In form for a swarm: programmable neutrophil swarming impacts infection outcome

Salik M. Borbora[1][§], Ivanna Williantarra[1][§], Giulia Rinaldi[1], Tuhin Samanta[2], Can Cui[1], Echo Yongqi Luo[1], Hazel A. Walker[1], Debsuvra Ghosh[2], Holly M. Craven[1,3], Auxence Desrentes[1], Nir S. Gov[1,2], Milka Sarris[1][*]

Affiliations:

[1]Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience, University of Cambridge, Downing Site, Cambridge, CB2 3DY, UK.

[2]Department of Chemical and Biological Physics, Weizmann Institute of Science, Rehovot, Israel

[3]Roving Researcher Programme, School of Biological Sciences, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

§ These authors contributed equally

*Correspondence to: ms543@cam.ac.uk

Abstract

Migrating cells often pattern the distribution of chemoattractants to support their accumulation in target tissues. Neutrophil swarming represents a prominent example in which cells engage in coordinated paracrine chemoattractant signalling for rapid clustering at sites of injury or infection. Whether neutrophil swarming can be regeared to influence immune outcomes is unclear. Here, we show that neutrophil swarming is subject to reprogramming after microbial experience and amenable to genetic enhancement with measurable effects on infection outcome. We demonstrate that zebrafish larvae exposed to prior microbial experience are trained to be more resistant to subsequent wound infection. Through live imaging and chemical perturbations, we show that these training effects are in part attributed to changes in neutrophil swarming and associated gene expression signatures. Among the reprogrammed genes, genetic enhancement of 5-lipoxygenase is sufficient to maximise neutrophil swarming and improve infection outcome. Finally, through mathematical modelling, we demonstrate that alterations in attractant secretion, sensitivity of bacterial detection and stop signals predict kinetics of neutrophil swarming and bacterial clearance in trained animals. Together, these data suggest new routes for reprogramming cell accumulation and positioning in tissues, via manipulating their ability to shape chemoattractant landscapes.

Introduction

Directed cell migration is essential for tissue development and surveillance. Guidance of migrating cells relies on interpretation of gradients of chemoattractants within tissues. Traditional mechanistic models portray migrating cells as receivers of information, responding to chemoattractant landscapes patterned by extrinsic tissue cells. However, several lines of evidence highlight an important role for self-organisation in the process, through cell-autonomous generation of chemical gradients by migratory cells[1–5]. For example, during development, migrating tissue collectives sculpt chemical gradients through asymmetric distribution of dedicated chemoattractant scavenging receptors[3,5]. In cancer metastasis, melanoma cells disperse via catabolism of ligand and local micro-gradient generation[6]. In chemotactic mazes, amoeboid cells detect dead ends using breakdown of chemoattractant[7]. During immune responses, leukocytes pattern autologous chemical gradients through chemoattractant scavenging or through autocrine/paracrine secretion[8–12]. Finally, modification of ligands by migrating cells can generate complex patterns such as reverse chemotaxis[13]. A fundamental question raised by these observations is whether cell guidance is autonomously programmable, in a manner sufficient to impact disease at the tissue and organism scale.

To explore this question, we focus on the prominent paradigm of neutrophil swarming, as a self-organised migration behaviour. Neutrophils are first responders to tissue injury and infection and directly fight microbes through a variety of effector mechanisms, such as phagocytosis, secretion of antimicrobial molecules, and release of neutrophil extracellular traps (NETs)[14]. Neutrophils also produce chemokines and cytokines that influence the accumulation and function of other cells and ultimately shape the course of inflammation and disease. The recruitment of neutrophils is initially prompted by primary signals produced by tissue cells afflicted by injury or infection[14]. Thereafter, neutrophils begin to secrete further chemoattractants, generating tissue-scale gradients and/or waves of chemoattractants, which amplify the range of recruitment and determine the final magnitude of the response[8–11,15–17]. The process of neutrophil swarming is highly conserved and thought to impart functional benefits in fighting infection, particularly in the face of large and focal targets, such as wound infection or fungal invasions[9,18,19]. Specifically, swarms are characterized by rapid kinetics of recruitment and dense accumulation of neutrophils[8–11,15], which in principle would support prompt containment of pathogens, physical insulation of the pathogen-afflicted area and local

concentration of antimicrobial molecules. On the other hand, neutrophil accumulation is also

known to prolong pathological inflammation when not properly regulated and resolved[14,20].

Therefore, the mechanisms and rules of organisation underlying neutrophil swarm

development have important functional implications in disease.

Several conserved mechanisms have been determined that drive the initiation and evolution of

neutrophil swarming. This includes the key neutrophil-derived chemoattractants driving swarm

development (notably, the eicosanoid leukotriene B4 (LTB4) and the chemokine Cxcl8[8,9,15,21]),

signal inducers of chemoattractant secretion (such as coordinated calcium signals[9,10,22]) as well

as factors that self-limit the evolution of swarms (such as receptor desensitization and reactive

oxygen species[10,23,24]). Additional contributing factors have also been described, such as

damage associated molecular patterns (for example ATP and fMLP[9,11]) and cellular behaviours,

such as neutrophil NETosis and target cloaking by other immune cells[21,25]. Despite the overall

conservation of neutrophil swarming and associated mechanisms, the dynamics of neutrophil

swarm behaviours within a given experimental system show significant heterogeneity, ranging

from small, short-lived clusters, to persistent and larger clusters[9,26]. Although some of this

heterogeneity can be attributed to variation in the intensity and composition of tissue-derived

signals[23,25], it remains unclear whether cell-intrinsic properties account for variation in

neutrophil propensity to swarm and whether these are subject to re-programming.

Immune cell gene expression and function can be re-programmed in at least two ways. The

first is through experience and 'training', whereby immune cells exposed to a primary insult

acquire epigenetic marks that poise their gene expression profile and responsiveness to a

subsequent insult[27–29]. Neutrophils have been shown to undergo such durable training after

exposure to primary infection, through epigenetic re-programming in relevant long-lived

progenitors[30,30–33]. Innate immune training increases resistance to infection in a variety of

tumour and infection settings and involves a range of epigenome and transcriptome

changes[30,31,34,35]. Whilst it is well-established that neutrophils enhance their killing capacity

and associated gene signatures after immune training[30,36–38], it remains unclear to what extent

their ability to swarm can also undergo re-programming under these conditions. A second route

to re-programming immune function is through genetic engineering, as exemplified in tumor

immunotherapies. Specifically, chimeric antigen receptors (CAR) can be engineered in

immune cells to programme their ability to recognise and kill certain tumours[39]. Whilst this has

been developed to the largest extent for T lymphocytes[39], new approaches for CAR therapies

are geared towards the manipulation of myeloid cells, including macrophages and

neutrophils[40–43]. However, the ability to genetically reprogramme the infiltration of immune

cells to target diseased tissues remains a challenging frontier. In this context, the manipulation

of self-generated gradients is a relatively unexplored but interesting route of manipulation, as

it offers the potential to modify the composition of inflammatory niches through the

reprogramming of ligands delivered by immune cells to the site.

Here we exploit the zebrafish as a tractable model to explore the link between cell behaviours

at the microscopic with disease outcome at the whole-organism scale. We developed and

characterised a model of wound infection in which neutrophil swarm heterogeneities can be

visualized in real time in individual animals, concomitant with monitoring of disease

progression and infection outcome. We first establish factors that determine susceptibility of

wound infection, notably the role of osmotic surveillance programmes in the epithelial barrier.

We then show that training challenge of zebrafish with non-pathogenic microbes enhances

resistance to subsequent wound infections and that, under these conditions, neutrophils exhibit

enhanced swarming prowess with reduced swarm heterogeneity across individuals. We found

that this correlates with upregulation of swarm-related gene expression signatures and that

inhibition of swarm machinery (LTB4 biosynthesis pathway) limits the protective effects of

prior microbial insult. We show that targeted genetic enhancement of swarm machinery

enhances neutrophil swarming and resistance to wound infection, indicating that neutrophil

swarm reprogramming is sufficient to influence infection outcome. Finally, we show that

mathematical modelling predicts distinct mechanisms of swarm reprogramming and associated

benefits in bacterial clearance in 5-LO engineered neutrophils versus in neutrophils from

microbially trained animals.

Results

Tissue damage detection through osmotic surveillance shapes susceptibility of zebrafish larvae to pathogenic wound infections

To investigate the dynamics and functional consequences of neutrophil swarms, we employed a wound infection model. *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* is an opportunistic bacterial pathogen, present in water and soil, able to colonise wounds in multiple species. In humans, wound infections can occur through contact of injured tissue with contaminated water or surfaces[44,45]. These infections can be severe and lead to sepsis and mortality, particularly in immunocompromised individuals or in the case of large surgery-associated infections[44,45]. We previously introduced a model whereby zebrafish larvae are subjected to wounding in the presence of aqueous medium contaminated with *P. aeruginosa* PAO1 strain[9]. This experimental model is advantageous in that it recapitulates a natural route of infection, in comparison to more common microinjection routes[46], and provides a relevant setting to study the role of neutrophil swarming in defence. However, these experimental infections are inherently more variable, since heterogeneities in the injured tissue can influence the titres of microbial colonisation and the ensuing immune response.

