Th22 cells are a major contributor to the mycobacterial CD4+ T cell 1 response and are depleted during HIV infection 2 3 4 Rubina Bunjun^{1,2}, Fidilia M.A. Omondi^{1,2}, Mohau S. Makatsa^{1,2}, Tracey L. Müller^{1,2}, Caryn 5 S.L. Prentice^{1,2}, Robert J. Wilkinson^{1,3,4,5,6}, Catherine Riou^{1,2,3}, Wendy A. Burgers^{1,2,3} 6 7 8 ¹Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine, ²Department of Pathology, and 9 ³Wellcome Centre for Infectious Diseases Research in Africa, University of Cape Town, 10 11 Observatory, 7925, South Africa; ⁴Department of Medicine, University of Cape Town, 12 Observatory, 7925, South Africa; ⁵Department of Medicine, Imperial College London, W12 0NN, United Kingdom; ⁶The Francis Crick Institute, London NW1 1AT, United Kingdom. 13

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41 **ABSTRACT**

42 HIV-1 infection substantially increases the risk of developing tuberculosis (TB). Some 43 mechanisms, such as defects in the Th1 response to Mycobacterium tuberculosis (M.tb) in 44 HIV-infected individuals have been widely reported. However, Th1-independent mechanisms 45 also contribute to protection against TB. To identify a broader spectrum of defects in TB 46 immunity during HIV infection, we examined IL-17 and IL-22 production in response to 47 mycobacterial antigens in individuals with latent TB infection (LTBI) and HIV co-infection. 48 Upon stimulating with mycobacterial antigens, we observed a distinct CD4+ T helper lineage 49 producing IL-22 in the absence of IL-17 and IFN-Y. Th22 cells were present at high 50 frequencies in response to mycobacterial antigens in blood and contributed up to 50% to the 51 CD4+ T cell response to mycobacteria, comparable in magnitude to the IFN- γ Th1 response 52 (median 0.91% and 0.55%, respectively). Phenotypic characterization of Th22 cells revealed 53 that their memory differentiation was similar to *M.tb*-specific Th1 cells (*i.e.* predominantly 54 early-differentiated CD45RO+CD27+ phenotype). Moreover, CCR6 and CXCR3 expression 55 profiles of Th22 cells were similar to Th17 cells, while their CCR4 and CCR10 expression 56 patterns displayed an intermediate phenotype between Th1 and Th17 cells. Strikingly, 57 mycobacterial IL-22 responses were three-fold lower in HIV-infected individuals compared 58 to uninfected individuals, and the magnitude of responses correlated inversely with HIV viral 59 load. These data provide important insights into mycobacteria-specific T helper subsets and 60 suggest a potential role for IL-22 in protection against TB during HIV infection. Further 61 studies are needed to fully elucidate the role of IL-22 in protective TB immunity.

62 **INTRODUCTION**

63

Tuberculosis (TB) is the leading cause of death from an infectious agent, claiming 1.6 64 65 million lives in 2017, with 10 million new TB cases that year (1). This considerable burden 66 of disease, along with a host of challenges in diagnosing, treating and managing TB, 67 emphasize its significance as a global health threat. Although TB is curable and successful 68 treatment outcomes are typically >80%, cure is achieved less frequently with drug 69 resistant TB (56%), and outcomes during HIV co-infection are worse (2). Importantly, 70 cure does not lead to protection from re-infection or disease reactivation. HIV-infected 71 persons are particularly vulnerable to developing TB, with an estimated increase in risk of 72 20-30 fold (3). The widespread introduction of ART has coincided with only a modest 73 decline in TB in regions most affected by HIV (4), as TB risk still remains elevated in 74 HIV-infected persons compared to HIV-uninfected persons, despite immune 75 reconstitution (5).

76 The development of an effective TB vaccine is hampered by a lack of 77 understanding of correlates of immune protection (6), particularly the functional and 78 phenotypic characteristics of effector T cells that mediate control of Mycobacterium 79 tuberculosis (M.tb), and how this immune response might be balanced by 80 immunoregulatory T cell populations to limit inflammation and avoid pathology. The 81 recent demonstration of the first candidate TB vaccine capable of protecting adults from 82 pulmonary TB with an efficacy of 54% (7), provides the field with an opportunity to 83 define correlates of vaccine protection, and has the potential to uncover unique insights 84 into immunological control of TB.

TB and HIV co-infection presents us with a further prospect to improve our understanding of the mechanisms of immune control of *M.tb*, by identifying how HIV

renders the immune response to *M.tb* defective, leading to increased risk of TB disease. CD4+ T cells and specifically the Th1/IFN- γ response to *M.tb* are critical for protective immunity to TB (8). Most studies of HIV-TB co-infection focus on Th1 immunity, and have demonstrated depletion or dysfunction of *M.tb*-specific Th1 responses in both blood (9–12) and the airways (13–15) during HIV infection.

92 However, there is evidence of a role for IFN- γ -independent mechanisms in immune 93 control of TB (16) that may also contribute to, or synergize with, Th1 responses to TB. 94 Recently, we characterized the profile of Th subsets specific for *M.tb* using lineage-defining 95 transcription factors, revealing the broad spectrum of Th subsets involved in mycobacterial 96 immunity, demonstrating that the inflammatory environment associated with HIV infection 97 skewed these profiles (17). Th17 cells form part of this spectrum of *M.tb*-specific Th 98 responses, and are believed to play an important role in immune protection from TB (18). 99 Suppression of Th17-related genes was recently shown to be associated with progression 100 to TB disease in *M.tb*-infected adolescents (19). In line with this, *M.tb*-specific IL-17-101 producing CD4+ T cells were significantly depleted in HIV-infected individuals from a 102 TB-endemic area, compared to HIV-uninfected individuals (20).

