

1     **Title:** Identification of scavenger receptor B1 as the airway microfold cell receptor for  
2     *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*

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15    **Abstract:** *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (Mtb) can enter the body through multiple routes,  
16    including via specialized transcytotic cells called microfold cells (M cell). However, the  
17    mechanistic basis for M cell entry remains undefined. Here, we show that M cell transcytosis  
18    depends on the Mtb Type VII secretion machine and its major virulence factor EsxA. We identify  
19    scavenger receptor B1 (SR-B1) as an EsxA receptor on airway M cells. SR-B1 is required for Mtb  
20    binding to and translocation across M cells in mouse and human tissue. Together, our data  
21    demonstrate a previously undescribed role for Mtb EsxA in mucosal invasion and identify SR-B1  
22    as the airway M cell receptor for Mtb.

23 **Running title:** SR-B1 is an airway M cell receptor for Mtb EsxA

24 **Introduction**

25 *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (Mtb), the causative agent of tuberculosis (TB), latently  
26 infects roughly one-third of the world's population and causes 1-2 million deaths per year. The  
27 current paradigm of acute infection is that after an actively infected person aerosolizes infectious  
28 Mtb-containing particles, a naïve individual inhales the bacteria that then traverse the respiratory  
29 tree to ultimately be phagocytosed by alveolar macrophages (Churchyard et al., 2017; Cohen et  
30 al., 2018). While this model can account for pulmonary TB, it is insufficient to explain some  
31 extrapulmonary forms of TB initiated by oropharyngeal infection and lacking evidence of  
32 concurrent pulmonary disease. For example, a disease known as tuberculous cervical  
33 lymphadenopathy, or scrofula, represents 10% of all new cases of TB, and frequently manifests  
34 without lung involvement (Fontanilla et al., 2011). Because the oropharynx and upper airway  
35 lymphatics drain to the cervical lymph nodes, while the lower airway lymphatics drain to the  
36 mediastinal lymph nodes, infection of the cervical lymph nodes by Mtb may not involve the lower  
37 airways. Indeed, in the infamous “Lübeck Disaster” where hundreds of infants and children were  
38 accidentally orally administered Mtb instead of the attenuated BCG vaccine, the majority  
39 developed lymphatic and oropharyngeal TB rather than pulmonary TB (Fox et al., 2016),  
40 highlighting how inoculation via the oropharyngeal route can cause extrapulmonary disease.

41 One potential explanation for the development of lymphatic TB centers upon the mucosa-  
42 associated lymphoid tissue (MALT) (Brandtzaeg et al., 2008). Specialized epithelial cells known  
43 as M cells overlie the MALT and are able to translocate luminal material to basolateral antigen  
44 presenting cells located immediately beneath the M cell (Kimura, 2018). In this way, M cells can

45 initiate an immune response to pathogens or material found within the lumen (Nakamura et al.,  
46 2018).

47 Since their initial discovery overlying Peyer's patches of the gastrointestinal tract, M cells  
48 have been identified at other mucosal sites. Within the respiratory tract, M cells have been found  
49 in the upper and lower airways of both mice and humans (Fujimura, 2000; Kim et al., 2011; Kimura  
50 et al., 2019). M cells express a number of pattern recognition receptors (PRRs) (Mabbott et al.,  
51 2013). The majority of these M cell receptors have been identified on gastrointestinal M cells,  
52 while receptor expression by airway microfold cells is less well understood. Some PRRs on  
53 gastrointestinal M cells function in bacterial recognition and translocation. For example, the  
54 cellular prion protein (PrP(C)), a receptor for *Brucella abortus*, is necessary for *B. abortus*  
55 translocation (Nakato et al., 2012). Similarly, glycoprotein 2 (GP2) expressed on the apical surface  
56 of gastrointestinal M cells recognizes FimH, a component of the type I pili found on both  
57 commensal and pathogenic bacteria (Hase et al., 2009). Loss of either the host receptor GP2 or the  
58 bacterial ligand FimH diminishes bacterial translocation through M cells, reducing the immune  
59 response to these antigens and bacteria within Peyer's patches (Hase et al., 2009).

60 We previously demonstrated that Mtb uses airway M cells as a portal of entry to initiate  
61 infection (Nair et al., 2016). We hypothesized that Mtb may produce a bacterial effector to mediate  
62 this process, and that, similar to receptors for Gram-negative bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract  
63 (Hase et al., 2009), airway M cells may also encode an Mtb receptor. Here we show that Mtb  
64 requires the type VII secretion system for translocation in vitro and in vivo. The type VII secretion  
65 system effector EsxA is sufficient to mediate this process in vitro through binding to scavenger  
66 receptor class B type I (SR-B1). SR-B1 is enriched on mouse and human M cells both in vitro and  
67 in vivo. Loss of SR-B1 reduces EsxA and Mtb binding to M cells, and prevents Mtb translocation

68 through M cells in vitro. Using a newly developed explanted human adenoid model, we  
69 demonstrate robust expression of SR-B1 on primary human M cells. Finally, we show that Mtb  
70 infects primary human M cells on adenoids in a type VII secretion system dependent manner.  
71 Taken together, our findings indicate that the interaction of Mtb EsxA with M cell SR-B1 allows  
72 Mtb to traverse the airway mucosa to initiate infection.

73

## 74 **Results**

### 75 **The Mtb type VII secretion system mediates Mtb binding to and translocation through M** 76 **cells in vitro**

77 Mtb encodes several protein secretion systems important for bacterial virulence (Feltcher  
78 et al., 2010). One of the type VII secretion systems (T7SS) of Mtb, contained within the region of  
79 difference 1 (RD1) locus of Mtb (Behr et al., 1999), secretes virulence factors including EsxA and  
80 EsxB (CFP-10) (Stanley et al., 2003) (Fig. 1A). We hypothesized that the Mtb T7SS might  
81 facilitate M cell translocation because the T7SS machine interacts directly with eukaryotic  
82 membranes (Augenstreich et al., 2017), EsxA can be identified on the mycobacterial cell surface  
83 (Kinhikar et al., 2010), and EsxA may directly bind several cell surface receptors (Kinhikar et al.,  
84 2010; Sreejit et al., 2014). To test if the Mtb T7SS was required for bacterial binding to and  
85 translocation across M cells, we used a human airway M cell transwell model we developed  
86 previously (Nair et al., 2016). Such transwells combine 16-HBE cells (Cozens et al., 1994) in the  
87 apical compartment of a transwell and Raji B cells in the basolateral compartment in order to  
88 mimic the organization of MALT and to enhance M cell formation (Kerneis et al., 1997; Nair et  
89 al., 2016). HBE cells cultured alone form a homogenous, polarized monolayer (hereafter called  
90 “control”) while coculture with Raji B cells induces some HBE cells to differentiate into M cells

91 (hereafter called “HBE/Raji B”) (Nair et al., 2016). We used the *MtbΔeccDI* strain, which lacks  
92 the inner membrane pore required for assembly of and protein secretion by the T7SS (Fig. 1A)  
93 (Abdallah et al., 2007). To test if the *Mtb* T7SS was necessary for M cell binding, we incubated  
94 transwells with either mCherry expressing wild-type *Mtb* (WT *Mtb*) or mCherry expressing  
95 *MtbΔeccDI* at 4°C to prevent bacterial entry or translocation and analyzed surface binding by  
96 confocal microscopy and quantification of colony-forming units (CFU) (Fig. 1B-D). Consistent  
97 with our prior data (Nair et al., 2016), significantly more WT *Mtb* bound HBE/Raji B transwells  
98 (containing M cells) than control transwells by both microscopy (Fig. 1B,C) and CFU (Fig. 1D).  
99 However, binding was greatly reduced for the *MtbΔeccDI* strain (Fig. 1B-D).