To understand and control sources of variation in this model, we examined known aspects of the tissue response to damage. Previous studies have shown that damage detection through osmotic surveillance is important for epithelial wound closure[47], inflammatory signal production and recruitment of neutrophils[48]. In addition, these tissue damage detection pathways were shown to promote optimal defence from microbes, when the latter are microinjected into hosts[49]. We therefore aimed to establish whether wound infections are influenced by osmotic surveillance pathways, with a view to minimising variation in infection.

To test the role of osmotic surveillance, we subjected zebrafish larvae to two types of wounding, mechanical and laser wounding **(Fig. 1A, G)**, in two common zebrafish buffers E3 medium (hypotonic), Ringer medium (isotonic), as well as isotonic E3 medium (with the same sodium levels and tonicity as Ringer). The use of two wounding assays offers complementary advantages. Whilst mechanical wounding can be performed on a large scale, to screen for disease phenotypes, laser wounding permits real-time visualisation of neutrophil responses

immediately upon wounding[9,50]. In both types of wound assays, we found that larvae in

hypotonic medium were largely resistant to wound infection, whereas larvae in isotonic

medium (iso E3, Ringer) were susceptible **(Fig. 1E, H)**. In all media conditions, non-wounded

larvae were resistant to infection, confirming the wound-dependent nature of infection **(Fig.**

1E, H). To characterise the disease progression in a more granular fashion, we created a disease

scoring matrix, with phenotypes ranging from alterations in swimming behaviour, to more

extensive morphological abnormalities **(Fig. 1B)**. Larvae infected in hypotonic media showed

minimal disease symptoms and bacterial burdens in comparison to larvae infected in isotonic

media (**Fig 1C, J**).

Wound closure can be delayed in isotonic media due to lack of tissue damage detection by the

ruptured epithelium[47]. We hypothesised that this may render wounds more permissive to

bacterial colonisation, contributing to the increased burden of infection in these conditions

(Fig. 1D, I). We confirmed in our experimental setting that wound closure was delayed in

isotonic solutions (**Fig. S1A and B**, **Movie S1**). In addition, we observed a trend for reduced

neutrophil recruitment in isotonic solutions, consistent with previous reports (**Fig. S1C**). To

test whether early wound colonisation might differ in the different media, we measured

bacterial burden shortly after wound infection (10 min and 30 min), at time points shorter than

the duplication time of *P. aeruginosa*[51]. We found that at this early stage the bacterial titres

were already significantly higher in isotonic conditions, suggesting either a difference in

bacterial colonisation or a difference in the early containment by immune cells **(Fig. 1F)**. To

test direct effects of the medium composition on the growth of bacteria, we examined the

growth of PAO1 bacteria in hypotonic E3, isotonic E3, Ringer and PBS solutions. We found

comparable bacterial growth after 30 min exposure in the different media, suggesting that the

disease phenotypes of the larvae depended on the host response (**Fig. S1D**, **Movie S1**).

Together these results indicated an important role for osmotic surveillance in wound defence

and allowed us to establish the optimal conditions for recapitulating wound infection and

associated disease in larvae.

Training through microbial challenge alters neutrophil swarm-related gene expression

and enhances resistance to wound infections

We thereafter used the susceptible model of wound infection (isotonic conditions for infection/Ringer solution) to explore whether we can reprogramme the innate immune response to infection through training. To mimic vaccination challenge, we used superficial microinjection as a route. We injected non-pathogenic, CFP-expressing *Escherichia coli* MG1655[52] in the otic vesicle at 2 days post-fertilisation **(Fig. 2A)**. We found this pre-challenge increased the resistance to wound infection by *P. aeruginosa*, two days after the first challenge, as compared with controlled PBS-pre-challenged larvae **(Fig. 2B)**. Notably, in the absence of wounding, larvae were not susceptible to infection in either PBS *or E. coli*-pre-challenge, confirming again the opportunistic nature of infection **(Fig. S2A)**. Varying the dose of *E. coli* injection showed that a minimum dose was required to trigger protective effects **(Fig. S2B)**. One way of distinguishing innate immune 'training' from immune 'priming' is by assessing whether the protective effects persist after the immune response to the first challenge has passed its peak or resolved. To explore the nature of the protection observed, we determined the resolution kinetics of the first challenge, by measuring titres of *E. coli* and levels of inflammatory cytokines **(Fig 2E)**. Both markers indicated that the response to *E. coli* had largely subsided by the time the second challenge was given **(Fig 2F-J)**.

Neutrophil training is characterised by changes in transcriptomic and epigenetic signatures in differentiated neutrophils and progenitors[33]. Since the training challenge led to resistance of infection in a heterologous tissue site (tail versus ear), we hypothesised neutrophils from hematopoietic sites might be centrally altered. To explore this, we isolated neutrophils from the caudal hematopoietic tissue (CHT) **(Fig. 2K)** and found that CHT-derived neutrophils showed increased expression of genes associated with inflammation and cell migration, in particular *cxcl8a*, *5-lo* and cytoskeletal proteins, such as *tubg1* **(Fig 2L-R)**. This suggested that neutrophils may be centrally altered by training in a manner that changes their gene expression profile.

To explore epigenetic changes in genes associated to swarming, we mined published datasets in models of neutrophil training by *S. flexneri,* which is phylogenetically highly related to *E.coli*[53][38]. Zebrafish neutrophils undergo epigenetic reprogramming upon sub-lethal *Shigella flexneri* infection, and this is associated with enhanced resistance to subsequent *S. flexneri* infection. We explored whether swarm-associated genes undergo epigenetic modification in this model and found that H3K4me3 marks were induced in *Shigella*-trained animals in gene

loci associated to LTB4 synthesis and production, namely *5lo/alox-5*, *lta4h* and *cyp4f3* (Fig

2SC), with *5lo/alox-5* as the most significant hit.

Together, these analyses revealed that innate immune responses to wound infections can be

trained by prior microbial challenge and suggested that, among the many pathways of

reprogramming, neutrophil genes associated with cell migration and swarming can be subject

to reprogramming.

Neutrophil swarming is enhanced through prior training challenge, and these phenotypic

changes contribute to disease resistance

The changes in gene expression patterns in neutrophils upon training suggested that their

migratory behaviour is altered. To relate neutrophil swarm patterns with disease outcome, we

combined early imaging of wound infections (0-2 hours post infection-hpi) with monitoring of

disease outcome over a longer timescale (up to 24 hpi) in the same larvae **(Fig. 3A)**. We

confirmed that in this laser-wound assay, PBS pre-challenged, control fish were more

susceptible to PAO1 infection than *E. coli* pre-challenged fish **(Fig. S3A)**. We then compared

the behaviour of neutrophils upon wounding and found that in PBS-pre-challenged, control

animals, neutrophils exhibited both small-scale clustering and large-scale clustering **(Fig. 3B,**

Movie S2). By contrast, in *E. coli*-pre-challenged animals, we observed a more consistent scale

of clustering **(Fig. 3B, Movie S2)**. To understand differences in migratory behaviour, we

plotted the average neutrophil radial speed (Fig. 3C) and speed (Fig. S3B) over time in PBS

versus *E. coli*-pre-challenged fish. *E. coli*-pre-challenged fish showed enhanced migration

speeds towards the wound after the first wave of recruitment (1-2 hpi)(Fig. 3C and S3B).

To relate this variation in swarm kinetics to disease outcome, we plotted the average radial

speed per embryo at 1-2 hpi against the bacterial burden outcome measured from the same

larva at 24hpi (Fig 3.D). We stratified fish into four categories: i) weak neutrophil recruiters

with high bacterial burden (Group 1, G1, in **Fig. 3D**), ii) strong recruiters with high bacterial

burden (Group 2, G2, in **Fig. 3D**), iii) strong recruiters with weak bacterial burden (Group 3.

G3, in **Fig. 3D**) and iv) weak recruiters with weak bacterial burden (Group 4, G4, in **Fig. 3D**).

We considered as 'strong recruiters' those larvae in which the radial speed was above the

average radial speed across all larvae. We considered as 'high burden' all the cases above the

lowest level of CFU count at which disease symptoms (i.e. disease score more than 1, as per

table in Fig. 1B) were observed across all experiments with these two groups of larvae. The
number of larvae within G4 did not differ between PBS and *E. coli*-pre-challenged fish, and
we reason this group may represent larvae in which bacterial colonisation was weak, as there
was neither evidence for neutrophil recruitment nor bacterial burden. Most notably, we found
that upon *E. coli* training there was a significant increase of larvae in G3 and a decrease in G1
(Fig. 3E).