103 Whilst IL-17 responses in *M.tb* immunity have been relatively well-studied (21-26), 104 IL-22 responses have been overlooked in part due to their classification as a Th17 cytokine 105 from studies in mice (27). In humans, however, IL-22 is produced by a distinct subset of 106 CD4+ T cells (28–30), termed "Th22 cells". IL-22 is a member of the IL-10 family of 107 cytokines, and functions mainly to protect tissues from inflammation and infection, through 108 stimulating proliferation and repair, and the production of antimicrobial peptides (31). Until 109 recently, IL-22 was thought to be dispensable for control of *M.tb*, since deficiency or 110 neutralization of IL-22 in mice had no effect control of *M.tb* using lab strains H37Rv and 111 Erdman (32–35). However, the recent observation that IL-22 deficient mice infected with a clinical strain of *M.tb* (HN878) had an impaired ability to control *M.tb*, leading to increased
bacterial burden and greater dissemination of infection (36), has triggered renewed interest in
IL-22 and its role in TB control.

115 Given the paucity of data on *M.tb*-specific IL-22 CD4+ responses, and the knowledge 116 that HIV infection results in the preferential targeting and depletion of Th22 cells (37), we 117 sought to characterize HIV-induced defects in adaptive immunity to *M.tb*, with a focus on 118 Th22 cells. Our findings highlight the large contribution IL-22 makes to the human CD4+ T 119 cell response to TB (equivalent in magnitude to the IFN- γ response), with *M.tb*-specific Th22 120 cells being entirely distinct from Th1 and Th17 cells. Moreover, we show for the first time 121 that *M.tb*-specific Th22 cells are depleted during HIV co-infection to a similar extent as Th1 122 responses. These findings emphasize the potential importance of this understudied CD4+ Th 123 subset in TB immunity, and suggest that the loss of *M.tb*-specific Th22 cells may contribute 124 to the increased risk of TB during HIV infection.

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126

127 MATERIALS AND METHODS

128

129 Study Participants

Volunteers were recruited from Cape Town, South Africa, and fell within the following groups: ART naive HIV-seropositive persons with CD4 counts >400 cells/mm³ (n=25; median age 31; 96% female) and HIV-seronegative persons (n=25; median age 23; 60% female). HIV RNA levels were determined using an Abbott m2000 RealTime HIV-1 assay and blood CD4 counts by the Flow-CARETM PLG CD4 test. All volunteers were TB sensitized based on a positive IFN-γ release assay (IGRA; Quantiferon, Cellestis), and active TB was excluded, based on symptoms and radiological evidence.

Healthy donors were recruited from the University of Cape Town, South Africa.
Participants were >18 years of age, weighed >55 kg, did not have any chronic disease, did
not use immunosuppressive medication and were not pregnant or lactating. These studies
were approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Cape Town
(158/2010, 279/2012). All participants provided written, informed consent.

142

143 Whole blood stimulation assays

144 Venous blood was collected and processed within 4 hours. Whole blood stimulation was 145 performed as previously described (38) with the following antigens: Bacillus Calmette-146 Guerin (BCG; MOI of 4; SSI), Purified Protein Derivative (PPD) of M. tuberculosis 147 $(20\mu g/m)$; Statens Serum Institute), ESAT-6 and CFP-10 peptide pools $(4\mu g/m)$, M. 148 tuberculosis whole cell lysate (10µg/ml; BEI Resources) or PMA and Ionomycin (0.01µg/ml 149 and 1µg/ml, respectively, Sigma), in the presence of anti-CD28 and anti-CD49d (1µg /ml 150 each). Unstimulated cells were incubated with co-stimulatory antibodies only. Brefeldin A 151 (BFA, 10µg/ml; Sigma) was added 7 hours after the onset of stimulation, and five hours after 152 BFA addition, cells were either stained immediately, or red blood cells were lysed, the cell 153 pellet stained with a violet viability dye, ViViD (Molecular Probes), fixed with FACS Lyse 154 (BD Biosciences) and cryopreserved in 10% DMSO in FCS.

155

156 Antibody Staining and Flow Cytometry

Cryopreserved or freshly stimulated whole blood was stained as previously described (15).
For intracellular markers, cells were permeabilized with Perm/Wash buffer (BD Biosciences)
and then stained intracellularly. Cells were stained with the following antibodies: CD3 APCH7 (SK7; BD Biosciences), CD4 PE-Cy5.5 (S3.5; Invitrogen), CD4 ECD (T4; Beckman
Coulter), CD8 QDot705 (3B5; Invitrogen), CD45RO ECD (UCLH1; Beckman Coulter),

162	CD27 PE-Cy5 (1A4CD27; Beckman Coulter), CXCR3 PE-Cy7 (1C6/CXCR3; BD
163	Biosciences), CCR6 BV605 (11A9; BD Biosciences), CCR4 BV510 (L291H4; Biolegend),
164	CCR10 PE (1B5; BD Biosciences), KLRG1 PE-vio770 (REA261; Miltenyi Biotec), CD26
165	FITC (M-A261; BD Biosciences), IFN-γ Alexa700 (B27; BD Biosciences), IL-17 Alexa488
166	(N49-653; BD Biosciences), IL-17 FITC (BL-168; Biolegend), IL-22 PE (22URTI; e-
167	Bioscience) or IL-22 eFluor450 (22URTI; e-Bioscience). Cells were acquired on a BD
168	Fortessa using FACSDiva software and data analysed using FlowJo (TreeStar) and Pestle and
169	Spice (39). A positive cytokine response was defined as twice background and a net response
170	>0.025%, and all data are reported after background subtraction. A minimum of 30 cytokine-
171	positive events was required for memory or chemokine receptor phenotyping.
172	
173	Statistical Analysis
174	Statistical analyses were performed using Prism 7 (GraphPad). Non-parametric tests (Mann-
175	Whitney U test, Wilcoxon matched pairs test and Spearman Rank test) were used for all
176	comparisons. Kruskal-Wallis with Dunn's post-test was used for multiple comparisons. A p

- 177 value of <0.05 was considered significant.
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180 RESULTS
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182 IL-22 responses are a major component of the CD4+ mycobacterial response

183 We examined CD4+ T cell cytokine profiles in response to a range of mycobacterial antigens

184 in 25 healthy, HIV-uninfected persons sensitized by *M. tuberculosis* (*M.tb* IGRA+; **Table 1**).