100 To test if the *Mtb* T7SS is necessary to facilitate mycobacterial translocation across M  
101 cells, we infected the apical chamber of transwells with either WT *Mtb* or *MtbΔeccDI* and  
102 measured translocation to the basal compartment. As we reported previously (Nair et al., 2016),  
103 WT *Mtb* translocated across HBE/Raji B transwells to a greater extent than control transwells,  
104 while the translocation of the *MtbΔeccDI* strain was significantly reduced (Fig. 1E). Importantly,  
105 the transepithelial electrical resistance (TEER), a measure of epithelial monolayer integrity  
106 (Srinivasan et al., 2015), was stable during the experiment (Fig. 1F). To further verify that *Mtb*  
107 T7SS is required for bacterial translocation across M cells in vitro, we also utilized an established  
108 model of M cell differentiation where Caco-2 cells, a human colonic epithelial cell line, are  
109 cultured with Raji B transwells to induce M cell differentiation (Nair et al., 2016). Similar to  
110 HBE/Raji B transwells, we observed that *Mtb* translocated across Caco-2/Raji B transwells in a  
111 T7SS dependent manner (Fig. 1G). Taken together, these data show that the *Mtb* T7SS is necessary  
112 for both binding to and translocation across M cells in vitro.

113 **EsxA is sufficient to mediate binding to and translocation across M cells in vitro**

114 Two of the most abundant T7SS secreted proteins are EsxA and EsxB; therefore, we  
115 hypothesized that one of these proteins might mediate Mtb binding and translocation. We  
116 conjugated recombinant EsxA, EsxB, or glycine (as a control) to fluorescent beads, added the  
117 beads to the apical chamber of transwells, and quantified bead translocation to the basal  
118 compartment by flow cytometry. EsxA-beads but not control beads translocated across HBE/Raji  
119 B transwells (Fig. 2A) without disrupting the epithelial monolayer (Fig. 2B). EsxA-beads, but not  
120 EsxB-beads or control beads, also translocated across Caco-2/Raji B transwells (Fig. 2C).

121 To test if the ability of EsxA to mediate translocation was due to direct EsxA binding to M  
122 cells, we incubated transwells with recombinant EsxA and performed immunofluorescence  
123 microscopy using antibodies against EsxA and  $\alpha$ 1,2-fucose (NKM 16-2-4; a marker for M cells  
124 (Nair et al., 2016; Nochi et al., 2007)) (Fig. 2D). While both groups of transwells had equal number  
125 of nuclei per field (Fig. 2E), HBE/Raji B transwells had more NKM 16-2-4 positive M cells  
126 compared to control transwells (Fig. 2F). We detected robust EsxA binding to M cells on HBE/Raji  
127 B transwells (Fig. 2D,G-H). Similar results were observed using an antibody against Sialyl Lewis<sup>A</sup>  
128 (SLA), a different M cell marker (Giannasca et al., 1999; Nair et al., 2016) (Supp. Fig. 1). Taken  
129 together, these data demonstrate that EsxA directly binds the M cell surface and is sufficient to  
130 mediate translocation across M cells when conjugated to inert beads.

### 131 **Scavenger receptor class B type 1 binds EsxA and is expressed on M cells in vitro**

132 Because EsxA bound directly to the surface of M cells, we hypothesized that EsxA may  
133 engage a cell surface receptor. To affinity purify cell surface binding proteins we performed a  
134 modified co-immunoprecipitation experiment using either EsxA or transferrin crosslinked to the  
135 TriCEPS reagent, a molecule that allows for the covalent cross-linking of a ligand and its receptor

136 (Tremblay and Hill, 2017). We used Caco-2 cells for this experiment as they have been used  
137 extensively as a model for M cells in vitro (Tyrrer et al., 2006) and because Caco-2/Raji B  
138 transwells behaved similarly to HBE/Raji B transwells in Mtb and EsxA translocation (Fig. 1E,G  
139 and Fig. 2A,C). Using this approach, we identified the interaction between transferrin (TRFE) and  
140 the transferrin receptor (TFR1) (Fig. 3A, blue peptides), proving the validity of this system. When  
141 cells were treated with EsxA, peptides for two proteins, apolipoprotein E (ApoE) and scavenger  
142 receptor class B type I (SR-B1) were enriched (Fig. 3A, red peptides). Because ApoE is a soluble  
143 protein (Huang and Mahley, 2014) while SR-B1 is a known cell surface molecule, we focused on  
144 SR-B1. For further verification, we performed a co-immunoprecipitation/biotin transfer  
145 experiment without the TriCEPS reagent. After incubation with biotinylated EsxA, completion of  
146 the biotin transfer assay, and subsequent immunoprecipitation with streptavidin-coated beads,  
147 western blotting with an anti-SR-B1 antibody detected a 130 kD band likely reflecting a heavily  
148 glycosylated SR-B1 isoform (Zanoni et al., 2016), along with a fainter band at approximately 55  
149 kD consistent with the non-glycosylated SR-B1 protein (Fig. 3B).

150 We next determined if SR-B1 expression is specific for M cells or ubiquitously expressed  
151 by epithelial cells. We quantified colocalization of SR-B1 and NKM 16-2-4 by  
152 immunofluorescence microscopy in control and HBE/Raji B transwells (Fig. 3C-F). While there  
153 was no difference in the number of nuclei per field on the transwells (Fig. 3C), SR-B1 expression  
154 was higher on HBE/Raji B transwells (Fig. 3C,E) and the majority of the SR-B1 positive cells  
155 were M cells (Fig. 3C,F). Taken together, we identify SR-B1 as a candidate EsxA receptor  
156 expressed on M cells in vitro.

157 **Genetic disruption of SR-B1 limits EsxA binding to M cells**

158 We next investigated whether SR-B1 is required for EsxA binding to M cells. We  
159 transduced HBE cells with non-targeting (NT) or *SR-B1* shRNA and observed a robust knock-  
160 down of SR-B1 in HBE cells transduced with the *SR-B1* shRNA as compared to the NT shRNA  
161 (Fig. 4A). HBE/Raji B transwells constructed from these cells had a similar number of M cells  
162 comparing NT and *SR-B1* shRNA transwells (Fig. 4B,C) and *SR-B1* shRNA transwells showed a  
163 reduction in SR-B1 expression by immunofluorescence microscopy (Fig. 4B,D). Loss of SR-B1  
164 reduced the number of EsxA positive cells on HBE/Raji B *SR-B1* shRNA transwells (Fig. 4B,E).  
165 Additionally in HBE/RajiB NT shRNA transwells, the majority of EsxA positive cells were SR-  
166 B1 positive (Fig. 4B,F), suggesting that EsxA preferentially bound SR-B1 expressing M cells.  
167 Taken together, we identify SR-B1 as necessary for EsxA binding to M cells.