As an additional analysis, we measured the maximal rate of neutrophil recruitment across the
2 h imaging window. Here, we plotted the number of new neutrophils arriving at the wound
over time and determined the slope of the curve during the phase of maximal recruitment **(Fig.**
S3C). We then plotted the maximal rate of recruitment against the bacterial burden for the same
embryo. We performed similar stratification of larvae in four groups, considering 'fast
recruiters' and 'slow recruiters' as those that had a maximal rate of recruitment of either above
or below the mean maximal rate, respectively, across all larvae in both PBS and *E. coli*-pre-
challenge groups. This analysis indicated a trend for a higher probability of larvae to show fast
maximal rate of recruitment and low bacterial burden **(Fig. S3D)**, although the difference was
not found to be significant with this sample size **(Fig. S3E)**.

To measure differences in scale of recruitment, we plotted the number of cells at 2 hpi versus
the bacterial burden at 24 hpi in individual larvae. We confirmed that the initial number of
neutrophils in the field of view in PBS versus *E. coli*-pre-challenged fish was not significantly
different **(Fig. S3F)**. We stratified fish larvae in the same four groups and considered as 'strong
recruiters' those larvae in which the cell number exceeded 10 neutrophils. This was based on
the distribution of the numbers seen in our experiments and on previous papers indicating a
minimal number of clustering neutrophils to correlate with swarming kinetics of
recruitment[16,17,54]. We found that upon *E. coli* training there was a significant increase of larvae
in G3 and a decrease in G1 **(Fig. 3D)**.

The tracking analyses suggested that in a proportion of control larvae, the swarm potential of
neutrophils is sub-maximal and limits resistance to infection, whereas in *E. coli*-trained larvae,
the swarm potential is maximised across different animals. To investigate whether a change in
neutrophil swarm potential contributes to wound infection resistance, we used a specific
inhibitor for 5-lipoxygenese (5-LO), zileuton, to target the production of the swarm-driving
chemoattractant, LTB4. When fish were wounded and infected in the presence of zileuton, the

E. coli-pre-challenged fish did not show as marked an increase of infection resistance (over
PBS-pre-challenged fish), in comparison to when control vehicle (DMSO) was used **(Fig. 3J-**
K).

Together, these results indicated that innate immune training leads to changes in neutrophil
swarm patterns upon secondary pathogenic challenge, which in turn influence the probability
to resolve infection successfully.

5-lipoxygenase enhancement in neutrophils is sufficient to enhance neutrophil swarming
and resistance from wound infection

To determine whether reprogramming of neutrophil swarming is sufficient to influence wound
infections, we used genetic engineering of 5-LO in neutrophils. We hypothesised that
neutrophils expressing maximal levels of 5-LO would have enhanced swarming capacity and
that this may contribute to containment of infection. We first compared the resistance to
mechanical wound infection in transgenic larvae in which neutrophils overexpress 5-LO ('5-
LO-Neu'; for 5-lipoxygenase overexpressing neutrophils) versus control wild type larvae. We
found that 5-LO-Neu larvae showed enhanced resistance to infection, as measured by an
improvement in survival rates, disease score and bacterial burden **(Fig. 4A-C)**.

To relate neutrophil swarm patterns to disease susceptibility, we combined again live imaging
during the early stage of wound infection, with subsequent monitoring of disease progression
in individual larvae. As with our mechanical wound model, we found that the 5-LO-Neu larvae
showed greater resistance to infection in our laser wound infection model **(Fig. S4A and B)**.
By observation of the movies, we noted heterogeneity in swarm magnitude across control
larvae, which appeared to be less pronounced in 5-LO-Neu larvae **(Fig. 4D** and **Movie S3)**.
This was not explained by developmental differences in the number of the cells, as the number
of neutrophils in the field of view at the start of the movies was comparable **(Fig. S4C)**. To
quantify these differences, we first measured neutrophil speed (Fig. S4D) and radial speed (Fig.
4E) over time and found that in 5-LO-Neu, neutrophils were faster particularly in the first 1h
of observation. We then plotted bacterial burden per larva against radial speed (Fig 4F),
maximal rate of recruitment and number of cells recruited (Fig. S4E-H). Accordingly, we
stratified fish into four groups: i) weak or slow neutrophil recruiters with high bacterial burden
(Group 1, G1, in **Fig S4E, S4G** and **Fig. 4F**), ii) strong or fast recruiters with high bacterial

burden (Group 2, G2, in **Fig S4E, S4G** and **Fig. 4F**), iii) strong or fast recruiters with weak

bacterial burden (Group 3. G3, in **Fig S4E, S4G** and **Fig. 4F**) and iv) weak or slow recruiters

with weak bacterial burden (Group 4, G4, in **Fig S4E, S4G** and **Fig. 4F**). We found that in

control larvae, the main outcomes were in groups G1 and G2 whereas in 5-LO-Neu larvae there

was increased proportion of outcomes in group G3 and a decrease in group G1. Similar trends

were observed whether we used radial speed, number of cells recruited or the maximal rate of

recruitment **(Fig. 4G, S4F, S4H)**, except the results using number of cells did not reach

significance **(Fig. S4H)**. Together these results suggested that 5-LO enhancement in

neutrophils is sufficient to enhance neutrophil swarming rates and that this can provide a

beneficial outcome in a subset of larvae.

Excess neutrophil recruitment can be detrimental for resolution of inflammation and tissue

homeostasis. We therefore interrogated whether enhanced neutrophil 5-LO expression could

compromise tissue repair and regeneration. To test this, we measured tissue regeneration over

2 days post sterile wound injury. We found that 5-LO enhanced animals did not have impaired

regeneration and rather showed a trend for improved regeneration. Thus the reprogramming of

5-LO in neutrophils did not appear to have a specific physiological counter effect in wound

responses.

Distinct models of reprogramming swarming during training versus via genetic

engineering

Both natural reprogramming of neutrophils through training and targeted genetic engineering

enhanced swarming in a manner that benefited wound defence. However, the phenotypic

changes in swarming were distinct in the two cases, with a delayed enhancement of swarming

in trained animals (after 1hpi), versus an early enhancement of swarming in 5-LO-engineered

animals (before 1hpi). To understand differences in the mechanistic basis of reprogramming,

we employed mathematical modelling.

We modelled the dynamics of the swarming using the simplest model that contains essential

chemotaxis and signalling properties that are known for these cells (for the model equations

see Materials and Methods section). The chemotaxis of each neutrophil is simply described to

arise due to the difference in chemoattractant concentration on opposite sides of the cell, with

respect to the source at the wound (Fig. 5A). The chemoattractant triggers a local signal at the

cell edge, which induces cytoskeleton-driven traction forces, with the net chemotactic
migration speed given by the difference between these forces at either end of the cell. As the
local cellular signal in this model includes the effects of saturation, cells respond weakly both
to very weak gradients, and in the presence of large concentrations[55,56]. We focus here on the
long time-scale swarming behaviour. Previous work indicated neutrophils mutually stimulate
each other to secrete attractant at the wound as they cluster[9]. We therefore assume the
chemotaxis be dominated by the chemokine signal that is secreted at the wound by neutrophils,
as well as the primary tissue damage signals. In addition to core secretion of attractants by
clustering neutrophils, attractants can be further relayed in a wave-like fashion beyond the
wound focus[1,10]. When we allow attractant secretion by cells outside the wound we encounter
detrimental clustering of cells outside the wound (Fig.S5A and B). This suggests that the relay
dynamics may require more complex assumptions to be incorporated in our model. Since the
core secretion by neutrophils at the wound was sufficient to reproduce the basic pattern of
kinetics of neutrophil swarming (Fig 5B-D), we focused on this reductionist model for our
questions here.

Our model assumes that neutrophils arriving at the wound begin to secrete chemokine, thereby
increasing its amplitude at the wound, which diffuses and decays outside the wound. Within
this model the migration speed of the immune cells towards the wound decreases at high levels
of chemokine concentrations, through receptor saturation, which limits their swarming as has
been observed experimentally[23].The model includes two additional processes that occur at the
wound: First, they can spontaneously switch from secretion of chemokine to producing an
active "stop-signal", which acts to switch cells from secreting the chemokine signal. This was
implemented to simulate the rapid arrest of swarming in experimental sterile wounds
(Fig.S5C), which did not emerge by receptor saturation alone. Various pathways reported in
the literature could play the role of active stop signals[10,24,57]. Secondly, in the presence of
bacteria we assume neutrophils sense the bacteria and transition to engaging and attacking the
invaders. These attacking neutrophils are assumed to stop secreting the chemokine (or the stop-
signal), and they act to both kill and decrease growth of bacteria.

The model describes the average chemotactic migration of the cells in a circular domain around
the wound (Fig.5A), where cells are continuously added at the outer boundary to maintain the
initial density there fixed. An example of one such simulation is shown in (Fig. 5B-C, Movie
S5), where the initial condition has a random distribution of the immune cells outside the

wound. We plotted the trajectories of the cells arriving at the wound within the first 100min,

their number and the number of bacteria (Fig. 5D).