185 Figure 1A shows representative flow cytometry plots of IFN-γ, IL-22 and IL-17 CD4+

186 responses to *M. bovis* BCG, *M.tb* PPD and a pool of ESAT-6 and CFP-10 peptides from

187	<i>M.tb</i> . As expected, CD4+ T cell IFN- γ responses to BCG were detected in all donors (median
188	0.55%, IQR: 0.28-1.46%; Figure 1B). Remarkably, IL-22 accounted for the greatest
189	proportion of the CD4+ response to BCG (median 0.91%, IQR: 0.52-1.24%). In fact, the
190	frequency of IL-22+ cells was greater than IFN- γ in 75% of participants. IL-17 CD4+
191	responses to BCG were significantly lower (median 0.11%, IQR: 0.06-1.66%) than both IFN-
192	γ (p=0.007) and IL-22 (p=0.0008). Stimulation with <i>M.tb</i> PPD led to the detection of a
193	similar IFN- γ response as BCG (median 0.74%), with comparatively lower frequencies of
194	PPD-specific IL-22+ CD4+ T cells (median 0.21%; p=0.02) and IL-17+ cells (median 0%;
195	p<0.0001) (Figure 1B). The ESAT-6/CFP-10 response was dominated by IFN- γ (median
196	0.07%), with low to undetectable IL-17 and IL-22 responses (medians of 0%). Taken
197	together, these data demonstrate that different mycobacterial antigen preparations result in
198	detection of different CD4+ T cell cytokine profiles. Of note, IL-22 made a substantial
199	contribution to the anti-mycobacterial CD4+ response, with responses equivalent to or greater
200	than the IFN- γ response to BCG.

201

202 Most CD4+ T cells producing IL-22 do not make IFN-γ and IL-17

203 We next focused on the high magnitude IL-22 response detected to BCG, to further 204 characterize IL-22 CD4+ responses and their relationship with IFN-y and IL-17. There was a 205 highly significant positive correlation between IFN- γ and IL-22 responses to BCG (p<0.0001, 206 r=0.830; Figure 2A). The frequency of IL-17+ CD4+ T cells also correlated with both IFN- γ 207 and IL-22 production (p=0.039, r=0.424 and p=0.005, r=0.559, respectively; data not shown). 208 Given these associations between IFN- γ , IL-22 and IL-17, we examined the co-expression 209 patterns of the cytokines following BCG stimulation (Figure 2B). The majority of BCG-210 responding CD4+ T cells produced only IL-22 (median 47%; IQR: 36.6-59.6), whilst CD4+ 211 cells secreting IFN- γ -alone made up a median of 37% (IQR: 27.1-47.4). There was minimal

212	co-expression of IL-22 with both IL-17 (median 0.5%) and with IFN- γ (median 6.4%). When
213	examining all CD4+ T cells producing IL-22, a median of 78% produced IL-22 alone (IQR:
214	71.1-89.2%), while 14% and 1.5% co-expressed IFN-y or IL-17, respectively (data not
215	shown). We also investigated IL-22 production in combination with other cytokines and
216	found low or negligible co-expression with TNF- α , IL-2 and IL-21 (medians 0.3%, 0.5% and
217	3%, respectively, data not shown). Our data reveal that the large proportion of BCG-specific
218	IL-22 was produced predominantly by CD4+ T cells secreting IL-22 in the absence of either
219	IL-17 or IFN- γ , consistent with being a distinct 'Th22' lineage (28–30).
220	
221	Phenotypic characteristics of mycobacteria-specific IL-22-producing CD4+ T cells
222	In order to characterize the Th22 subset in more detail, we determined the memory

223 differentiation profile of mycobacteria-specific Th22 cells (*i.e.* those producing IL-22 alone) 224 compared to cells producing only IFN- γ or IL-17. Figure 3A shows representative flow 225 cytometry plots of CD45RO and CD27 expression on total CD4+ cells with overlays of 226 BCG-specific cytokine-producing CD4+ T cells (IFN- γ , IL-22 or IL-17 alone). The memory 227 profile of BCG-specific CD4+ T cells was comparable, regardless of their cytokine secretion 228 profile, with approximately 79% having an early differentiated phenotype (ED: 229 CD45RO+CD27+, comprising central and transitional memory cells). Of the remaining cells, 230 a median of ~17% were late differentiated (LD: CD45RO+CD27-, comprising effector 231 memory and intermediate cells), with few terminally differentiated (TD: CD45RO-CD27-; 232 ~0.3%) or naïve-like (CD45RO-CD27+; ~2 %) cells (Figure 3B). Thus, CD4+ T cells 233 producing IFN- γ , IL-22 or IL-17 shared a similar memory differentiation phenotype.

To further characterize the phenotype of the different cytokine-producing subsets, we examined chemokine receptor expression profiles on CD4+ cells producing IFN- γ , IL-22 or IL-17. For these studies, we stimulated whole blood with *M.tb* whole cell lysate. To ensure 237 that we were measuring similar cytokine responses, we compared IFN- γ , IL-22 and IL-17 238 induced by each antigen and found highly comparable frequencies of CD4+ T cell responses 239 in the same donors (Supplemental Figure S1). Figure 4A shows representative flow 240 cytometry plots of *M.tb*-specific CD4+ T cell production of IFN- γ , IL-22 and IL-17 overlaid 241 onto chemokine receptor expression profiles (CXCR3, CCR6, CCR4 and CCR10). Whilst a 242 majority of IFN- γ -producing cells expressed CXCR3 (median 61.5%), a sizable fraction also 243 expressed CCR6 (median 54.5%), with a low proportion expressing CCR4 (median 4.1%) 244 and negligible CCR10 (median 0.5%; Figure 4B). In contrast, CD4+ cells producing IL-22 245 were almost all CCR6 positive (median 94.7%), and compared to cells producing IFN- γ , 246 significantly fewer expressed CXCR3 (median 27.7%), and significantly more expressed 247 CCR4 and CCR10 (median 23.3% and 2.7%, respectively). Th17 cells (IL-17+) shared 248 comparable expression profiles for CCR6 and CXCR3 (medians 96.1% and 17.2%, 249 respectively), but a higher proportion expressed CCR4 (median 50.8%) and CCR10 (median 250 5.8%) compared to Th22 cells. Of note, cells co-producing IFN- γ and IL-22 had a similarly 251 high expression of CCR6 as Th22 and Th17 cells, but were otherwise intermediate between 252 IFN- γ + and Th22 for the remaining chemokine receptors (**Supplemental Figure S2A**). These 253 findings demonstrate distinct patterns of chemokine receptor expression on different 254 cytokine-producing subsets. These data are consistent with previous descriptions (28, 30), but 255 also highlight the substantial overlap in chemokine receptor expression between T helper 256 subsets producing distinct cytokines.