#### 168 **Genetic disruption of SR-B1 reduces both Mtb binding to and translocation across M cells**

169 To determine the role of SR-B1 in Mtb binding to M cells, we incubated HBE/Raji B  
170 transwells expressing NT or *SR-B1* shRNAs with mCherry Mtb at 4°C for 1 hr and analyzed  
171 binding by confocal microscopy and CFU (Fig. 4G-I). Loss of SR-B1 greatly reduced the number  
172 of bacteria bound to the HBE/Raji B transwells as determined by confocal microscopy (Fig. 4G,H)  
173 and by quantification of CFU (Fig. 4I). To determine the role of SR-B1 in Mtb translocation by M  
174 cells, we infected HBE/Raji B transwells expressing NT or *SR-B1* shRNAs with Mtb in the apical  
175 compartment and measured translocation to the basal compartment. As expected from the reduced  
176 bacterial binding (Fig. 4G-I), loss of SR-B1 also greatly reduced Mtb translocation in the HBE/Raji  
177 B transwells at 37°C (Fig. 4J) with no impact on the TEER (Fig. 4K). The reduced ability of Mtb  
178 to translocate across HBE/Raji B transwells expressing *SR-B1* shRNA was not due to any intrinsic  
179 defect in translocation caused by SR-B1 deficiency as another airway pathogen, *Pseudomonas*  
180 *aeruginosa*, was able to translocate equally across NT and *SR-B1* shRNA HBE/Raji B transwells



181 (Fig. 4L). Of note, *P. aeruginosa* does not encode a T7SS or EsxA homologue, suggesting that its  
182 translocation across M cells depends on unique bacterial and host factors. We thus conclude that  
183 SR-B1 is essential for the binding and translocation of Mtb via M cells in a process requiring the  
184 effector EsxA.

### 185 **The Mtb type VII secretion system is necessary for Mtb translocation in mice**

186 M cells are found in the upper and lower airways of mice and humans (Fujimura, 2000;  
187 Mutoh et al., 2016; Nair et al., 2016; Teitelbaum et al., 1999). We therefore determined if SR-B1  
188 was expressed preferentially by primary M cells as compared to other epithelial cells using  
189 immunofluorescence microscopy. Mouse nasal-associated lymphoid tissue (NALT), a region  
190 enriched for M cells (Mutoh et al., 2016; Nair et al., 2016; Park et al., 2003), demonstrated robust  
191 SR-B1 staining on the surface of NKM 16-2-4 positive cells (Fig. 5A). Importantly, we did not  
192 observe SR-B1<sup>+</sup>/NKM 16-2-4<sup>-</sup> cells, demonstrating that SR-B1 is specific for M cells in the NALT  
193 epithelia in vivo.

194 We and others previously demonstrated that NALT and airway M cells are a portal of entry  
195 for Mtb in mice (Nair et al., 2016; Teitelbaum et al., 1999). To determine if the Mtb T7SS is  
196 necessary for bacterial translocation in vivo, we performed NALT infections (Nair et al., 2016)  
197 with *Mtb*Δ*eccDI* or *Mtb*Δ*esxA*. In both *Mtb* mutant strains the T7SS machine fails to assemble  
198 (Abdallah et al., 2007) thereby preventing T7SS-dependent virulence factor secretion. We infected  
199 mice intranasally with WT *Mtb*, *Mtb*Δ*eccDI* (Fig. 5B), or *Mtb*Δ*esxA* (Fig. 5C) and enumerated  
200 CFU from draining cervical lymph nodes 7 days post-infection (Nair et al., 2016). Both the  
201 *Mtb*Δ*eccDI* and *Mtb*Δ*esxA* strains had 1.0-1.5 log fewer bacteria compared to WT *Mtb* in the  
202 cervical lymph nodes. This degree of attenuation was not observed when we infected mice

203 intranasally with a Cor deficient strain of Mtb (*Mtbcor::Tn7*) that is also attenuated in vivo  
204 (Zacharia et al., 2013) (Supp. Fig. 2). Taken together, these data demonstrate that the lower CFU  
205 recovered from cervical lymph nodes of mice infected with T7SS mutant Mtb strains may be due  
206 to reduced translocation across M cells.

### 207 **Human adenoid M cells express SR-B1**

208 Because TB is a human disease, we tested if primary human M cells can serve as a portal  
209 of entry for Mtb. The human adenoid is a MALT structure that contains M cells interspersed among  
210 the overlying epithelial cells (Fujimura, 2000). We first demonstrated that human adenoids contain  
211 SR-B1 positive M cells by immunofluorescence microscopy (Fig. 5D), similar to our observations  
212 from mouse NALT. We confirmed the presence of M cells in human adenoids by flow cytometry  
213 (Supp. Fig. 3 for gating strategy) and observed that approximately 10% of the adenoid cells were  
214 EpCAM<sup>+</sup>/NKM<sup>-</sup> epithelial cells, while about 1% of the cells were EpCAM<sup>+</sup>/NKM<sup>+</sup> double positive  
215 M cells (Fig. 5E). When we analyzed SR-B1 expression using flow cytometry, we observed that  
216 approximately 20% of primary human M cells (marked as EpCAM<sup>+</sup>/NKM<sup>+</sup> cells) were SR-B1  
217 positive as compared to less than 2% of the other epithelial cells (EpCAM<sup>+</sup>/NKM<sup>-</sup>) (Fig. 5F),  
218 verifying our observation that SR-B1 is expressed predominately by M cells in vivo.

### 219 **Human adenoid M cells are a portal of entry for Mtb**

220 To determine if primary human M cells can be a route of entry for Mtb, we infected human  
221 adenoids with GFP<sup>+</sup> Mtb and quantified the number of GFP<sup>+</sup> Mtb EpCAM<sup>+</sup>/NKM<sup>+</sup> M cells versus  
222 GFP<sup>+</sup> Mtb EpCAM<sup>+</sup>/NKM<sup>-</sup> epithelial cells by flow cytometry (Fig. 5G, Supp. Fig. 4 for gating  
223 strategy). The number of GFP<sup>+</sup> Mtb containing EpCAM<sup>+</sup>/NKM<sup>+</sup> M cells cells ranged from 0.1-8%  
224 while we were unable to identify any GFP<sup>+</sup> Mtb containing EpCAM<sup>+</sup>/NKM<sup>-</sup> epithelial cells,

225 suggesting that M cells were a preferred route of entry for Mtb in adenoids. Finally, we determined  
226 the role of the Mtb T7SS in Mtb entry into adenoid M cells. We infected adenoids with GFP<sup>+</sup> WT  
227 Mtb or GFP<sup>+</sup> Mtb $\Delta$ *eccDI* and observed more GFP<sup>+</sup>/EpCAM<sup>+</sup>/NKM<sup>+</sup> cells after infection with WT  
228 Mtb as compared to Mtb $\Delta$ *eccDI* (Fig. 5H). Taken together, we conclude that Mtb can enter via  
229 mouse NALT and human adenoid M cells in a T7SS dependent manner.