We found that the total number of recruited immune cells and bacterial growth can evolve very

differently, merely because of fluctuations in the initial distribution of the immune cells around

the wound (Fig. S5D). To understand this source of variability better, we compared events

where the final number of recruited neutrophils was comparable, but the bacterial burdens were

different (Fig. S5E and F). We found that this variation was due to the differences in the initial

number of neutrophils proximal to the wound (Fig. S5G) and this prediction matched

experimental observations from representative examples (Fig. 4 and Fig. S5H). Since our

simulations have fixed parameters, we reason the only source of noise in our simulations (S5D)

is the initial distribution of immune cells. In experimental data, we anticipate further sources

of variation to influence the scatter. For example, the number of colonising bacteria is expected

to vary, and our simulations predict a wider scatter of bacterial growth, independent of

neutrophil recruitment kinetics (Fig. S5I and J).

To explore the role of chemoattractant secretion rates in bacterial clearance, we simulated

bacterial burden and neutrophils numbers with varying of α rates. As the secretion activity

increases, more immune cells are recruited faster which results in diminished bacteria numbers

(Fig 5E). However, this improvement in the reduction of the bacterial number saturates, and

beyond a certain point higher values of α diminish neutrophil recruitment and bacterial control

(Fig 5E inset). This arises due to faster onset of receptor saturation in high attractant levels

(Fig. 5F and G). To compare kinetics of neutrophil swarming in trained versus 5-LO engineered

animals, we plotted experimental neutrophil speed towards the wound over time (Fig. 5H).

Neutrophils in control fish exhibited a plateau following the initial peak in speed. 5LO cells

moved initially significantly faster towards the wound, but converged with speeds in control

animals by ~90min. By contrast, in trained fish, neutrophils showed an additional peak in speed

at later time, at ~100min. These experimental observations can be explained by our model as

follows (Fig. 5I): the 5LO-enhanced neutrophils secrete more chemoattractant compared to

control cells, and are simulated in our model as having a larger value of α (Fig.5I). As observed

experimentally (Fig. S4G an H), our simulations show larger α accounts for higher number of

recruited immune cells and lower bacteria proliferation (Fig. 5E). To explain the behavior of

neutrophil in trained fish, we hypothesised that neutrophils in these fish have an increased level

of secretion in response to the presence of bacteria. Here neutrophils have a basal level of
secretion strength α_0, which can be further increased in response to bacteria presence (Eq.11
in Material and Methods). This combination of higher sensitivity to bacteria and increased
secretion rates recapitulated observed kinetics of delayed enhancement of neutrophil swarming
in trained fish (Fig.5I). Note that in our model there is persistent recruitment over long periods
in the presence of bacteria (Fig.5I), as opposed to very brief transient recruitment in sterile
wounds (Fig.S5C), as observed in experiments. This behavior emerges in our model simply
due to the weak stop-signal as cells in the wound continuously switch from secretion to
engaging with the bacteria.
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449 Together, this evidence showed that i) core secretion by neutrophils at the wound along with
450 stop signals describe the basic swarm kinetics of neutrophils and that ii) distinct swarm
451 reprogramming mechanisms can achieve improvement in bacterial clearance.
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Discussion

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Here, we examine whether self-generated guidance is a programmable process and the extent
to which such reprogramming can affect disease outcome. We show that neutrophil swarming
and the expression of genes for swarm machinery are altered during natural reprogramming
('training') by microbial experience. Through chemical inhibition, we found that these
alterations contribute to enhanced resistance of trained animals to pathogenic infection.
Through quantitative live imaging and modelling, we demonstrate how variations in secretion
of chemoattractant by neutrophils lead to changes in swarm kinetics, bacterial clearance and
infection outcome. Finally, we show that enhancing the ability of neutrophils to produce
autologous chemoattractants (through 5-LO engineering) is sufficient to accelerate neutrophil
swarming and improve bacterial clearance and disease progression.
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Whilst exploring tissue variables influencing bacterial wound infection, we found that osmotic
surveillance during tissue damage plays a major role in resistance to opportunistic wound
infection. This extends findings reported previously, using *P. aeruginosa* microinjection in the
context of wound infection[49]. Previous studies conversely reported that damage detection
through osmotic surveillance compromised *Candida albicans* wound infection outcome[58].
Mechanistically, this was attributed to keratinocyte movement in response to hypotonic

medium detection, which, rather than limiting microbial colonisation, appeared to favour tissue

spreading of *C. albicans*. These discrepancies suggest that the role of osmotic surveillance in

wound infection outcome depends on the type of invading microbe. For example, *P. aeruginosa*

bacteria are highly mobile[59] and thus may rely less on host tissue movements for spreading

than *C. albicans*.

Our study highlights novel routes for training in wound infection settings. We observed

improved resistance to bacterial wound infection after a pre-challenge with non-pathogenic *E.*

coli. Probiotic *E. coli* strains have been reported to have beneficial effects on viral resistance

in mouse models[60], but such training has not been reported for wound infection. Neutrophil

training in zebrafish larvae arises through changes in hematopoietic stem cells within similar

timeframes post-infection, as has been reported in adult mammals[36]. Our observations are

consistent with central reprogramming of neutrophils, as the protective effects were seen across

heterologous tissue sites and the gene expression changes were detectable in neutrophils

isolated from hematopoietic tissue. In addition, we showed that zebrafish neutrophils undergo

epigenetic modifications on swarm-associated genes during training with *Shigella flexneri*

(which are phylogenetically close to *E. coli)* in a comparable timeframe with our study[38].

We found that neutrophil swarm capacity is amenable to reprogramming after microbial

experience. Specifically, neutrophils upregulated expression of genes associated with

swarming and trained larvae were less likely to show poor swarming and high susceptibility to

infection. This suggests that training primarily benefits subgroups of larvae with submaximal

swarming. Inter-individual variation in training has notably been reported in humans exposed

to Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine, wherein training improved outcome in a

subpopulation of individuals with sub-maximal immunological profiles at the time of

vaccination[61]. Interestingly, we found that training also reduced the higher-end values for

swarm kinetics (with migration kinetics more closely clustered around a medium range). One

potential explanation is that the effect of increasing neutrophil numbers has non-linear effects

on bacterial clearance, whereby at low neutrophil numbers the changes in neutrophil kinetics

can make a significant difference in bacterial clearance whereas beyond a certain number of

recruited neutrophils, the benefit decreases. Our mathematical modelling supports this model

and suggested that beyond a certain point, increasing the secretion of chemoattractant has no

benefit for bacterial clearance and can even be detrimental to clearance. A question raised is

why neutrophil swarming has not evolved to be maximal at steady state. In our model,

enhanced swarming did not delay regeneration, suggesting that there is no detriment to physiological wound repair processes. We therefore speculate that adaptive reprogramming of neutrophil swarming may reflect a strategy to economise energy or a means to balance the risks of overt inflammation in chronic inflammatory settings.

We used mathematical modelling to understand how different dynamics of chemoattractant secretion can influence neutrophil swarm kinetics and bacterial clearance. Our experimental data indicated distinct kinetics of swarm enhancement in trained animals versus 5-LO engineered animals, wih a delayed peak of swarming in the former and an early peak in the latter. A general explanation is that in trained animals a range of genes are altered whereas in 5-LO engineered animals, the enhancement is specific to chemoattractant secretion. We explored theoretical parameters that could be altered during training. Our mathematical model predicts that a combination of upregulation of swarm machinery (e.g. 5-LO expression) together with enhanced sensitivity to bacterial detection and bacteria-dependent secretion can produce the delayed swarm peak seen in trained fish. This theory aligns with evidence from the literature, in that LTB4 secretion is triggered by bacterial detection through Toll like receptor (TLR) signalling[62] and that TLR signalling pathways can be reprogrammed during trained immunity[28]. It is noteworthy that epigenetic H3K4 marks were detected along the catabolic regulator of LTB4 *cyp4f3*, suggesting that training may fine tune LTB4 dynamics in a more complex manner. Future studies could aim to dissect these circuits and recapitulate these by genetic engineering.

Our discovery that engineering 5-LO is sufficient to improve bacterial clearance has relevance to cellular immunotherapies. Strategies for genetic modification of immune cells are growing and extending to cell types beyond lymphocytes, due to advances in genetic engineering and stem cell biology[40,41,43,63]. In this backdrop, the engineering of chemoattractant receptors has been conceptualised to improve the efficacy of CAR-engineered immune cell deployment to tumors[64]. Our study suggests that harnessing the ability of immune cells to seed chemoattractant gradients in target tissues may offer new routes for reprogramming immune cell migratory patterns.

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Competing Interests

The authors declare no competing interests

Code availability

The available codes used for modelling neutrophil swarming can be found here:

https://github.com/samantatuhin1991/immune-swarming-model

Methods

Experimental model and subject details

All zebrafish were maintained in accordance with UK Home Office regulations under the UK Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (PPL number PP4458156), with approval from the University Biomedical Service Committee. Adult fish were maintained and bred following established protocols[65]. Briefly, zebrafish were bred and maintained under standard conditions at 28.5 ± 0.5 °C on a 14 h light:10 h dark cycle. Embryos were collected from natural spawnings at 3 hours post-fertilization (hpf), bleached for 5 minutes in 0.003% sodium hypochlorite (NaOCl; Cleanline, CL3013), and rinsed three times with E3 medium. They were subsequently incubated at 28 °C in E3 medium supplemented with 0.1 μg /ml methylene blue (Sigma-Aldrich, M9140-25G). For imaging experiments, E3 medium was additionally supplemented with 0.003% 1-phenyl-2-thiourea (PTU; Sigma Aldrich, P7629) to inhibit pigmentation and preserve optical transparency.