We also investigated the homing potential of *M.tb*-specific CD4+ Th subsets using KLRG1 and CD26. Killer cell lectin-like receptor G1 (KLRG1)-expressing cells appear to be retained within lung blood vasculature, while KLRG1⁻ cells migrate to the lung parenchyma (40). Dipeptidyl peptidase IV (CD26) is involved in enzymatic chemokine modification that enhances T cell migration (41, 42). Expression of these markers was significantly different between Th subsets (Supplementary Figure S2B). Th22 cells were characterized by a near
absence of KLRG1 expression compared to Th1 and Th17 cells. In contrast, 50% of Th22
cells expressed CD26, compared to a median of 34% of Th1 cells and 11% of Th17 cells
(Supplemental Figure S2B). These data suggest that *M.tb*-specific Th22 are endowed with a
distinct homing potential compare to Th1 and Th17 cells.

267

268 The effect of HIV infection on the Th22 response to mycobacteria

269 Th1 responses to *M.tb* are impaired or reduced during HIV infection (3). However, little is 270 known about the effect of HIV co-infection on the Th22 response to *M.tb*. Hence, we 271 examined IFN-y, IL-22 and IL-17 responses to BCG and PPD in 25 HIV-infected individuals 272 with a median CD4 count of 619 cells/mm³ (IQR: 532.5-782) and a median plasma viral load of 6.38 $\times 10^3$ copies/ml (IQR: 3.55-16.45 $\times 10^3$; Table 1). Consistent with previous reports, the 273 274 frequency of *M.tb*-specific CD4+ T cells producing IFN- γ was significantly lower in HIV-275 infected participants compared to uninfected participants in response to BCG (p=0.0004, 276 medians 0.12% and 0.55%, respectively; Figure 5A). Notably, the IL-22 response to BCG 277 was also lower in HIV-infected individuals, to a similar degree as the IFN- γ response 278 (p=0.0005; medians 0.28% and 0.91%, respectively). Additionally, IL-17 responses were also 279 significantly lower in HIV-infected individuals in response to BCG compared to the HIV-280 uninfected group (p<0.0001, medians 0% and 0.11%, respectively). After adjusting for CD4 281 count, these differences became even more evident (Figure 5B), despite the relatively well-282 preserved CD4+ T cell numbers in our HIV-infected cohort. HIV-infected participants had 8-283 fold (p<0.0001) and 3-fold (p=0.0003) fewer CD4+ T cells producing IFN- γ or IL-22, 284 respectively, compared to uninfected participants. There were also fewer cells producing IL-285 17 in HIV-infected individuals (median 0; p<0.0001). Similar results were obtained for IFN- γ 286 and IL-22 in response to PPD (Supplemental Figure S3A and B). Overall, HIV-infected participants had lower *M.tb*-specific IFN- γ , IL-22 and IL-17 responses. Whilst the decrease in *M.tb*-specific IFN- γ and IL-17 responses during HIV infection has been reported, we report here a striking loss of *M.tb*-specific CD4+ T cells producing IL-22.

290 To further investigate the impact of HIV on BCG-specific Th22 responses, we 291 measured the amount of IL-22 produced per cell, using median fluorescent intensity (MFI). 292 The MFI of IL-22 was significantly lower in HIV-infected individuals compared to 293 uninfected individuals (p<0.0001; medians 4169 and 6215, respectively; Figure 5C), 294 whereas no differences in the MFI of IFN- γ and IL-17 was observed. This suggests that HIV 295 may have a unique effect on Th22 cells in response to BCG. However, we found no 296 differences in the MFI of any cytokines produced in response to PPD (Supplemental Figure 297 S3C).

298 To investigate whether the lower cytokine responses to mycobacterial antigens in 299 HIV-infected individuals related to clinical parameters, the association between IFN- γ , IL-22 300 and IL-17 responses and CD4 count or plasma viral load was examined. We observed a 301 significant positive correlation between both the IFN- γ and IL-22 response to BCG and CD4 302 count (p=0.04, r=0.43; and p=0.004, r=0.57, respectively; Figure 6A). Likewise, in response 303 to PPD, IFN- γ (p=0.03, r=0.45) and IL-22 (p=0.004, r=0.57) correlated directly with CD4 304 count (data not shown). This suggests that the decrease in these responses could be a 305 consequence of overall CD4+ T cell depletion, despite the relatively narrow CD4 count range 306 and modest CD4 decreases in our study (84% of participants had CD4 counts >500 307 cells/mm³). No association between the frequency of IL-17 and CD4 count was observed for 308 either BCG (Figure 6A, bottom panel) or PPD (data not shown). Finally, there were no 309 significant associations between plasma viral load and IFN- γ or Th17 responses to BCG; 310 Figure 6B) or any cytokine in response to PPD (data not shown). However, the frequency of Th22 cells responding to BCG was significantly inversely correlated with plasma viral load (p=0.006, r=-0.54, **Figure 6B**, middle panel).

