD30 C repressor (*gp1-JBD30*), or a spacer which uniquely targets

JBD30 (2sp17).

(C) Hybrid phage (Hybrid$_{acrIF1}$ or Hybrid$_{acrIE3}$) harvested from infections of PA14 5sp

expressing the JBD30 C repressor from experiments shown in Figure 2G-I. Hybrid PFUs

were quantified on the 0sp PA14 strain. Data are represented as the mean of 3

biological replicates +/- SD.

(D) 10-fold serial dilutions of JBD30$_{acrIF1}$ or virulent DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ spotted on lawns of

PA14 Δ$csy3$ or PA14 Δ$csy3$ lysogenized with Hybrid$_{acrIE3}$ or Hybrid$_{acrIF1}$. Despite being

heteroimmune with respect to DMS3, the DMS3 phage is unable to replicate well on this

lysogens due to other superinfection exclusion properties of DMS3.

Figure S5. Timecourse of lysogen formation

Time course of acquisition of gentamicin-resistance marked DMS3m$_{acrIFI\ gp52::gentR}$

prophage by a non-targeting (0 sp) strain of PA14, labeled with estimates of each

infectious cycle (Rounds 1-3). Data are represented as the mean of 3 biological

replicates +/- SD.

Figure S6. Prophage content of lysogens from Figure 3E-F

(A) 10-fold serial dilutions of supernatant harvested from overnight cultures of lysogens

from Figure 3E (1-48) and 3F (49-51), spotted on a non-targeting (0 sp) strain of PA14. A

faint clearing corresponds to induction of the gentamicin marked phage, while strong

plaquing (i.e. 50, 51) reflects the presence of the gentamicin marked phage and the

donor phage.

(**B**) PCR of genomic DNA harvested from harvested from overnight cultures of lysogens

from Figure 3E (1-48) and 3F (49-51) amplified with primers targeting $gp52$-$DMS3m$ (top) or

the gentamicin resistance cassette used to replace $gp52$ in $DMS3m_{acr\ gp52::gentR}$ derivatives

(bottom).

METHODS

Strains and growth conditions

Pseudomonas aeruginosa strains (UCBPP-PA14, PAO1) and *Escherichia coli* strains

were cultured on lysogeny broth (LB) agar or liquid media at 37C. LB was supplemented

with gentamicin (50 µg/mL for *P. aeruginosa*, 30 µg/mL for *E. coli*) to maintain the

pHERD30T plasmid or carbenicillin (250 µg/mL for *P. aeruginosa*, 100 µg/mL for *E. coli*)

to maintain pHERD20T or pMMBHE. To maintain pHERD30T and pMMBHE in the same

strain of *P. aeruginosa*, double selection of 30 µg/mL gentamicin and 100 µg/mL

carbenicillin was employed. In all *P. aeruginosa* experiments, expression from

pHERD20/30T was induced with 0.1%

PAO1 SpyCas9 expression strain
SpyCas9 expressed from the P_{LAC} promoter of pUC18T-mini-Tn7T-Gm was integrated
into the *P. aeruginosa* strain PAO1 chromosome by electroporation and Flp-mediated
marker excision as previously described (Choi and Schweizer, 2006). To generate the
heterologous Type II-A PAO1 strain the PAO1-attTn7::pUC18T-miniTn7T-P_{LAC}-SpyCas9
strain was transformed with pBAO72 (pMMB67HE-P_{LAC}-sgRNA) by electroporation. In all
experiments with this strain, SpyCas9 and the sgRNA were induced with 1mM IPTG.

Construction of recombinant DMS3m$_{acr}$ phages
DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$ was generated as in (Bondy-Denomy et al., 2013) by infecting cells
containing a recombination plasmid bearing JBD30 genes 34-38 (the anti-CRISPR locus
with large flanking regions). JBD30 naturally carries *acrIF1* and has high genetic
similarity to DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$, permitting for the selection of recombinant DMS3m phage
which had acquired *acrIF1*. To generate the extended panel of DMS3m$_{acr}$ phages in this
work, recombination cassettes were generated with regions from up and downstream the
anti-CRISPR genes from JBD30 Gibson assembled to flank the *acr* gene of interest on
pHERD20T or pHERD30T (see S1 for *acr* gene sources and exact details of *acr* locus
architecture). Recombinant phages were generated by infecting cells bearing these
recombination substrates. DMS3m$_{acr}$ phages were screened for their ability to resist
CRISPR targeting, and the insertion of the anti-CRISPR gene was confirmed by PCR.
Virulent derivatives of DMS3m$_{acr}$ phages were constructed by deleting gp1 (C repressor)
using materials and methods from Cady et al., 2012.