For experiments that required *E. coli* training, *E. coli* was administered to larvae at 2 days post-fertilization (dpf) and subsequent re-challenge experiments were done at the 4 dpf stage. In experiments without training, larvae at 3-4 dpf were used. For live imaging, larvae were anesthetized in appropriate buffer containing 160-200 mg/L MS-222 (Sigma-Aldrich, E10521-50G). Where indicated, larvae were treated with Zileuton (20 μM, Tocris, 3308) or appropriate volume of vehicle (DMSO (Sigma-Aldrich, 276855-100ML)) solution by immersion.

The following transgenic zebrafish lines were used: Tg(*lyz*:GCamp6F)*cu104* and Tg(*lyz*:tRFP-5LO) *cu106* from previously described work[9] ,Tg(*mpx*:GFP)i114[66], Tg(*runx1+23*:mCherry).

Bacterial culture and preparation

For *E. coli* injection, cyan fluorescent protein (CFP)-expressing *E. coli* MG1655 7740 strain was developed as described previously[67]. A single colony was obtained from a four-way streak on antibiotic-free LB Agar (Melford, A20020-500.0) plate. The colony was inoculated into 50 ml of antibiotic-free LB broth (Formedium, LBX0102) and cultured at 37 °C with shaking until the OD_{600} reading reached 0.8-0.9. The culture was then aliquoted into 1 ml stocks in antibiotic-free LB broth with 20% v/v glycerol (Fisher Scientific, G/0650/17), snap-frozen with liquid nitrogen, and stored at -80 °C until usage. On the day of the experiment, aliquots of *E. coli* were thawed at 37 °C, pelleted by centrifugation at $5,000 \times g$ for seven minutes at 4 °C, and

washed twice with PBS (Sigma Aldrich, D8537). The bacteria were finally suspended in PBS

with 10% v/v phenol red (Sigma, P0290).

For *P. aeruginosa* infection, PAO1 strain was used[9]. One day prior to infection, a single colony

of *P. aeruginosa* was obtained from a four-way streak on Pseudomonas Isolation Agar (PIA;

BD Difco, 292710) supplemented with cetrimide and nalidixic acid (E&O Laboratories Ltd,

LS0006) and glycerol. The colony was inoculated into 5 ml of antibiotic-free LB broth and

cultured at 37 °C with shaking for 24 h. On the day of the experiment, the overnight culture

was diluted in fresh LB and incubated to mid-logarithmic phase (OD_{600} = 0.6–0.8). Bacterial

density was adjusted to 3×10^5 CFU/mL using spectrophotometric estimation. Bacteria were

pelleted at $1700 \times g$ for five minutes and washed twice with PBS to remove residual growth

medium, then resuspended in PBS.

PBS and *E. coli* injections

On the day of injections, *E. coli* injection mix was prepared as described above. PBS injection

mix was prepared as PBS with 10% v/v phenol red for control. Larvae were anaesthetised in

E3 medium supplemented with 0.1 µg/ml methylene blue and 160-200mg/L MS-222. The left

otic vesicle of each zebrafish larva was then injected with 2 drops of 0.125 nL of PBS or *E.*

coli injection mix with a pressure of 20 psi using Picospritzer III microinjector (Intracell), as

previously described[68]. To confirm the dose of *E. coli* injected, 2 drops of 0.125 nL of injection

mix was directly injected into a microcentrifuge tube containing 100 µl PBS after the injections

and were then plated onto antibiotic-free LB Agar plates overnight at 37 °C at 10^0 and 10^{-1}

dilution. The bacterial colony forming units (CFU) were then determined by counting the

number of CFP^+ colonies after overnight incubation. Only when the *E. coli* injection dose

exceeded 400 CFU/ml were the larvae included for subsequent experiments. After injections,

larvae were transferred to fresh E3 medium supplemented with 0.1 µg/mL methylene blue and

kept at 28 °C until further use.

Tail transection, wound infection and survival assay

Zebrafish larvae were transferred to a Petri dish containing Ringer's solution and 160-200 mg/L

MS-222. Tail transection was done using a surgical blade (Swann Morton, 0510) at the distal

boundary of the notochord, avoiding injury to the notochord. Non-transected larvae served as

controls. Immediately after tail transection, larvae were transferred to a six-well plate

containing Ringer's solution with 3×10^5 CFU/mL *P. aeruginosa* (for the role of specific

buffers, E3/isotonic E3/Ringer were used as indicated) and incubated at 32 °C for 3 h. After

incubation, larvae were washed five times in E3 medium (without methylene blue). Individual

larvae were then placed in wells of a 24-well plate containing 1 mL E3 (without methylene

blue) and monitored for survival and disease progression. For 5-LO inhibition assays, 20 μM

zileuton treatment (diluted in DMSO) was initiated 1 h prior to tail transection and maintained

until the end of the experiment.

Survival was assessed immediately after washing, at 3 hpi, and 24 hpi. Assessment was also

done at intermediate time points (7 hpi and 10 hpi) when experiment was done for 24 h. For

48h time point experiments, analysis was done at 3 h, 24 h and 48 h. Phenotypic disease scoring

was based on behavioural responses, transparency, tissue integrity, circulation, and survival.

Between observation timepoints, larvae were returned to 32 °C. A score of 4 was defined as

death of the organism that was determined by the absence of heartbeat as observed under the

microscope.

Measurement of regeneration after sterile tail transection

Caudal fin transection of zebrafish larvae (3dpf) was performed using a sterile surgical blade

at the boundary of the notochord, without injuring the notochord. Following injury, larvae were

rinsed with E3 medium and placed in individual wells of a 24-well plate in E3 medium, at

28.5°C. Images of each larva was acquired on a stereomicroscope (Zeiss Stemi 2000-C)

immediately after caudal fin transection (0h), one day after transection (24h) and two days after

transection (48 h).

For every larva, the caudal fin area posterior to the notochord was outlined using the Freehand

selection tool in ImageJ/Fiji for images acquired at all the three time points. The outlined area

was measured to obtain a total surface area of the region of interest (ROI). The area of the ROI

at 24 h and 48 h for each larva was normalized by the area of the ROI for the same larva at 0

h.

Bacterial burden quantification

At indicated timepoints, zebrafish larvae from each condition were pooled into groups of three

larvae and homogenised in 300 μL PBS containing 0.1% v/v Triton X-100 (VWR, 28817.295)

using sterile pestles. Serial dilutions (up to 10^{-3}) were prepared in PBS and plated on PIA

supplemented with cetrimide and nalidixic acid (as per manufacturer's instructions) for *P.*

aeruginosa or antibiotic-free LB agar for *E. coli*. CFU were then counted after 24 hours
incubation.

Fluorescence-Activated Cell Sorting (FACS)

Approximately 400 embryos from a cross between Tg(*mpx*:GFP)^{i114} and
Tg(*runx1+23*:mCherry) transgenic lines were injected with either *E. coli* or PBS (200 per
group) in the otic vesicles at 2 dpf as described above. At 4 dpf, larvae were collected into
microcentrifuge tubes, rinsed twice with 1x HBSS (prepared by diluting 10x HBSS (Gibco™,
14175095) in UltraPure™ DNase/RNase-Free Distilled Water (Invitrogen™, 10977035)), and
placed on ice for 10 minutes to immobilise the larvae. The caudal haematopoietic tissue (CHT)
regions from the larvae were dissected on sterile petri dishes using ethanol-sterilised scalpels
and centrifuged to remove excess HBSS.

For tissue dissociation, 500 μL of digestion solution (2% w/v collagenase (Gibco™, 17104019)
and 40% v/v trypsin (Gibco™, 15400054) in 1x HBSS) was added to each tube. Samples were
incubated at 30 °C for 30 minutes with periodic trituration by pipetting. Digestion was halted
with 1x HBSS containing 10% v/v heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum (FBS; Gibco™,
A5670701). All subsequent steps were performed on ice. Cells were centrifuged at 500 × g for
5 minutes at 4 °C and then resuspended in sorting solution (1x HBSS supplemented with 10
mM HEPES 15630056) and 2% FBS) and filtered through a pre-wetted 40 μm cell strainer
(Falcon, 352340). Filtered cells were centrifuged and resuspended in 1 ml sorting solution in a
microcentrifuge tube. Cell viability and concentration were assessed using trypan blue (Gibco,
15250) staining and a hemocytometer, respectively.

GFP-positive neutrophils were FAC-sorted using a BD FACS Aria III (Becton Dickinson)
directly into 100 μL of lysis solution supplied with the RNAqueous® Micro Kit (ThermoFisher,
AM1931).