## 230 **Discussion**

231 In this work, we used in vitro and in vivo M cell models to demonstrate a mucosal  
232 interaction between Mtb EsxA and the cell surface protein SR-B1. EsxA, a protein secreted  
233 through the T7SS, bound M cells in vitro, was sufficient to mediate M cell translocation by inert  
234 beads and was necessary for Mtb translocation in vitro. Furthermore, the T7SS was necessary for  
235 Mtb translocation in a mouse mucosal infection model. Primary human airway M cells internalized  
236 Mtb in a T7SS dependent manner, indicating that this process is relevant for human disease.  
237 Finally, SR-B1 was enriched on M cells and served as a receptor for Mtb EsxA to mediate Mtb  
238 translocation. Together, our data demonstrate a previously undescribed role for Mtb EsxA in  
239 mucosal invasion and identify SR-B1 as the airway M cell receptor for Mtb.

240 EsxA has previously been implicated as a secreted pore-forming molecule (Smith et al.,  
241 2008), though this activity has recently been questioned (Conrad et al., 2017). In our experiments  
242 utilizing recombinant EsxA we also did not observe pore formation or epithelial damage. This  
243 could be due to the relatively short amount of time we incubated EsxA with our transwells for  
244 binding or translocation experiments. Alternatively, the pore forming properties of EsxA may only  
245 occur when the protein is in low pH conditions, such as in the lysosome. Thus, EsxA may directly  
246 interact with M cell SR-B1 in a cell contact dependent manner (Conrad et al., 2017), leading to  
247 SR-B1 receptor mediated internalization similar to its function in both hepatitis C virus and

248 *Plasmodium vivax* uptake (Heo et al., 2006; Manzoni et al., 2017). Though SR-B1 has not been  
249 previously identified as an EsxA receptor, prior studies have found other host proteins that interact  
250 with EsxA, including laminin (Kinhikar et al., 2010),  $\beta$ 2 microglobulin (Sreejit et al., 2014), and  
251 TLR-2 (Pathak et al., 2007). We did not identify these proteins in our affinity purification assay, a  
252 discrepancy possibly related to the cell types used for binding experiments.

253 In mice, we observed that Mtb lacking the T7SS had a greatly reduced ability to  
254 disseminate from mouse NALT to the cervical lymph nodes, potentially due to a reduced ability  
255 to translocate across M cells. A possible alternate interpretation for this result centers on the  
256 observation that T7SS deficient strains of Mtb are attenuated in vivo and in macrophages (Stanley  
257 et al., 2003). Thus, the reduced CFU recovered from draining lymph nodes could represent a  
258 macrophage survival defect for the T7SS deficient strains. However, when we used a different  
259 attenuated Mtb strain for NALT infection, we observed normal dissemination to the draining  
260 lymph nodes. We therefore propose that the reduced CFU recovered from cervical lymph nodes  
261 of mice infected with T7SS-deficient Mtb is not simply due to an attenuation defect within  
262 macrophages. Consistent with this interpretation, the markedly reduced translocation of T7SS-  
263 deficient Mtb across M cells in vitro and into explanted human adenoids ex vivo, in the absence  
264 of an innate immune response and over a very short time course, indicates that the T7SS is required  
265 for translocation across M cells.

266 SR-B1 has been well characterized as a high-density lipoprotein receptor involved in  
267 cholesterol uptake (Shen et al., 2018). It has also been shown that SR-B1 binds several bacterial  
268 molecules, including lipopolysaccharide and lipoteichoic acid produced by Gram-negative and  
269 Gram-positive bacteria respectively (Bocharov et al., 2004). Although direct interaction of EsxA  
270 and SR-B1 has not previously been shown, SR-B1 has been reported as a receptor for mycobacteria

271 (Philips et al., 2005; Schafer et al., 2009), primarily in macrophages (Stamm et al., 2015).  
272 However, when SR-B1<sup>-/-</sup> mice were infected with Mtb via the aerosol route, there was no  
273 difference in bacterial replication, granuloma size, cytokine secretion, or survival within the first  
274 four months post-infection compared to wild-type mice (Schafer et al., 2009). Based on our current  
275 data and previous results showing improved mouse survival during aerosol Mtb infection when M  
276 cells are reduced (Nair et al., 2016), we predict that loss of M cell SR-B1 should reduce bacterial  
277 dissemination from the airway and enhance mouse survival. SR-B1<sup>-/-</sup> mice experience defective  
278 intrauterine and post-natal development and as a result are not born at normal Mendelian ratios  
279 (Santander et al., 2013). In addition, they manifest increased serum HDL, cardiovascular defects  
280 and altered adrenal hormones (Trigatti et al., 1999), making them incompatible with such a study.  
281 Likewise, mice expressing an M-cell specific Cre have not been reported, preventing analysis of  
282 SR-B1 function exclusively in M cells.

283 Adenoid M cells may serve as a portal of entry for Mtb, with significant implications for  
284 Mtb pathogenesis in humans. Because respiratory MALT is more abundant in children than adults  
285 (Tschernig and Pabst, 2000) and M cells are a key component of MALT (Corr et al., 2008), we  
286 propose that the increased incidence of extrapulmonary TB in children (Yang et al., 2004) is due  
287 to M cell mediated translocation. Interestingly, there was significant variation in M cell entry in  
288 human adenoids, which could relate to polymorphisms in SR-B1 or differences in SR-B1  
289 expression by M cells. We speculate that M cell invasion may be a common phenomenon for other  
290 pathogens that invade via the airway, including *Bacillus anthracis*, *Streptococcus pneumoniae* or  
291 *Streptococcus pyogenes*, and such pathogens may also utilize M cell receptors for entry.

292 In conclusion, we demonstrate that M cells are a portal of entry for Mtb in vitro, in mouse  
293 NALT, and in human adenoids. Utilizing mouse models and in vitro models, we identify EsxA

294 and SR-B1 as a molecular synapse required for Mtb translocation across M cells in vitro and in  
295 vivo in both mice and humans. A greater understanding of the role of airway M cells in the context  
296 of infection by Mtb or other respiratory pathogens will yield insight into novel pathways with  
297 potential for new vaccine candidates or therapeutics.

298

## 299 **Materials and Methods:**

### 300 **Bacterial strains and Media**

301 *M. tuberculosis* Erdman, *M. tuberculosis* Erdman  $\Delta eccD1$  (Stanley et al., 2003), *M.*  
302 *tuberculosis* Erdman  $\Delta esxA$  (Stanley et al., 2003), *M. tuberculosis* Erdman *cor:Tn7* (Zacharia et  
303 al., 2013) were grown in Middlebrook 7H9 medium or on Middlebrook 7H11 plates supplemented  
304 with 10% oleic acid-albumin-dextrose-catalase. Tween 80 (Fisher T164-500) was added to liquid  
305 medium to a final concentration of 0.05%.