Overall, we demonstrate the detrimental effect of HIV infection on CD4+ T helper subsets in response to mycobacteria. In particular, the Th22 subset exhibited both a decrease in the magnitude of the response to mycobacteria, and a defect in IL-22 production on a per cell basis. Furthermore, unlike the other cytokine-producing subsets examined (Th1 and Th17), the frequency of Th22 cells correlated inversely with HIV viral load, suggesting a direct relationship between HIV infection and the loss of Th22 cells specific for mycobacteria.

320

321

322 **DISCUSSION**

323 Th1/IFN- γ responses are needed for an effective response to TB (8), however a range of 324 immune mechanisms beyond Th1 immunity may also contribute to protection from TB (6). 325 Since HIV-infected individuals are considerably more susceptible to TB disease (3), key 326 components required for effective immune control of *M.tb* are likely to be defective in these 327 individuals, and we sought to identify these. In addition to IFN- γ /Th1 immunity, this study 328 examined IL-17 and IL-22 responses to mycobacteria in *M.tb*-sensitized, HIV-infected and 329 uninfected individuals. Consistent with previous studies, we identified distinct populations of 330 CD4+ T cells expressing IFN-y, IL-17 or IL-22 in response to mycobacterial antigens (43, 331 44). The IL-22 response was unexpectedly abundant, contributing up to 50% of the 332 mycobacterial response measured using these three cytokines, and the source was a distinct 333 subset of CD4+ T cells producing IL-22 alone. Importantly, IL-22 response was impaired in 334 HIV-infected individuals in both magnitude and function, suggesting that depletion of this 335 subset may contribute to TB risk.

336 IL-22 has classically been characterized as a Th17-related cytokine, since in mice it is 337 co-secreted with IL-17 and has overlapping functions with IL-17 (27). However, IL-22 is a 338 member of the IL-10 family (45), and in humans IL-22 is not co-expressed with IL-17 (28– 339 30). Consequently, 'Th22' cells were proposed as a novel CD4+ T helper cell lineage in 340 humans, with shared but distinct features and functions compared to Th17 cells. To date, the 341 role of IL-17 in *M.tb* immunity has been well-studied (21–24, 26). Here, we found that IL-17 342 responses made only a modest contribution to the total mycobacterial response in *M.tb*-343 exposed individuals, consistent with previous reports (20, 43). In contrast, we detected ample 344 mycobacteria-specific IL-22 production from CD4+ T cells in the absence of IL-17 (and IFN-345 γ), consistent with a distinct Th22 subset and in agreement with earlier observations in LTBI 346 and TB disease (43, 46). Phenotypic profiling demonstrated that whilst their memory 347 differentiation phenotype was similar to that of Th1 and Th17 cells, the bulk of Th22 cells 348 expressed CCR6, with expression frequencies of CXCR3, CCR4 and CCR10 intermediate 349 between Th1 and Th17 cells, somewhat consistent with published reports (28, 30). M.tb-350 specific Th22 cells were also characterized by higher CD26 and absent KLRG1 expression 351 compared to both Th1 and Th17 cells. Altogether, these characteristics emphasize the shared 352 and unique features of mycobacteria-specific Th22 cells relative to Th1 and Th17 cells, 353 which may relate to distinct homing capabilities.

The previously unappreciated, sizeable contribution Th22 cells make to the mycobacterial response prompts the question of whether Th22 responses play a role in protective immunity against *M.tb*. Previous studies demonstrated that deficiency or neutralization of IL-22 in mice did not affect control of laboratory strains of *M.tb* (H37Rv and Erdman) (32–35). However, renewed interest in IL-22 has been garnered since the observation that IL-22 deficient mice infected with a hypervirulent clinical strain of *M.tb* (HN878) have an impaired ability to control the infection, resulting in both increased

361 bacterial burden and greater dissemination of infection (36). Additional evidence from a 362 range of models suggest that IL-22 may indeed participate in TB immunity. IL-22 has been 363 found at sites of TB disease; soluble IL-22 and IL-22 transcripts were elevated in the airways, 364 lung tissue, granuloma, and in pleural and pericardial effusions during TB disease (43, 46– 365 50). Along with IFN- γ , IL-22 was one of the strongest genes upregulated in bovine TB (51), 366 and gene expression signatures revealed that IFN- γ and IL-22 were the dominant correlates of 367 protection from bovine TB in blood in BCG-vaccinated cattle (52). Human genetic studies 368 demonstrated the association between increased susceptibility to TB and a single nucleotide 369 polymorphism in the IL-22 promoter that decreased IL-22 expression (50).

370 If IL-22 is involved in TB immunity, how might it mediate a protective function? IL-371 22 functions as a key regulator of tissue-specific antimicrobial immunity (31). The receptor 372 for IL-22 is a heterodimer consisting of the IL-10R2 and the IL-22R, and expression is 373 primarily restricted to non-hematopoietic cells, particularly epithelial cells in the skin, 374 digestive tract and respiratory tract (31). IL-22 has been shown to be essential for mediating 375 protective immunity to a range of extracellular and intracellular bacteria, such as *Klebsiella* 376 and *Chlamydia* in the lung and *Citrobacter* in the intestine (53–56). Neutralization of IL-22 377 led to bacterial dissemination, exacerbated pathology, and lower Th1 and Th17 responses in 378 the lung (55). The protective role at barrier sites appears to be mediated by three distinct 379 functions, namely; maintenance of barrier integrity by promotion of epithelial homeostasis, 380 stimulating epithelial proliferation and preventing apoptosis, as well as enhancing mucin 381 production and tight junction formation; inducing antimicrobial peptides such as β -defensins; 382 and regulating chemokine secretion from epithelial cells to co-ordinate recruitment of 383 immune cells, such as neutrophils, to inflamed tissue (27, 29, 55, 57). Indeed, Treerat and 384 colleagues demonstrated that the TB-protective role of IL-22 resulted from the secretion of 385 S100 and Reg3y from epithelial cells, and induction of CCL2 that mediated macrophage

recruitment to the infected lung (36). It is worth noting that several studies have independently documented IL-22R expression on *M.tb*-infected monocyte-derived macrophages (MDMs), as well as macrophages in TB granulomas in humans and non-human primates (36, 58, 59). Consistent with these findings, IL-22 from CD4+ T cells and innate cells, as well as recombinant IL-22, reduced mycobacterial replication in MDMs by improving phagolysosome fusion (36, 58–60). These data suggest that a direct effector function for IL-22 in limiting mycobacterial growth cannot be ruled out.