RNA extraction and cDNA synthesis

For transcriptomic analysis, RNA isolation was done from the sorted cells using the
RNAqueous® Micro Kit (Thermo Fisher, AM1931) according to the manufacturer's
instructions, including DNase I digestion step to eliminate genomic DNA contamination.

For cytokine expression analysis following PBS/ *E. coli* injections, at 2 dpf, RNA was extracted
from groups of 10 wild-type zebrafish per condition (non-injected, PBS-injected, and *E. coli*-
injected) after euthanasia with MS-222 at 4.5 hours post-injection using the RNeasy® Mini Kit

(Qiagen, 74104). Subsequently, from 3 to 10 dpf, groups of 8-10 larvae per condition were

euthanised with MS-222 prior to RNA extraction.

The obtained RNA concentrations were measured using the Nanodrop. Purified RNA was then

reverse transcribed into cDNA using the Maxima H Minus First Strand cDNA Synthesis Kit

(ThermoFisher, K1651) following the manufacturer's protocol. Finally, cDNA was stored at -

20 °C until further use for quantitative PCR (qPCR) analysis.

Gene expression analysis

The qRT-PCR was performed using the PowerTrackTM SYBR^{TM} Green Master Mix

(ThermoFisher, A46012) and carried out in the LightCycler® 480 Instrument II (Roche). For

transcriptomic analysis, each reaction contained 0.5 ng of cDNA, 10 nM of primer pairs, and

1X master mix. The zebrafish gene *rpl32* served as the reference for normalisation.

For cytokine expression analysis, each reaction contained 5 ng cDNA, 500 nM primer pairs,

and 1X master mix and the zebrafish gene *ef1a* served as the reference for normalisation.

The mRNA levels of target genes relative to a housekeeping gene (**Table 1**) were calculated

using the Livak (2$^{-\Delta\Delta Cqt}$) method[69]. All qRT-PCR reactions for transcriptomic analysis were

performed in duplicate with five biological repeats for transcriptomic analysis while the

cytokine expression experiments were performed in triplicate with three biological repeats.

Table 1

Gene	Primer Sequences (5′ → 3′)
5-lo	Forward: GAGATGGCAGGGCTCGATTG
	Reverse: TACTCATCGGGAAGCCAGGA
cx43	Forward: GCTCTCCACTCTTTACTTCTTTCCAG
	Reverse: GTATTGCACTTGAAAGCTGACTGC
cxcl8a	Forward: GTCGCTGCATTGAAACAGAA
	Reverse: CTTAACCCATGGAGCAGAGG
cxcl8b	Forward: CTACCGAGACGTGGGTGATT
	Reverse: GCTCGGTGAATGGTCATTTT
cxcr2	Forward: TGACCTGCTTTTTTCCCTCACT

	Reverse: TGACCGGCGTGGAGGTA
cxcr1	Forward: GTGATCGTACGCGCTATGGA
	Reverse: ATTCGGGTTGCTAATCGCCA
tubg1	Forward: GGATACACACCGCTGACCAC
	Reverse: AGCCTCCTCATCACATCCAGA
rpl32	Forward: CCCTCACCAAACCTAAGATCGT
	Reverse: CTCCAGTTTGCCCTGATCTTG
ef1a (housekeeping)	Forward: AAGGAGAAGATCGACCGTCG
	Reverse: TGATTGAGGGAAATTCACTTGG
cxcl18b	Forward: TGCCAGTGTGAAGAGTCATC
	Reverse: TCGCAGTTTGGTCTTTTAGGG
il6	Forward: AGACGAGCAGTTTGAGAGAGATT
	Reverse: GTTTGAGGAGAGGAGTGCTGAT
il1b	Forward: ATCAAACCCCAATCCACAGAGT
	Reverse: GGCACTGAATCCACCACGTT

ChIP-seq   Data   Analysis   and   Visualisation

H3K4me3 ChIP-seq data from *Shigella*-trained zebrafish neutrophils were obtained from GEO

accession GSE217063[38].Processed peak files were filtered to extract signal values and q-values

for promoter regions (≤1 kb from transcription start site) of five swarming-associated genes

(*cyp4f3, lta4h, alox5a, pla2g4aa, alox5ap*). Heatmaps were generated using the pheatmap

package in R, with statistical significance ($q < 0.05$) indicated by asterisks. Permission for data

use was obtained from the corresponding author of the original study.

Two-photon imaging and laser wounding

Two photon imaging was performed in Tg(*lyz*:GCaMP6f)[cu104] larvae or larvae from crosses

between Tg(*lyz*:GCaMP6f) x Tg(*lyz*:tRFP-5LO). Transgenic larvae expressing the calcium

indicator GCaMP6f were screened to ensure high reporter expression. Larvae exhibiting strong

fluorescence and normal morphology were selected for imaging and infection. Selected larvae

were anaesthetised and mounted in a mixture of 1.2% low-melting-point agarose (Invitrogen,

16520) and the medium (E3, isotonic E3, Ringer) containing 160-200 mg/L MS-222. Imaging

under sterile conditions was performed as as previously described[50]. For sterile imaging, larvae

were mounted on a 35 mm glass-bottom dish with a 14 mm microwell #1.5 coverglass. Excess

agarose was removed before solidification to embed the larvae in a thin layer. For infection
imaging, larvae were mounted in a custom-built coverslip chamber consisting of glass
coverslips sealing both the top and bottom of the sample onto a metallic ring. Larvae were
oriented laterally, and the agarose was allowed to solidify. After agarose solidification, the
urogenital region was exposed by carefully removing surrounding agarose under a dissecting
microscope using a pair of forceps, allowing bacterial access post-wounding. The chamber (for
infection conditions) or dishes (for sterile conditions) were filled with 1 mL or 4 mL of Ringer's
solution containing 160-200 mg/L MS-222 and 3×10^5 CFU/mL PAO1. For sterile conditions,
appropriate buffer (Ringer/ E3 or isotonic E3) was used as indicated.
Laser ablation and time-lapse imaging were performed on a LaVision TriM Scope multiphoton
microscope equipped with an electro-optic modulator for rapid power modulation. A Spectra-
Physics Insight DeepSee dual-line laser was tuned to 900 nm for imaging and 1,040 nm for
ablation, with imaging power set to ~500 mW at the specimen plane. Image acquisition was
controlled using ImSpector Pro software (version 5.0.284.0; LaVision Biotec, ©1998–2016).
Two-photon imaging was conducted with a 25×/NA 1.05 water-dipping objective. A 40 μm-
diameter region of interest was defined on a single superficial focal plane (240 nm/pixel, 15 μs
dwell time). Z-stacks (~20 planes, 2 μm step size) were acquired every 20 s. Laser wounding
was initiated after a 2 min pre-wound baseline, followed by 2 h of post-wound imaging. Focus
was maintained throughout acquisition. Image stacks were processed in Fiji using maximum-
intensity z-projections to generate neutrophil-swarming time-lapse movies for subsequent
analysis.
762
763 **Image analyses**
764 ***Defining the cumulative number of cells arriving at the wound***
765 The cumulative number of neutrophils that reach the wound were calculated by manually
766 counting the neutrophils reaching the wound in blinded datasets using ImageJ/Fiji overtime.
767
Cell trajectories speed and radial speed
Neutrophils were semi-automatically tracked using Imaris v8.2 (Bitplane AG, Zürich,
Switzerland) on 2D maximum intensity projections of the 4D time-lapse movies. Speed and
cell position data of the tracked cells overtime from Imaris were exported using Excel 2016.
Radial speed was calculated using MATLAB scripts developed previously[9]. Briefly, for
normalised radial speed calculations, instantaneous speed values for individual neutrophils
were divided by the mean instantaneous speed value of the corresponding embryo and

multiplied for the cosine of the angle. Tissue drift was observed in the first 20 minutes after
LW, therefore, these timepoints were excluded from speed and radial speed analyses. Movies
in which there was considerable tissue drift throughout the imaging window or where the
wound was too small to cause any detectable response were excluded from the analysis.
779

Defining maximum rate of recruitment
After image acquisition, each movie was manually analysed using Fiji, to determine the number
of cells recruited to the wound overtime. Using the number of cells recruited at set time points
(at 0 min, 5 min and then every 15 min), the maximum rate of recruitment's function was
calculated. In this, only the active recruitment timepoints were considered (i.e. if the
recruitment started at 15 min, the timepoints 0 and 5 min were not considered. Similarly, if the
recruitment of cells plateaued at later timepoints, those timepoints were not considered for the
calculation).
788

789   ***Measuring rate of wound closure***
790

Time-lapse movies of laser wounding in zebrafish larvae (3dpf) in three buffers (E3, isotonic
E3 and Ringer) were acquired as mentioned above. All movies were blinded before analysis of
wound closure. Each time lapse movie was opened using ImageJ/Fiji. The first slice in which
the impact of the wound is visible is noted. For analysis of the wound closure, the slice after
the first visible impact of the wound is selected as the time of wound (t=0 mins). Using the
freehand selection tool, the margin of the wound is selected as the region of interest (ROI) and
the area of the ROI measured. Similarly, the wound region is outlined in all subsequent time
points, and their corresponding area of ROI is measured (until t=20 mins). Exporting the area
onto an excel sheet, the area at each time point is normalized by the initial area (t=0). The
resulting value is plotted over time. A non-linear regression (curve fit) analysis was done using
GraphPad Prism. Briefly, the one phase decay model with the least squares regression method
was employed. The comparison was done to check if the best-fit values for the three conditions
differ for all parameters (Y0, plateau and K).
804

805   ***Statistical analyses***
806

All statistical tests were performed in Prism10 (GraphPad Software, La Jolla, CA). The
statistical test and the n number are indicated in the figure legends. The error bars show
standard error of the mean except for bacterial burden data where error bars represent 95%
confidence intervals of the median. Where the distribution was verified as normal, outliers were
removed by applying Rout test. Live imaging experiments were acquired in minimum five
independent experiments. A normal distribution test was performed prior to any *t*-test statistical
analyses. Normal distribution was assessed using *Shapiro-Wilk test*.