### 306 **Cell culture**

307 The human colorectal adenocarcinoma cell line Caco-2 (HTB-37) and human Burkitt  
308 lymphoma cell line Raji B (CCL-86) were obtained from ATCC (Manassas, VA, USA).  
309 16HBE14o- cells (Forbes et al., 2003) were provided by Dieter Gruenert (University of California,  
310 San Francisco). Caco-2 or HBE cells were grown in DMEM (Gibco 11965092) supplemented with  
311 20% fetal bovine serum (Gibco 26140079), 50 units/mL penicillin (Gibco 15140122), 50  $\mu$ g/mL  
312 streptomycin (Gibco 15140122), 2 mM L-glutamine (Gibco 25030081), 1% sodium pyruvate  
313 (Gibco 11360070), 1% non-essential amino acids (Gibco 11140050), and 1 mM HEPES (Hyclone  
314 SH30237.01). Raji B cells were grown in DMEM supplemented with 20% FBS and 2 mM L-  
315 glutamine. In order to generate stable knock-down lines of SR-B1, HBE cells were transduced  
316 with lentivirus containing the appropriate shRNA cloned into pLKO.1 (Addgene 10878) as

317 described previously (Huang et al., 2019). Transduced cells were selected with puromycin (Sigma-  
318 Aldrich P8833-10MG) and surviving cells were maintained in puromycin for three additional  
319 passages.

### 320 **Tissue bilayer model**

321 3 x 10<sup>5</sup> Caco-2 or HBE cells in 1 mL of media were plated in the upper chamber of a 3 µm  
322 transwell insert (Corning 3462). For Raji B treated transwells, 5 x 10<sup>5</sup> Raji B cells in 2 mL of  
323 media were added to the basal compartment, thereby inducing some of the overlying epithelial  
324 cells to differentiate into M cells. For control transwells, 2 mL of media alone were added to the  
325 basal chamber, leading to little to no M cell differentiation. 1 mL of media in the upper chamber  
326 and 1 mL of media in the bottom chamber were aspirated daily and replaced with 1 mL of fresh  
327 media. The transwells were maintained at 37°C for 2 weeks or until the transepithelial electrical  
328 resistance was greater than 350Ω. 72 hours prior to infection, transwells were cultured in media  
329 lacking antibiotics. Transwell media was changed approximately 2 hours prior to infection.

### 330 **In vitro Mtb infection**

331 Liquid cultures of Mtb were grown until mid-log phase, washed three times with PBS, and  
332 centrifuged and sonicated to remove clumps. Bacteria were then resuspended in DMEM + 20%  
333 fetal bovine serum. For translocation assays, bacterial inoculum was added to the upper chamber  
334 of the transwell at a MOI of 5:1 and media from the basal compartment was sampled after 60  
335 minutes. The samples were then plated on 7H11 agar plates and maintained in a 37°C incubator  
336 for 3 weeks to allow for colony formation.

### 337 **Protein expression and purification**

338 gBlocks (IDT) encoding Mtb EsxA or EsxB were first cloned into the pENTR entry vector  
339 (Thermo K240020) then subcloned into the pDest17 destination vector (Thermo 11803012;

340 Thermo 11791020) using Gateway cloning (Invitrogen) per the manufacturer's protocol. The  
341 resulting vectors were cloned into the BL21 strain of *E. coli* (NEB C2527I) for protein expression.  
342 1 L of bacterial culture was grown to an OD600 of 0.6, induced with 1 mM IPTG (Promega V3955)  
343 at 37°C for 3 hours, and centrifuged at 3500 rpm for 15 minutes at 4°C to yield a bacterial pellet.  
344 The bacterial pellet was then resuspended in 15 mL of resuspension buffer (50 mM sodium  
345 phosphate, 500 mM NaCl, pH 7.4) with one tablet of EDTA-free protease inhibitor (Roche  
346 11836170001). Bacteria were lysed by sonication and centrifuged at 11200 rpm for 15 minutes at  
347 4°C. The resulting pellet was resuspended in 20 mL of 8 M urea in resuspension buffer and  
348 incubated for 2 hours at room temperature with gentle agitation. The protein slurry was again  
349 centrifuged at 11200 rpm for 15 minutes at 4°C and the resulting supernatant was incubated with  
350 cobalt TALON affinity resin (Clontech 635503) for 2 hours at room temperature. Resin was  
351 washed with 8 M urea in resuspension buffer and EsxA or EsxB was eluted with 150 mM  
352 imidazole and 8 M urea in resuspension buffer. The eluate was dialyzed overnight using a Slide-  
353 a-Lyzer dialysis cassette (Thermo 66203) against 10 mM ammonium bicarbonate. The dialyzed  
354 sample was again incubated with cobalt TALON affinity resin for 2 hours at room temperature.  
355 Resin was subsequently washed with 10 mM Tris-HCl pH 8.0, 0.5% ASB-14 (Sigma A1346-1G)  
356 in 10 mM Tris-HCl pH 8.0, and 10 mM Tris-HCl pH 8.0. EsxA or EsxB was eluted with 150 mM  
357 imidazole in PBS, dialyzed overnight against PBS, and stored at 4°C.

### 358 **Tissue bilayer immunofluorescence microscopy**

359 In order to image binding of Mtb to transwells, mCherry Mtb was grown until mid-log  
360 phase, washed, and centrifuged and sonicated to remove clumps. The bacterial inoculum was  
361 added to the upper chamber of the transwell at a MOI of 5:1 for 2 hours at 4°C with gentle agitation  
362 every 15 minutes. Transwells were gently washed and fixed with 4% paraformaldehyde in PBS at



363 4°C for one hour. Transwell inserts were stained with DAPI (Thermo D1306), excised using a  
364 blade, mounted on microscope slides using Prolong Gold antifade reagent (Invitrogen P36390)  
365 and imaged using an AxioImager MN microscope (Zeiss). In order to image binding of EsxA to  
366 transwells, EsxA was expressed and purified as described above. EsxA was then biotinylated by  
367 the Sulfo-SBED reagent (Thermo 33033) per manufacturer's instructions and excess reagent was  
368 removed using PD-10 desalting columns (GE Healthcare 17-0851-01). Transwells were then  
369 incubated with 1.5 µM EsxA in HBSS for 2 hours at 4°C with gentle agitation, washed, and  
370 exposed to UV light for 30 minutes at room temperature to allow for cross-linking. Transwells  
371 were then fixed with 4% paraformaldehyde in PBS for 15 minutes at room temperature, blocked  
372 with 10% donkey serum (Sigma D9663-10ML) in PBS for three hours at room temperature, and  
373 incubated with a 1:100 dilution of rabbit anti-SR-B1 antibody (Abcam 52629) in 2% donkey serum  
374 in PBS overnight at 4°C. The following day, transwells were washed and incubated with a 1:100  
375 dilution of PE-conjugated rat NKM 16-2-4 (Miltenyi 130-102-150), a 1:500 dilution of an  
376 AlexaFluor 647 conjugated donkey-anti-rabbit secondary antibody (Thermo A-31573), and a  
377 1:500 dilution of AlexaFluor 488 conjugated streptavidin (Jackson 016-540-084) for 1 hour at  
378 room temperature. Transwells were then washed, stained with DAPI, excised with a blade,  
379 mounted, and imaged as described above.