393 HIV-infected individuals remain one of the most vulnerable populations at risk of TB 394 (3). The early depletion of *M.tb*-specific Th1 responses, considered fundamental to TB 395 immunity, has been reported during HIV infection (9, 10). Here, we investigated the relative 396 effect of HIV on Th22 and Th17 responses to mycobacteria compared to Th1 responses. An 397 important and novel finding from our study was that the mycobacteria-specific Th22 398 response was depleted during HIV infection, to a similar extent as Th1/IFN- γ responses. 399 Several studies have described a global and preferential loss of Th22 and Th17 cells during 400 HIV/SIV infection, leading to mucosal gut damage and systemic immune activation, driving 401 HIV disease progression (37, 61–64). The CCR6+CD4+ T cell subset (within which all 402 Th22 and Th17 cells reside) is more permissive to HIV infection and replication, and is 403 enriched for HIV DNA (65-67). Elevated expression of HIV co-receptors CCR5 and 404 CXCR4 has been reported on CCR6+CD4+ T cells, which could facilitate HIV entry 405 (68). In addition, post-entry mechanisms appear to create a more permissive cellular 406 environment for HIV replication in CCR6-expressing cells, demonstrated by specific 407 transcriptional signatures favoring HIV replication (69–71). We report here that higher 408 HIV plasma viral load correlates with lower frequencies of Th22 cells specific for 409 mycobacteria, consistent with a mechanism of direct, preferential infection of Th22 cells 410 by HIV. Overall, multiple mechanisms may contribute to the loss of Th22, Th17 and Th1

subsets specific for *M.tb* (72, 73), and their combined depletion may contribute to TB risk
during HIV infection.

413 Our new findings add to a growing body of evidence in support of a role for IL-22 in 414 protective immunity to TB. However, a number of questions remain unanswered. Does IL-22 415 contribute to protective immunity to TB, or only during infection with specific clinical 416 strains, or during HIV infection, when multiple immunological defects manifest? Does IL-22 417 assume a direct effector or indirect regulatory role in immunity to TB, or both? Does the 418 inflammatory context dictate whether IL-22 might be beneficial to the host or pathological 419 (74)? Ultimately, will it be necessary to induce Th22 responses for a TB vaccine to be 420 effective? Notwithstanding these gaps in our knowledge, our study highlights the substantial 421 contribution that Th22 cells make to mycobacterial immunity, and the importance of further 422 elucidating the role of IL-22 in the control of *M.tb* infection and disease.

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433 AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

- 434 Conceived and designed the experiments: WAB, CR and RJW. Performed the experiments:
- 435 RB, FMAO, MSM, TLM and CSLP. Analyzed the data: RB, FMAO, SMM and WAB. Wrote
- 436 the paper: **RB** and **WAB**. All authors approved the final manuscript.

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- 705

Table

707 Table 1: Characteristics of study participants

HIV-unin	fected (n=25)	HIV-infected (n=25)			
PID	CD4 count (cells/mm ³)	 PID	CD4 count (cells/mm ³)	Viral Load (RNA copies/ml)	
1032	ND	 1086	1449	4250	
1035	1459	1151	988	1848	
1052	1412	1075	965	5922	
1031	1169	1150	894	311	
1023	1120	1006	802	4141	
1070	1028	1039	790	4521	
1024	939	1080	774	14100	
1025	915	1152	749	<40	
1057	871	1154	714	2954	
1058	866	1018	681	4614	
1054	832	1143	656	618	
1094	827	1073	632	12274	
1028	814	1084	619	9192	
1033	813	1134	599	6383	
1011	801	1079	591	32485	
1095	760	1153	571	9697	
1038	743	1137	560	18797	
1072	741	1141	552	9826	
1047	680	1076	543	908	
1061	674	1045	522	59125	
1015	659	1129	510	4559	
1049	655	1074	478	10093	
1001	631	1142	441	544849	
1066	621	1126	433	32994	
1010	580	1020	406	31145	
Median	813		619	6383	
IQR	675.5-933		532.5-782	3548-16449	

711 FIGURE LEGENDS

712

713 Figure 1: CD4+ T cell cytokine responses to mycobacterial antigens in latent TB 714 **infection.** (A) Representative flow cytometry plots of the production of IFN- γ , IL-22 and IL-715 17 from CD4+ T cells after stimulation with *M. bovis* BCG, *M.tb* PPD and ESAT-6/CFP-10 716 peptides, in one study participant. UNS corresponds to the unstimulated control. The 717 frequency of cytokine-producing cells is shown as a percentage of the total CD4+ T cell 718 population, after gating on live, CD3+ lymphocytes. (B) Individual IFN- γ (blue), IL-22 (red) 719 or IL-17 (green) responses to BCG, PPD or ESAT-6/CFP-10 (n=25). The frequency of 720 cytokine-producing cells is shown as a percentage of the total CD4+ T cell population, after 721 gating on live, CD3+ lymphocytes. Each dot represents one individual. Data are shown as 722 box and whisker (interquartile range) plots and horizontal bars represent the median. 723 Statistical comparisons were performed using a Kruskal-Wallis and Dunn's multiple comparison test. *p≤0.05, **p≤0.01, ***p≤0.001, ****p≤0.0001 724

725

726 Figure 2: The relationship between IL-22, and other cytokines produced in response to 727 **BCG.** (A) The relationship between the frequency of CD4+ T cells producing IFN- γ and IL-728 22 in response to BCG (n=24). Each dot represents an individual. Statistical analyses were 729 performed using a non-parametric Spearman rank correlation. (B) Populations of CD4+ T 730 cells producing different combinations of IFN- γ , IL-22 and IL-17 in response to BCG. The 731 pie charts indicate the proportion of cytokine combinations that makes up the BCG response. 732 Each slice of the pie represents a specific subset of cells, defined by a combination of 733 cytokines shown by the color at the bottom of the graphs. Data are shown as box and whisker 734 (interquartile range) plots and horizontal bars represent the median.