Construction of DMS3m$_{acr\ gp52::GentR}$ phages
A recombination substrate with a gentamicin resistance cassette flanked by homology
arms matching the DMS3m genome up and downstream of gp52 (450 bp and 260 bp,
respectively) was assembled into pHERD20T using Gibson assembly. This
recombination cassette was transformed into PA14 ΔCRISPR lysogenized with either
DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ or DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$.These transformed lysogens were grown under gentamicin
selection for 16 h, then sub-cultured 1:100 into LB with gentamicin and 0.2 µg/mL
mitomycin C to induce the DMS3m$_{acr}$ prophage. Supernatants were harvested after 24
hours of induction, and used to infect PA14 ΔCRISPR for 24 h. These cells were then
plated on gentamicin plates to select for cells that had acquired a prophage bearing the
gentamicin resistance cassette, and gentamicin resistant lysogens were then re-induced
with 0.2 µg/mL mitomycin C to recover the recombinant phage.

Construction of DMS3m$_{acr\ gp1-JBD30}$ (Hybrid$_{acr}$) phages
DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ and JBD30$_{acrIE3}$ were used to co-infect PA14 ΔCRISPR and the infected
cells were mixed with molten top agar and poured onto solid plates. After 24 hours of
growth at 30C, the phages were harvested by flooding the plate with SM buffer and
collecting and clarifying the supernatant. Phages were then used to infect PA14
ΔCRISPR expressing the DMS3 C repressor from pHERD30T, and the infections were
mixed with molten top agar and poured onto solid plates. After 24 hours of growth at 30
ºC, individual plaques with DMS3 morphology were picked, purified 3x by passage in
PA14 ΔCRISPR and screened as shown in Figure S4B.

Phage (PFU) quantification
Phage plaque forming units (PFU) were quantified by mixed 10µl of phage at a with 150
µl of an overnight culture of host bacteria. The infection mixture was incubate at 37 ºC
for 10 minutes to promote phage adsorption, then mixed with 3 mLs molten top agar and

675 spread on an LB agar plate supplemented with 10 mM MgSO$_4$. After 16 hours of growth
676 30 ºC, PFUs were quantified.
677
678 **Phage titering**
679 A bacterial lawn was generated by spreading 3 mLs of top agar seeded with 150 µl of
680 host bacteria on a LB agar plate supplemented with 10 mM MgSO$_4$. 3 µl of phage
681 serially diluted in SM buffer was then spotted onto the lawn, and incubated at 30 ºC for
682 16 hours.
683
Measurement of anti-CRISPR binding kinetics by surface plasmon resonance
Purified Csy complex was covalently immobilized by amine coupling to the surface of a
carboxymethyldextran-modified (CM5) sensor chip. Purified 6his-tagged AcrIF4 was
injected into the buffer flow in increasing concentrations (1.85 nM, 55.6 nM, 167 nM, 500
nM, 1.5 uM), and Csy complex-AcrIF4 binding events were recorded in real time.
Experiments were conducted at 37°C, in 20 mM HEPES pH 7.5, 100 mM KCl, 1mM
TCEP, 0.005% Tween. Data were fit with a model describing Langmuir binding (i.e. 1:1
binding between free analyte and immobilized ligand). Kinetic rate constants were
calculated using Biacore evaluation software (GE).
693
Liquid culture phage infections
Liquid culture phage infections and growth curves were performed by infecting 140 µl of
P. aeruginosa 1:100 diluted overnights cultured in LB supplemented with 10 mM MgSO4
and antibiotics and inducer in a 96 well costar plate with 10 µl of phage diluted in SM
buffer. These infections proceeded for 24 hours in a BioTek Synergy microplate reader
at 37 ºC with continuous shaking. After 24 hours, phage was extracted treating each
sample with chloroform followed by centrifugation at 21,000 x g for 2 minutes.
701
Lysogen acquisition and induction
Overnight cultures of PA14 were subcultured at 1:100 for ~3 hours (OD$_{600nm}$ = 0.3) in LB
supplemented with 10 mM MgSO4. 1 mL of cells were then infected with 10 µl DMS3m$_{acr}$
$_{gp52::GentR}$ and incubated for 50 minutes at 37 ºC, shaking at 100 rpm. The sample was
then treated with a 10% volume of 10X gentamicin, spun down at 8,000xg, and
resuspended in 200 ul of LB with 50 µg/mL gentamicin. 100 ul of sample was then plated
(after further dilution, if required) on gentamicin selection plates and incubated at 37 ºC.
To analyze the lysogens, the resulting colonies were grown for 16 hours in LB + 10 mM
MgSO4 (no selection), the supernatants harvested, and serial dilutions spotted onto a
lawn of PA14 ΔCRISPR. Crude genomic DNA for PCR analysis was harvested from the
lysogens by boiling 10 µl of culture in 0.02% SDS for 10 minutes.
713
714 **Lysogen PCR**
715 PCR amplification of 2 µl of crude genomic DNA harvested from lysogens was used to
716 screen for the presence of *DMS3m-gp52* and *gentR* using MyTaq (Bioline) polymerase
717 with MyTaq GC buffer under standard conditions.
718