Theoretical model

The signal triggered by the local concentration of the chemokine ($c(r)$), at the cell edge is given
by (Fig.5(a,b)):

$$s(r) = \frac{c(r)}{c(r)+c_s} \qquad (1)$$

And the net cell speed up the chemokine gradient is given by the difference of the traction
forces across the opposite ends of the cell, with respect to the direction of the wound (given by
unit vector $\hat{n}$, Fig.5(a,b))

$$\vec{v}(r) = v_0[s(r+R) - s(r-R)]\hat{n} \qquad (2)$$

Where R is the typical cell radius and v_0 its maximal migration speed. We ignore here the
random component to the cell speed, so that we focus on the average speed towards the wound
due to the chemokine signal.

We focus here on the long-time swarming behavior, which we assume to be dominated by the
chemokine signal that is secreted at the wound. We assume that the chemokine concentration
has an exponentially profile decaying radially away from the wound, with its amplitude at the
wound cite dependent on the number of chemokine secreting neutrophils (n_s). Neutrophils
arriving at the wound are assumed to start secreting chemokine, so that the chemokine profile
has the form:

$$c(r,t) = \left(c_0 + \alpha n_s(t)\right) \exp\left(-\frac{r}{r_0}\right) \quad (3)$$

The equation for the evolution of the number of chemokine secreting neutrophils at the wound
is given by

$$\frac{dn_s(t)}{dt} = J_{wound} - \gamma(t)n_s(t) - k_{\text{to\_attack}}(t)\,n_s(t) \qquad (4)$$

Where J_{wound} is the flux of cells arriving at the wound from the migration domain (Fig.Xa).

The second and third terms describe the rates at which the chemokine secreting cells change

their states to "stop-signal" mode (n_{ss}) and bacteria-attack model (n_b).

The secreting neutrophils undergo a spontaneous transition to a "stop-signal" mode (n_{ss}), at a

rate γ. We assume that this rate has a basal value (γ_0), but is dominated by the "stop-signal"

secreted by n_{ss} cells, in the form:

843
$$\gamma(t) = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 \frac{n_{ss}(t)}{n_{ss}(t) + n_{s,ss}} \quad (5)$$

844 Where γ_1 is the parameter describing the "stop-signal" effectiveness, and $n_{s,ss}$ describes the

845 saturation of the response to this signal. The number of "stop-signal" cells evolves according

846 to the following equation

847
$$\frac{dn_{ss}(t)}{dt} = \gamma n_s(t) - k_{\text{to\_attack}}(t) \, n_{ss}(t) \, (6)$$

Note that while the influx of cells into the wound is discrete, determined by the arrival of the

particles migrating to the wound within the simulation domain (Fig.5a), the subsequent

evolution of the numbers of cells in each of the states evolve according to continuum equations

(Eqs.4,6) for simplicity.

Finally, we consider the dynamics of the invading bacteria and their effect on the neutrophils.

The neutrophils are able to sense the presence of bacteria [ref] and this signal, which is

proportional to the number of bacteria, triggers the transition of neutrophils from the

chemokine and stop-signal secreting states into "attack" mode (n_b), at a rate given by

856
$$k_{\text{to\_attack}}(t) = k_{\text{to\_attack,0}} \cdot \frac{B(t)}{B(t) + B_{\text{sat}}} \quad (7)$$

857 Where $k_{\text{to\_attack,0}}$ is some constant rate, $B(t)$ is the number of bacteria in the wound at time t

858 and B_{sat} is some saturation constant. The equation of the time evolution of the number of

859 neutrophils in "attack" mode is given by

860
$$\frac{dn_b(t)}{dt} = k_{\text{to\_attack}}(t) \cdot [n_s(t) + n_{ss}(t)] - \beta \cdot \frac{B(t)}{B(t) + B_{\text{sat,1}}} \cdot n_b(t) \quad (8)$$

861 Where the last term describes the rate at which neutrophils get killed/consumed due to their

862 engagement with the bacteria. This term includes a saturation which describes a maximal

863 number of bacteria that each neutrophil can interact with, of order of the saturation constant

864 $B_{\text{sat,1}}$.

865 The dynamics of the bacteria is given by the following equation

866
$$\frac{dB(t)}{dt} = k_{\text{grow}}(t) \cdot B(t) - \eta n_b(t) \cdot \frac{B(t)}{B(t) + B_{\text{sat,1}}} \quad (9)$$

867 Where the first term describes their growth rate, given by

868
$$k_{\mathrm{grow}}(t) = \frac{k_{\mathrm{grow},0}}{1+n_b(t)/N_{\mathrm{att,grow}}} \qquad (10)$$

869 Where $k_{\mathrm{grow},0}$ is a constant, and we consider that the neutrophils can diminish the bacterial

870 growth rate, as described by the denominator. The last term in Eq.(9) describes the rate at which

871 bacteria are removed/destroyed by the neutrophils.

872 Finally, we also consider that the secretion of the chemoattractant can be increased in response

873 to the presence of bacteria. We use a form as in Eq.(7), such that

874
$$\alpha(t) = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \cdot \frac{B(t)}{B(t)+B_{\mathrm{s}}} \qquad (11)$$

875 The list of the model parameters is given in Table I in the Supplmentary Information section.

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Figure Legends

Figure 1. Osmotic surveillance determines susceptibility to wound infection.

A. Schematic detailing the mechanical wound (MW) wound-infection model by tail fin (TF) transection method in the presence of *P. aeruginosa* PAO1.

B. Parameters assessed in the disease scoring matrix to accord a disease progression stage to each zebrafish larva.

C. Disease progression in the specified group of larvae at the indicated time points. Representative of three independent experiments, with n ≥ 24 larvae per group.

D. Bacterial burden of *P. aeruginosa* in the specified groups of zebrafish larvae at 24 hpi (hours post infection). CFU, colony forming units. (Representative of three independent experiments with n ≥9 larvae per group used for CFU analysis in each experiment). (mean ± SD). *One-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test, ***$P < 0.001$*

E. Survival curves from zebrafish larvae when exposed to indicated buffers and *P. aeruginosa* infection upon MW. (Representative of three independent experiments with n ≥ 24 larvae per group for the wounded-infected; n ≥ 9 larvae per group for the non-wounded infected, in each experiment). *Log-rank (Mantel-Cox) test; ***$P < 0.001$*

F. Bacterial burden of *P. aeruginosa* in the specified groups of zebrafish larvae at early time points (10 mins and 30 mins) of infection. (Representative of three independent experiments with n ≥ 12 larvae per group per time point in each experiment. (mean ± SD). CFU, colony forming units. *One-way ANOVA with, Šídák's multiple comparisons test, **$P < 0.01$*

G. Schematic detailing the laser wound (LW) infection model. CHT: caudal hematopoietic tissue; VF: ventral fin.

H. Survival curves from zebrafish larvae when exposed to indicated buffers and *P. aeruginosa* infection upon LW. (Representative of three independent experiments with n ≥ 24 larvae per group for the wounded-infected; n≥12 larvae per group for the non-wounded infected, in each experiment). *Log-rank (Mantel-Cox) test, *$P < 0.05$*

I. Bacterial burden of *P. aeruginosa* in the specified groups of zebrafish larvae at 24 hpi (hours post infection). Representative of three independent experiments, with n ≥12 larvae per group in each experiment. (mean ± SD). CFU, colony forming units. *Unpaired t test, *$P < 0.05$*

1084   J. Disease progression in the specified group of larvae at the indicated time points.

1085     Representative of three independent experiments with n ≥ 24 larvae per group.

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1087 **Figure 2: Immune training enhances resistance to wound infections and reprograms**

1088 **genes associated to swarming.**

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1090   A. Schematic of the training experiment. Zebrafish larvae pre-challenged by PBS or a dose

1091     of *E. coli* in the otic vesicle (OV) at 2 days post fertilization (dpf) stage and

1092     subsequently subjected to mechanical wounding in the tail fin (TF) and *P. aeruginosa*

1093     PAO1 infection at 4 dpf.

1094   B. Survival curves from control (PBS) and trained (EC) zebrafish larvae upon *P.*

1095     *aeruginosa* infection following MW. (Representative of three independent experiments

1096     with n ≥ 36 larvae per group in each experiment). *Log-rank (Mantel-Cox) test; ****P*

1097     *< 0.0001.*

1098   C. Bacterial burden of *P. aeruginosa* in the control and trained zebrafish larvae at 24 hpi

1099     (hours post infection). (Representative of three independent experiments, with n ≥ 9

1100     larvae per group used for CFU analysis in each experiment. (mean ± SD). CFU, colony

1101     forming units. *One-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparisons test, *P < 0.05*

1102   D. Disease progression in the control and trained zebrafish larvae at the indicated time

1103     points. Representative of three independent experiments with n ≥ 36 larvae per group

1104     in each experiment.