736 Figure 3: Memory profiles of CD4+ T cells producing IFN- γ , IL-22 or IL-17 in 737 response to BCG. (A) Representative flow cytometry plots of total CD4+ memory subset 738 distribution in one individual based on CD45RO and CD27 staining. Naïve: CD45RO-739 CD27+, early differentiated (ED: CD45RO+CD27+), late differentiated (LD: 740 CD45RO+CD27-) and terminally differentiated (TD: CD45RO-CD27-). The overlays 741 indicate the antigen specific CD4+ T cells producing IFN- γ (blue), IL-22 (red) or IL-17 742 (green). The frequencies of each subset are indicated. (B) The memory distribution of cells 743 producing IFN- γ (blue), IL-22 (red) or IL-17 (green) in response to BCG (n=20, 25 and 7, 744 respectively). Only individuals with a positive cytokine response and more than 30 cytokine 745 events were included in the phenotyping. Each dot represents one individual. Data are shown 746 as box and whisker (interquartile range) plots and horizontal bars represent the median. 747 Statistical comparisons were performed using a Kruskal-Wallis and Dunn's multiple 748 comparison test.

749

750 Figure 4: Chemokine receptor expression of CD4+ T cells producing IFN- γ , IL-22 or 751 **IL-17 in response to** *M.tb* **whole cell lysate.** (A) Representative flow cytometry plots of the 752 expression of CCR6, CCR4, CXCR3 and CCR10 on total CD4+ T cells in one individual. 753 The overlays indicate the antigen specific CD4+ T cells producing IFN- γ (blue), IL-22 (red) 754 or IL-17 (green). The frequencies of each subset are indicated. (B) The chemokine receptor 755 distribution of cells producing IFN- γ (blue), IL-22 (red) or IL-17 (green) in response to *M.tb* 756 lysate (n=19, 19 and 11, respectively). Only individuals with a positive cytokine response and 757 more than 30 cytokine events were included in the phenotyping. Each dot represents one 758 individual. Data are shown as box and whisker (interquartile range) plots and horizontal bars 759 represent the median. Statistical comparisons were performed using a Kruskal-Wallis and 760 Dunn's multiple comparison test. *p≤0.05, **p≤0.01, ***p≤0.001, ****p≤0.0001

761

762	Figure 5: CD4+ T cell responses to BCG in HIV-infected and uninfected individuals. (A)
763	The individual IFN- γ , IL-22 or IL-17 responses in HIV uninfected or infected individuals in
764	response to BCG (n=24 in each group). (B) The cytokine frequency adjusted for CD4 count
765	in HIV-infected and HIV-uninfected individuals in response to BCG. (C) The median
766	fluorescent intensity (MFI) of IFN- γ in response to BCG (n=24 and n=15 for HIV-uninfected
767	and infected, respectively) The MFI of IL-22 in response to BCG (n=23 and n=20 for HIV-
768	uninfected and infected, respectively) The MFI of IL-17 in response to BCG (n=22 and n=8
769	for HIV-uninfected and infected, respectively). For each cytokine, MFI was only graphed for
770	individuals with positive cytokine responses. HIV-uninfected participants are shown with
771	open circles and HIV-uninfected individuals with closed circles. Each dot represents one
772	individual. Data are shown as box and whisker (interquartile range) plots and horizontal bars
773	represent the median. Statistical comparisons were performed using a non-parametric Mann
774	Whitney test. *p≤0.05, **p≤0.01, ***p≤0.001, ****p≤0.0001

775

776 Figure 6: The relationship between clinical parameters and IFN-γ, IL-22 or IL-17 CD4+

T cell responses to BCG in HIV-infected individuals. The association between IFN- γ (blue), IL-22 (red) or IL-17 (green) responses to BCG and (A) CD4 count or (B) viral load. Each dot represents an individual (n=24). The dotted line indicates linear regression for statistically significant correlations, highlighted in bold. Statistical analyses were performed using a non-parametric Spearman rank correlation.

Supplemental Figure S1: Cytokine responses to BCG and *M.tb* whole cell lysate. Comparison of the frequencies of CD4+ T cells producing IFN- γ , IL-17 and IL-22 in response to BCG (circles) and *M.tb* whole cell lysate (triangles) in healthy donors (n=8). The

frequency of cytokine-producing cells is shown as a percentage of the total CD4+ T cell
population, after gating on live, CD3+ lymphocytes. Statistical comparisons were performed
using a non-parametric matched pairs Wilcoxon test.

789

790 Supplemental Figure S2: Phenotypic profiles of Th subsets. (A) The chemokine receptor 791 distribution of cells co-producing IFN- γ and IL-22 (n=14) in response to *M.tb* lysate. 792 Horizontal bars represent the median. (B) KLRG1 and CD26 expression on M.tb-specific 793 Th1, Th22 and Th17 cells. Representative overlay plots showing KLRG1 and CD26 794 expression on total CD4+ T cells (grey), IFN- γ + (blue), IL-22+ (red) and IL-17+ (green) cells 795 in response to *M.tb* lysate (top panel). Expression of KLRG1 and CD26 shown as box and 796 whisker (interquartile range) plots (bottom panel) and horizontal bars represent the median 797 (n=19). Statistical comparisons were performed using a Kruskal-Wallis and Dunn's multiple 798 comparison test. Only individuals with a positive cytokine response and more than 30 799 cytokine events were included in the phenotyping. Each dot represents one individual.