Figure 1

Figure 2

Input phage MOI
- 2 x 10^{-5}
- 2 x 10^{-4}
- 2 x 10^{-3}
- 2 x 10^{-2}
- 2 x 10^{-1}
- 2 x 10^{0}
- 2 x 10^{1}

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5

Supplementary Figure 1

A

B

C DMS3m$_{acr}$ phages

Phage	DMS3m$_{acr}$ architecture	*acr* gene source	Acr Accession
DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ (parent phage, no manipulation)	natural	DMS3m (gp30)	WP_003723290.1
DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$	natural	JBD30 (gp35)	YP_007392342.1
DMS3m$_{acrIF2}$	natural	MP29 (gp29)	YP_002332454.1
DMS3m$_{acrIF3}$	natural	JBD88a (gp33)	YP_007392440.1
DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$	natural	JBD26 (gp37)	WP_016068584.1
DMS3m$_{acrIF5}$	synthetic	JBD5 (gp36)	YP_007392740.1
DMS3m$_{acrIF6}$	synthetic	*Pseudomonas aeruginosa* strain PSE05 (prophage)	WP_043884810.1
DMS3m$_{acrIF7}$	natural	LPB1 (gp29)	YP_009146150.1
DMS3m$_{acrIIA4}$	synthetic	*Listeria monocytogenes* J0161 (prophage)	WP_003723290.1

Supplementary Figure 2

A

Supplementary Figure 3

A

Supplementary Figure 4

A

DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$
JBD30$_{acrIF1}$

0sp + vector   0sp + *gp1-DMS3m*   0sp + *gp1-JBD30*

B

DMS3m$_{acrIE3, gp1-JBD30}$

0sp + *gp1-DMS3m*

0sp + *gp1-JBD30*

0sp + *2sp17*

C

Hybrid ouput PFUs

arIF4
(Figure 1B)

Output phage
(log10 PFU)

Hybrid$_{acrIF1}$ Hybrid$_{acrIE3}$

D

JBD30$_{acrIF1}$
DMS3m$_{acrIE3\ vir}$

Δcsy3   Δcsy3
[Hybrid$_{acrIE3}$]
Lysogen   Δcsy3
[Hybrid$_{acrIF1}$]
Lysogen

Supplementary Figure 5

A

Supplementary Figure 6

A

DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ *gp52::gm* + DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$ (1-24)

DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ *gp52::gm* + DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ 25-48)

DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ *gp52::gm* + DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$ 49-51)

B

Primers against gp52 (product = 155 bp)

Primers against gentR cassette (product = 204 bp)

Ladder: NEB 100 bp ladder
Samples 1-24:
DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ *gp52::gentR* + DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$
Samples 25-48:
DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ *gp52::gentR* + DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$
Samples 49-51:
DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$ *gp52::gentR* + DMS3m$_{acrIF1}$
Sample 52: PA14 5sp gDNA
Sample 53: Buffer
Sample 54: DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$ *gp52::gentR*
Sample 55: DMS3m$_{acrIE3}$

Plasmid table:

Plasmid	Backbone	Purpose
CR2sp17-OE	pHERD 30T	crRNA overexpression
CR2sp20-OE	pHERD 30T	crRNA overexpression
acrF2-flip	pHERD 30T	generating DMS3m$_{acrIF2}$
acrF3-flip	pHERD 30T	generating DMS3m$_{acrIF3}$
acrF4-flip	pHERD 30T	generating DMS3m$_{acrIF4}$
acrF5-synthetic-flip	pHERD 30T	generating DMS3m$_{acrIF5}$
acrF6-synthetic-flip	pHERD 30T	generating DMS3m$_{acrIF6}$
acrF7-flip	pHERD 30T	generating DMS3m$_{acrIF7}$
acrIIA4-synthetic-flip	pHERD 30T	generating DMS3m$_{acrIIA4}$
gp52::gentR-flip	pHERD 20T	generating DMS3m$_{acr\ gp52::gentR}$
gp1-JBD30	pHERD 20T and 30T	C repressor (JBD30) overexpression
gp1-DMS3	pHERD 20T and 30T	C repressor (DMS3) overexpression
sgRNA-DMS3	pMMBHE	DMS3m targeting with SpyCas9
SpyCas9- pLac	pUC18T-mini-Tn7T-Gm	Insertion of SpyCas9 into the PAO1 tn7 site