1105   E. Schematic detailing the assessment of *E. coli* burden and cytokine profile in whole

1106     zebrafish larvae after primary challenge (PBS/ *E. coli*) for trained immunity induction.

1107   F. Bacterial counts at the indicated time points after injection of *E. coli* in the otic vesicle

1108     (OV) of the zebrafish larvae. Representative of three independent experiments, with n

1109     ≥ 12 larvae for each time point.

1110   G-J. Change in the expression profile of the indicated cytokines in naive and trained

1111     zebrafish larvae at the specific time points after primary challenge. Representative of

1112     three independent experiments, with n ≥ 8 larvae at each time point.

1113   K. Schematic describing the isolation of neutrophils by Fluorescence Activated Cell

1114     Sorting (FACS) from the hematopoietic site (CHT: Caudal hematopoietic tissue) of

1115     zebrafish larvae, followed by transcript analysis using RT-PCR.

1116   L-R. Change in the expression profile of the indicated genes in naive and trained zebrafish

1117     larvae at 4dpf (2 days after primary challenge). Quantitative PCR data are presented as

mean ± S.E.M., with expression levels normalised to PBS-treated control groups (n=5 independent experiments, with each replicate representing a pool of 150-200 larvae at 4 dpf). Statistical significance was assessed using the Mann-Whitney test/ t-test (*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$).

Figure 3 Immune training induces alterations in neutrophil swarming that are beneficial for bacterial defence

A. Schematic of experiment with control, PBS pre-challenged or trained, E. Coli pre-challenged (EC) zebrafish larvae subjected to laser wounding (LW), followed by infection with P. aeruginosa (PAO1) and simultaneous confocal imaging.

B. Time lapse images of representative movies of control and trained larvae at 1 min prior LW (-1 min), at the time of LW (0 min), at 30 min and 90 min post LW. White dashed lines correspond to the CHT: caudal hematopoietic tissue and VF: ventral fin. Red dashed lines correspond to the site of the LW. On the far-right, neutrophil trajectories of same movie are depicted wherein each colour corresponds to a different neutrophil trajectory. Scale bar 50 μm.

C. Radial speed quantification of tracked cells in control (PBS) (black) and trained EC animals (pink) overtime after laser wound and infection. To reduce noise moving average with overlapping window of 3 point was used. Multiple unpaired t test ** $p < 0.01$.

D. Summary of individual larva-based analyses of control (PBS) (black) and trained (EC) animals (pink). The y-axis on the graph depicts bacterial burden in larva at 24 hours post infection (hpi) (after LW and infection), and the x-axis indicates the average radial speed 60-120 minutes post LW. Thresholds are set at the minimum PAO1 CFU value in which disease symptoms were observed (stage 1 or above, diamond shape), and the mean radial speed of all the animals in the same interval. Black rectangles and text indicate the movies used for representative images in B. Different shapes show the individual disease stages of each larva.

E. Contingency analysis of groups in D. n=16 (PBS) and n=17 (EC). Fisher's exact test * $p < 0.05$.

F-G. Survival curves from control (PBS) and trained (EC) zebrafish larvae upon PAO1 infection following mechanical wound. Larvae were pre-treated with DMSO or 20μM Zileuton (Zil), 1h prior to wounding and kept in this medium until the end of the

experiment Representative of three independent experiments with n ≥28 larvae per group for each experiment in E, and n ≥ 20 larvae in F. Log-rank (Mantel-Cox) test; * p < 0.05 , ns p > 0.05.

    H-I. Bacterial burden of P. aeruginosa in larvae from groups in E and F respectively. Representative of three independent experiments with n ≥ 9 larvae per group used for CFU analysis in each experiment. (mean ± SD). CFU, colony forming units. Unpaired t test with Welch's correction. * p < 0.05, ns p > 0.05.

Figure 4: Genetic enhancement of neutrophil LTB4 synthesis is sufficient to alter neutrophil swarm kinetics and infection outcome.

A. Survival curves from control (CTR) zebrafish larvae and larvae overexpressing 5-LO in neutrophils (5-LO-Neu) upon *P. aeruginosa* infection following MW. Representative of three independent experiments with n ≥ 50 larvae per group in each experiment. *Log-rank (Mantel-Cox) test; * p < 0.05.*

B. Bacterial burden of fish in survival experiments (A). Representative of three independent experiments with n ≥ 9 larvae per group used for CFU analysis in each experiment. *Unpaired t test with Welch's correction; * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01.*

C. Disease progression in the specified group of larvae at the indicated time points. Representative of three independent experiments with n ≥ 50 larvae per group in each experiment.

D. Time lapse images of representative movies of CTR and 5-LO-Neu at 1 min prior to LW (-1 min), at the time of LW (0 min), at 30 min and 90 min after LW. White dashed lines indicated the CHT: caudal hematopoietic tissue and VF: ventral fin. Red dashed line corresponds to the site of the laser wound (LW). On the right column neutrophil trajectories of same movie are represented wherein each colour indicates a different neutrophil trajectory. Scale bar 50 μm.

E. Radial speed quantification of tracked cells in control (CTR) *(black)* and 5-LO-Neu animals *(pink)* overtime after laser wound and infection. To reduce noise moving average with overlapping window of 3 point was used *Multiple unpaired t-test. *** p <0.001.*

F. Summary of individual larva-based analyses of control (CTR) *(black)* and 5-LO-Neu animals *(pink)*. The y-axis on the graph depicts bacterial burden in larva at 24 hours post infection (hpi) (after LW and infection), and the x-axis indicates the average radial

speed 25-60 minutes post LW. Thresholds are set at the minimum PAO1 CFU value in which disease symptoms were observed (stage 1 or above, diamond shape), and the mean radial speed of all the animals in the same interval. Black rectangles and text indicate the movies used for representative images in D. Different shapes show the individual disease stages of each larva.

G. Contingency analysis of groups in F. n=15 (CTR) and n=18 (5-LO-Neu). *Fisher's exact test* * *p < 0.05.*

Figure 5: Mathematical modelling predicts how variation in neutrophil chemoattractant secretion influences bacterial clearance.

A. Schematic of the simulated domain around the wound. Cells are initially placed randomly with uniform average density, and have a net migration speed towards the wound given by Eqs.(1,2). The simulated domain is bounded at its centre by the wound (red circle), where cells accumulate. At the outer boundary (green dashed line), there is an influx of cells, at random places around the edge, to maintain the density at the edge constant on average. The bottom panel explains how we calculate the average chemotactic cell speed by the difference between the traction forces at the opposing ends of the cell, with respect to the wound direction (Eq.2).

B. Snapshots of the simulated cells during an example of a recruitment process, with cells arriving in the wound (red) secreting chemoattractant.

C. heatmap giving the speed towards the wound at different locations, at the same times of (B).

D. Time series of the accumulated number of immune cells arriving in the wound (black line) and number of bacteria (blue line) from the example in (B,C) (see Movie S4).

E. Results of 40 simulations of different random initial conditions, for several values of the chemoattractant secretion strength parameter α (Eq.3). We plot the log of the number of bacteria (Eq.9) and number of recruited neutrophils that arrived at the wound by the final time of the simulation (100 min). The point highlighted by a square corresponds to the example of the recruitment process shown in (B-D). In the inset we show the mean values of these scatter clouds.

F. Mean number of recruited immune cells as function of time, for the different values of α in (E).

G. As in (F), for the mean number of bacteria.

H. Average speed towards the wound as function of time, for the cells outside the wound,

normalized by the value of the first peak of the WT cells (black line). Pink and green

lines give the data for the 5LO and E-coli-treated fish respectively.

I. As in (H) from the simulations, for the following parameter values: WT-like: α=10,

5LO-like: α=35, E. coli-like: $\alpha_0 = 11$, $\alpha_1 = 89$ with B_s =350.

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A

B Cell positions
t = 0.00 min   t = 30.00 min   t = 100.00 min

C v(r,t) field + cell positions,
t = 0.00 min   t = 30.00 min   t = 100.00 min

D

E α=10 α=35 α=60 α=120 α=200

F α=10 α=35 α=60 α=120 α=200

G α=10 α=35 α=60 α=120 α=200

H Experimental
Controls EC 5LO

I Simulations
Controls EC 5LO