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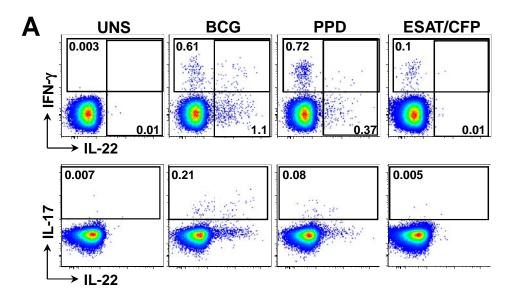
801 Supplemental Figure S3: CD4+ T cell responses to PPD in HIV-infected and uninfected

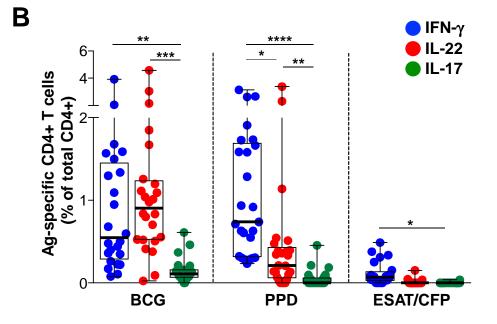
individuals. (A) The individual IFN- γ , IL-22 or IL-17 responses in HIV uninfected (n=25) or infected individuals (n=24) in response to PPD. (B) The cytokine frequency adjusted for CD4 count in HIV-infected and HIV-uninfected individuals in response to PPD. (C) The median fluorescent intensity (MFI) of IFN- γ in response to PPD (n=25 and n=24 for HIV-uninfected and infected, respectively). The MFI of IL-22 in response to PPD (n=21 and n=18 for HIVuninfected and infected, respectively). The MFI of IL-17 in response to PPD (n=12 and n=12 for HIV-uninfected and infected, respectively). For each cytokine, MFI was only plotted for

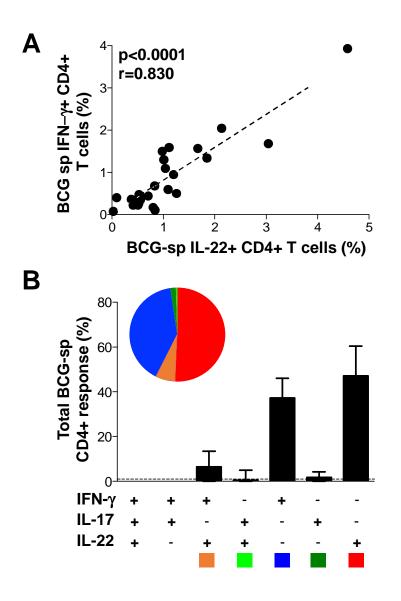
810 open circles and HIV-uninfected individuals with closed circles. Each dot represents one

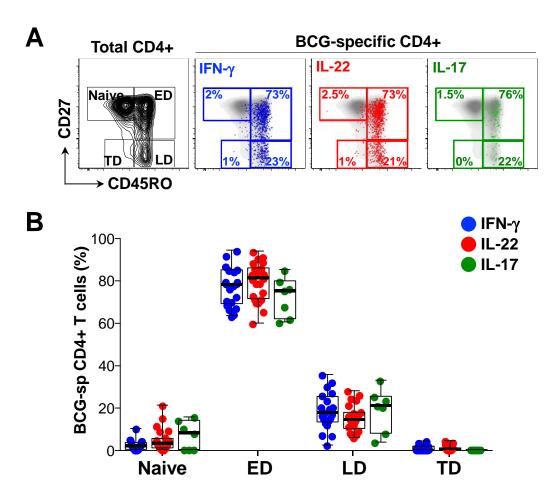
individuals with positive cytokine response. HIV-uninfected participants are shown with

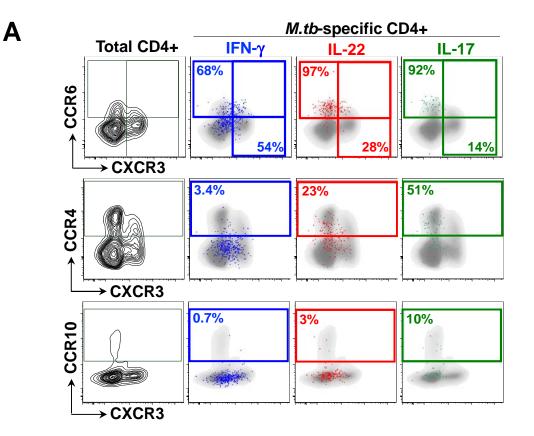
- 811 individual. Data are shown as box and whisker (interquartile range) plots and horizontal bars
- 812 represent the median. Statistical comparisons were performed using a non-parametric Mann
- 813 Whitney test.

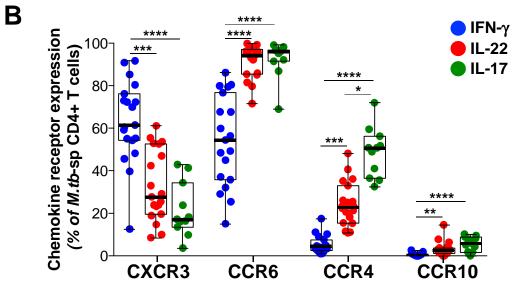


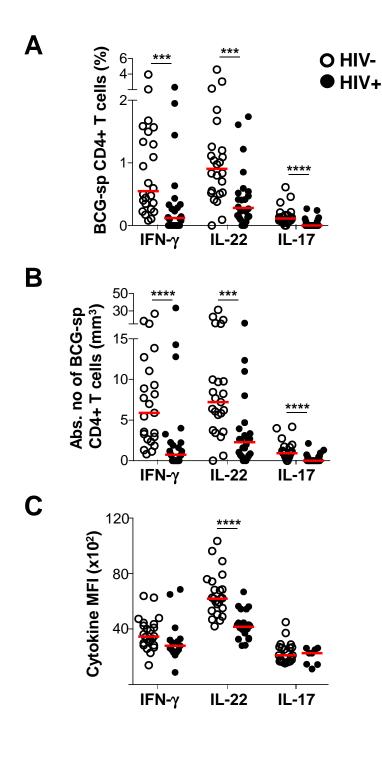












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