### 380 **Microsphere conjugation and translocation**

381         Microspheres were conjugated to protein as per instructions (Polylink 24350-1). Briefly,  
382 12.5 mg of microspheres were centrifuged and washed twice in coupling buffer. Microspheres  
383 were then incubated with an EDAC/coupling buffer solution to activate the microspheres. 200 µg  
384 of protein is added to the beads, thereby allowing for covalent binding of the protein to the  
385 microspheres. Microspheres are then washed twice with PBS and stored at 4°C. In order to test the

386 ability of these beads to translocate in the tissue bilayer assay, beads were diluted to a MOI of 5:1  
387 in DMEM + 20% fetal bovine serum and added to the apical chamber of transwells. Media from  
388 the basal compartment was sampled after 60 minutes and the number of beads present in the sample  
389 was analyzed by flow cytometry using an LSR II flow cytometer (BD).

390

### 391 **TriCEPS screen**

392 For initial conjugation of TriCEPS to protein, EsxA or transferrin (300  $\mu\text{g}$ ) dissolved in  
393 150  $\mu\text{L}$  25 mM HEPES pH 8.2 buffer was added to 1.5  $\mu\text{L}$  of the TriCEPS reagent (Dualsystems  
394 Biotech) and incubated at 20°C for 90 minutes with gentle agitation. During this time,  $6 \times 10^8$   
395 Caco-2 cells were detached from tissue culture plates using 10 mM EDTA in PBS. Cells were split  
396 into three aliquots, cooled to 4°C, and pelleted. Each pellet was resuspended in PBS pH 6.5 and  
397 sodium metaperiodate was added to a final concentration of 1.5 mM in order to gently oxidize the  
398 cell surface. Cells were then incubated with sodium metaperiodate in the dark for 15 minutes at  
399 4°C. Cells were washed twice with PBS pH 6.5 and split into two new aliquots. TriCEPS coupled  
400 EsxA was added to one aliquot and TriCEPS coupled transferrin was added to the other aliquot  
401 and incubated for 90 minutes at 4°C with gentle agitation. Samples were then washed, lysed via  
402 sonication, and digested with trypsin. The TriCEPS reagent:ligand:receptor complex was then  
403 affinity purified and peptides were identified using LC-MS analysis.

### 404 **Immunoprecipitation**

405 EsxA was expressed and purified as described above. EsxA or PBS alone was then  
406 biotinylated by the Sulfo-SBED reagent (Thermo 33033) according to the manufacturer  
407 instructions and excess reagent was removed using PD-10 columns (GE Healthcare 17-0851-01).  
408  $1 \times 10^7$  HBE cells were detached from tissue culture plates using 10 mM EDTA in PBS. Cells

409 were washed, resuspended in HBSS, and incubated with 1.5  $\mu$ M EsxA or with PBS alone for 2  
410 hours at 4°C with gentle agitation. Cells were then washed and exposed to UV light for 30 minutes  
411 at room temperature to allow for covalent cross-linking. Cells were lysed with RIPA buffer and  
412 lysate was incubated with streptavidin-conjugated magnetic beads (Thermo 88816). Proteins were  
413 eluted by boiling and analyzed by SDS-PAGE followed by Western blotting with rabbit anti-SR-  
414 B1 antibody (Abcam 52629).

#### 415 **Mouse NALT/human adenoid immunofluorescence**

416 Mouse NALT sections were obtained as previously described (Nair et al., 2016). Briefly,  
417 mouse NALT (after decalcification) and human adenoid specimens were embedded in paraffin,  
418 sectioned (5  $\mu$ m), and mounted on glass slides. Slides were deparaffinized using xylene and ethanol  
419 washes followed by heat mediated antigen-retrieval in 10 mM sodium citrate (pH 6.0).  
420 Endogenous peroxidase activity was quenched and slides were blocked in 10% donkey serum in  
421 PBS for three hours at room temperature. Slides were washed with PBS and incubated with a 1:100  
422 dilution of mouse NKM 16-2-4 and rabbit anti-SR-B1 in 2% donkey serum in PBS overnight at  
423 4°C. Slides were then washed with PBS and incubated with a 1:500 dilution of AlexaFluor 568  
424 conjugated goat-anti-mouse secondary antibody (Thermo A-11004) or with HRP conjugated  
425 donkey-anti-rabbit secondary antibody (Thermo A16023) in 2% donkey serum in PBS for 1 hour  
426 at room temperature. Slides were then washed with PBS and incubated with Cy5 tyramide (Perkin  
427 Elmer SAT705A001EA) for 8 minutes. Slides were then washed with PBS, incubated with DAPI,  
428 washed with PBS, mounted in Prolong Gold antifade reagent, and imaged using an AxioImager  
429 MN microscope (Zeiss).

#### 430 **Mouse intranasal infection**

431 Mtb Erdman and all mutants were grown in 7H9 and 0.05% Tween-80 until mid-log phase.  
432 Cultures were washed three times with PBS, centrifuged to remove clumps, and sonicated to yield  
433 a single-cell suspension. Bacteria were resuspended to yield a final concentration of  $1 \times 10^8$   
434 bacteria in 10  $\mu$ L PBS. BALB/c mice obtained from The Jackson Laboratory were infected with  
435 10  $\mu$ L of the bacterial suspension intranasally. NALT from 3-5 mice were collected, homogenized,  
436 and plated on 7H11 (Difco 283810) plates supplemented with 10% OADC to enumerate the  
437 number of bacteria deposited on Day 0. Mice were sacrificed on Day 7 post-infection and cervical  
438 lymph nodes were collected, homogenized, and plated on 7H11 plates. Plates were incubated in a  
439 37°C incubator for 3 weeks to allow for colony formation.

#### 440 **Adenoid culture and infection**

441 Adenoid samples were obtained from children undergoing elective adenoidectomy for  
442 obstructive sleep apnea. Excised adenoids were immediately placed in DMEM, subsequently  
443 dissected into 3-4 pieces depending on the size of the adenoid, weighed, and mounted in a 2% agar  
444 pad such that only the mucosal surface was exposed. The adenoid pieces were then incubated  
445 overnight at 37°C in DMEM supplemented with 20% fetal bovine serum, 2 mM L-glutamine, 1%  
446 sodium pyruvate, 1% non-essential amino acids, 1 mM HEPES, 50  $\mu$ g/mL kanamycin, and 50  
447  $\mu$ g/mL ampicillin to kill commensal bacteria. The following morning, liquid cultures of GFP Mtb  
448 (Kanamycin-resistant) grown to mid-log phase were washed three times with PBS and centrifuged  
449 and sonicated to remove clumps. Bacteria were then diluted to  $1 \times 10^7$  bacteria/mL and 1 mL of  
450 inoculum was added to the adenoid and incubated at 37°C for 1 hour. Adenoids were then washed,  
451 minced into small pieces, and pushed through a 100  $\mu$ m nylon cell strainer (Corning 431752). Cells  
452 were centrifuged, washed in ACK (Ammonium-Chloride-Potassium) lysis buffer (Gibco A10492-  
453 01), and then resuspended in FACS buffer (PBS + 2% FBS). Cells were stained with a 1:100

454 dilution of mouse anti-EpCAM Brilliant Violet 421 (Biolegend 324219), mouse PE-NKM-16-2-4  
455 (Miltenyi 130-102-150), or rabbit anti-SR-B1 in FACS buffer, washed, and then incubated with a  
456 1:500 dilution of AlexaFluor 488 conjugated donkey-anti-rabbit secondary antibody (Thermo  
457 R37118). Cells were washed and fixed in 4% paraformaldehyde for one hour followed by counting  
458 on an LSRII flow cytometer and analyzed using FlowJo software.

### 459 **Statistical analysis**

460 Statistical analysis was performed using GraphPad Prism. For in vitro transwell infections  
461 to determine bacterial binding or translocation, two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was performed.  
462 For in vitro determination of antibody staining, two-tailed unpaired Student's t-test was performed.  
463 For in vivo adenoid infections or receptor expression, the paired non-parametric Wilcoxon  
464 matched pairs signed rank test was performed. For in vivo mouse infections and determination of  
465 CFU, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was performed.

### 466 **Ethics statement**

467 Human adenoids were obtained from children undergoing elective adenoidectomy for sleep  
468 apnea after informed consent was obtained from parents or guardians. This study was reviewed by  
469 the University of Texas Southwestern Institutional Review Board (protocol STU 062016-087).  
470 Animal experiments were reviewed and approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use  
471 Committee at the University of Texas Southwestern (protocol 2017-101836) and followed the  
472 eighth edition of the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. The University of Texas  
473 Southwestern is accredited by the American Association for Accreditation of Laboratory Animal  
474 Care (AAALAC).

475

### 476 **Figure legends**

477 **Fig. 1 – Mtb T7SS is necessary to mediate binding and translocation across M cells**  
478 **(A)** Model of Mtb T7SS. **(B,C)** Control and HBE/RajiB transwells were incubated with Mtb strains  
479 at 4°C for 1 hr and binding was analyzed by confocal microscopy **(B)** with quantification of  
480 bacterial area **(C)**. Scale bar, 20 µm. **(D)** Control and HBE/RajiB transwells were incubated with  
481 Mtb strains at 4°C for 1 hr and lysed to determine binding by quantifying bacterial CFU and  
482 comparing with the initial inoculum. **(E)** Control and HBE/RajiB transwells were incubated with  
483 Mtb strains at 37°C for 1 hr and bacterial translocation was determined by quantifying bacterial  
484 CFU from the basal compartment and comparing with the inoculum. **(F)** TEER measurements  
485 from transwells from **(E)**. **(G)** Caco-2/Raji B transwells were infected as described in **E**.  
486 Experiments shown are representative of at least 3 independent experiments. \*\*p<0.01,  
487 \*\*\*p<0.001 as determined by Student's t-test.

488  
489 **Fig. 2 – Mtb EsxA is sufficient to mediate binding and translocation across M cells**  
490 **(A)** Control and HBE/RajiB transwells were incubated with fluorescent beads coated with EsxA,  
491 EsxB, or glycine. Translocation was determined by comparing the number of beads in the basal  
492 compartment with the inoculum. **(B)** TEER measurements from transwells from **(A)**. **(C)** Caco-  
493 2/Raji B transwells were treated as described in **A**. **(D)** Control and HBE/RajiB transwells were  
494 incubated with biotinylated EsxA and stained with NKM 16-2-4 (red) and Alexa Fluor 488  
495 conjugated streptavidin (green). Scale bar, 30 µm. **(E-G)** Quantification of nuclei **(E)**, NKM 16-  
496 2-4<sup>+</sup> cells **(F)**, and EsxA<sup>+</sup> **(G)** cells from the transwells described in **(D)**. **(H)** Quantification of  
497 NKM 16-2-4 staining on EsxA<sup>+</sup> cells from the HBE/Raji B transwells described in **(D)**.  
498 Experiments shown are representative of at least 3 independent experiments. \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01,  
499 \*\*\*p<0.001 as determined by Student's t-test.

500

501 **Fig. 3 – SR-B1 is the M cell EsxA receptor**

502 (A) Volcano plot displaying peptides enriched when Caco-2 cells were treated either with  
503 transferrin (blue dots on left) or EsxA (red dots on right). (B) Western blot using an anti-SR-B1  
504 antibody of proteins enriched after HBE cells were incubated with biotinylated EsxA or control.  
505 (C) Control and HBE/RajiB transwells were stained with NKM 16-2-4 and an anti-SR-B1 antibody  
506 and analyzed by confocal microscopy. Arrows denote examples of double positive cells. Scale bar,  
507 40  $\mu$ m. (D,E) Quantification of the number of nuclei (D) or SR-B1<sup>+</sup> cells (E) from the transwells  
508 described in (C). (F) Quantification of NKM 16-2-4 staining on SR-B1<sup>+</sup> cells from the HBE/Raji  
509 B transwells described in (C). Experiments shown are representative of at least 3 independent  
510 experiments. \*\*\*p<0.001 as determined by Student's t-test.

511

512 **Fig. 4 – Loss of SR-B1 reduces EsxA binding and Mtb translocation through M cells**

513 (A) Western blot of SR-B1 (top) or beta-actin (bottom) of shRNA expressing HBE cells. (B)  
514 HBE/RajiB transwells with shRNA expressing HBE cells were incubated with biotinylated EsxA  
515 and stained with NKM 16-2-4 (red), anti-SR-B1 (cyan), and Alexa Fluor 488 conjugated  
516 streptavidin (green). Arrows denote examples of triple positive cells. Scale bar, 40  $\mu$ m. (C-E)  
517 Quantification of the number of NKM<sup>+</sup> (C), SR-B1<sup>+</sup> cells (D) and EsxA<sup>+</sup> cells (E) on transwells  
518 described from (B). (F) Quantification of SR-B1 staining on EsxA<sup>+</sup> cells from HBE NT  
519 shRNA/Raji B transwells described in (B). (G,H) HBE/RajiB transwells with shRNA expressing  
520 HBE cells were incubated with mCherry Mtb and Mtb binding was analyzed by confocal  
521 microscopy (G) with quantification of bacterial staining (H). Scale bar, 10  $\mu$ m. (I) HBE/RajiB  
522 transwells with shRNA expressing HBE cells were incubated with Mtb strains at 4°C and lysed to

523 determine binding by quantifying bacterial CFU and comparing with the initial inoculum. **(J)**  
524 HBE/RajiB transwells with shRNA expressing HBE cells were incubated with Mtb strains at 37°C  
525 and bacterial translocation was determined by quantifying bacterial CFU from the basal  
526 compartment and comparing with the inoculum. **(K)** TEER of the transwells from **(J)**. **(L)**  
527 HBE/RajiB transwells with shRNA expressing HBE cells were incubated with *Pseudomonas*  
528 *aeruginosa* at 37°C and bacterial translocation was determined by quantifying bacterial CFU from  
529 the basal compartment and comparing with the inoculum. Experiments shown are representative  
530 of at least 3 independent experiments. \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 as determined by Student's t-test.

531

532 **Fig. 5 –The Mtb type VII secretion system is necessary for Mtb translocation in mice and**  
533 **humans**

534 **(A)** Mouse NALT sections were stained with NKM 16-2-4 and anti-SR-B1 antibodies and  
535 analyzed by confocal microscopy. Scale bar, top, 15 µm, bottom, 5 µm. **(B,C)** Mice were  
536 intranasally infected with either WT Mtb, MtbΔeccD1 **(B)**, or MtbΔesxA **(C)**. CFU was  
537 determined in the NALT on day 0 (left) or in the cervical lymph nodes on day 7 (right). Symbols  
538 represent CFU from individual animals (n=8-10 per strain). \*\*\*p<0.001 compared to WT by  
539 Mann-Whitney U test. **(D)** Human adenoid sections were stained with NKM 16-2-4 and anti-SR-  
540 B1 antibodies and analyzed by confocal microscopy. Scale bar, top, 15 µm, bottom, 5 µm. **(E)**  
541 Human adenoids were disaggregated, stained with NKM 16-2-4 and anti-EpCAM antibodies, and  
542 analyzed by flow cytometry. **(F)** Human adenoids were treated as in **(E)**, stained with anti-SR-B1  
543 or control IgG antibodies and analyzed by flow cytometry. Symbols represent adenoids from  
544 individual donor **(F-H)**. \*\*p<0.01, Wilcoxon matched pairs signed rank test. **(G)** Human adenoids  
545 were infected with GFP<sup>+</sup> Mtb, disaggregated, immunostained and analyzed by flow cytometry to



546 determine the proportion of GFP<sup>+</sup> Mtb containing NKM<sup>+</sup>/EpCAM<sup>+</sup> and NKM<sup>-</sup>/EpCAM<sup>+</sup> cells.  
547 \*p<0.05, Wilcoxon matched pairs signed rank test. **(H)** Human adenoids were infected with GFP<sup>+</sup>  
548 Mtb or GFP<sup>+</sup> MtbΔ*eccDI*. The percentage of GFP<sup>+</sup> Mtb containing NKM<sup>+</sup>/EpCAM<sup>+</sup> double  
549 positive cells was determined by flow cytometry. The Wilcoxon matched pairs signed rank test  
550 was used for comparison.

551

552 **Supplemental Fig. 1 – Recombinant EsxA and SR-B1 colocalize with the M cell marker Sialyl**  
553 **Lewis<sup>A</sup> on Raji B treated transwells**

554 **(A)** HBE/Raji B or control transwells were incubated with biotinylated EsxA and stained with anti-  
555 Sialyl Lewis<sup>A</sup> (red), anti-SR-B1 (cyan), and Alexa Fluor 488 conjugated streptavidin (green). Scale  
556 bar, 30 μm. **(B-E)** Multiple images of the transwells described in **(A)** were taken and the number  
557 of nuclei **(B)**, SLA<sup>+</sup> **(C)**, EsxA<sup>+</sup> **(D)**, and SR-B1<sup>+</sup> **(E)** cells was determined using ImageJ. **(F-H)**  
558 Expression of SLA on EsxA<sup>+</sup> cells **(F)**, of SR-B1 on EsxA<sup>+</sup> cells **(G)**, and the expression of SLA  
559 on SR-B1<sup>+</sup> cells **(H)** on HBE/Raji B transwells was determined by ImageJ.  
560 \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001 as determined by Student's t-test.

561

562 **Supplemental Fig. 2 – Mtbcor::Tn7 does not display a translocation defect following a mouse**  
563 **intranasal infection**

564 Mice were intranasally infected with either WT Mtb or Mtbcor::Tn7. CFU was determined in the  
565 NALT on day 0 (left) or in the cervical lymph nodes on day 7 (right). Symbols represent CFU  
566 from individual animals (n=8 per strain).

567

568 **Supplemental Fig. 3 – Adenoid gating strategy to determine SR-B1 positive cells**

569 (A-C) Gating strategy for unstained cells. Debris was excluded using FSC-A and SSC-A to yield  
570 the live cell population (A). Single cells were identified using the FSC-A and FSC-W (B) and  
571 singlets were identified using SSC-A and SSC-W (C). Gates for stained samples were established  
572 using unstained samples. (D-F) Adenoids were stained with mouse BV421 conjugated anti-  
573 EpCAM, mouse PE conjugated NKM 16-2-4, and a rabbit IgG followed by a donkey-anti-rabbit  
574 488 conjugated antibody. Using the gating strategy described in (A-C), NKM<sup>+</sup>/EpCAM<sup>+</sup> cells  
575 (highlighted in red) and NKM<sup>-</sup>/EpCAM<sup>+</sup> cells (highlighted in blue) were analyzed for fluorescence  
576 in the green channel. (G-I) Adenoids were stained with mouse BV421 conjugated anti-EpCAM,  
577 mouse PE conjugated NKM 16-2-4, and rabbit anti-SR-B1 followed by a donkey-anti-rabbit 488  
578 conjugated antibody. Using the gating strategy described in (A-C), NKM<sup>+</sup>/EpCAM<sup>+</sup> cells  
579 (highlighted in red) and NKM<sup>-</sup>/EpCAM<sup>+</sup> cells (highlighted in blue) were analyzed for fluorescence  
580 in the green channel.

581

#### 582 **Supplemental Fig. 4 – Adenoid gating strategy to determine GFP+ Mtb containing cells**

583 (A-C) Gating strategy for unstained cells. Debris was excluded using FSC-A and SSC-A to yield  
584 the live cell population (A). Single cells were identified using the FSC-A and FSC-W (B) and  
585 singlets were identified using SSC-A and SSC-W (C). Gates for stained samples were established  
586 using unstained samples. (D-F) Adenoids were infected with a vehicle control, disaggregated, and  
587 stained with mouse BV421 conjugated anti-EpCAM and mouse PE conjugated NKM 16-2-4.  
588 Using the gating strategy described in (A-C), NKM<sup>+</sup>/EpCAM<sup>+</sup> cells (highlighted in red) and NKM<sup>-</sup>  
589 /EpCAM<sup>+</sup> cells (highlighted in blue) were analyzed for fluorescence in the green channel. (G-I)  
590 Adenoids were infected with GFP Mtb, disaggregated, and stained with mouse BV421 conjugated  
591 anti-EpCAM and mouse PE conjugated NKM 16-2-4. Using the gating strategy described in (A-

592 C), NKM<sup>+</sup>/EpCAM<sup>+</sup> cells (highlighted in red) and NKM<sup>-</sup>/EpCAM<sup>+</sup> cells (highlighted in blue) were  
593 analyzed for fluorescence in the green channel.

594

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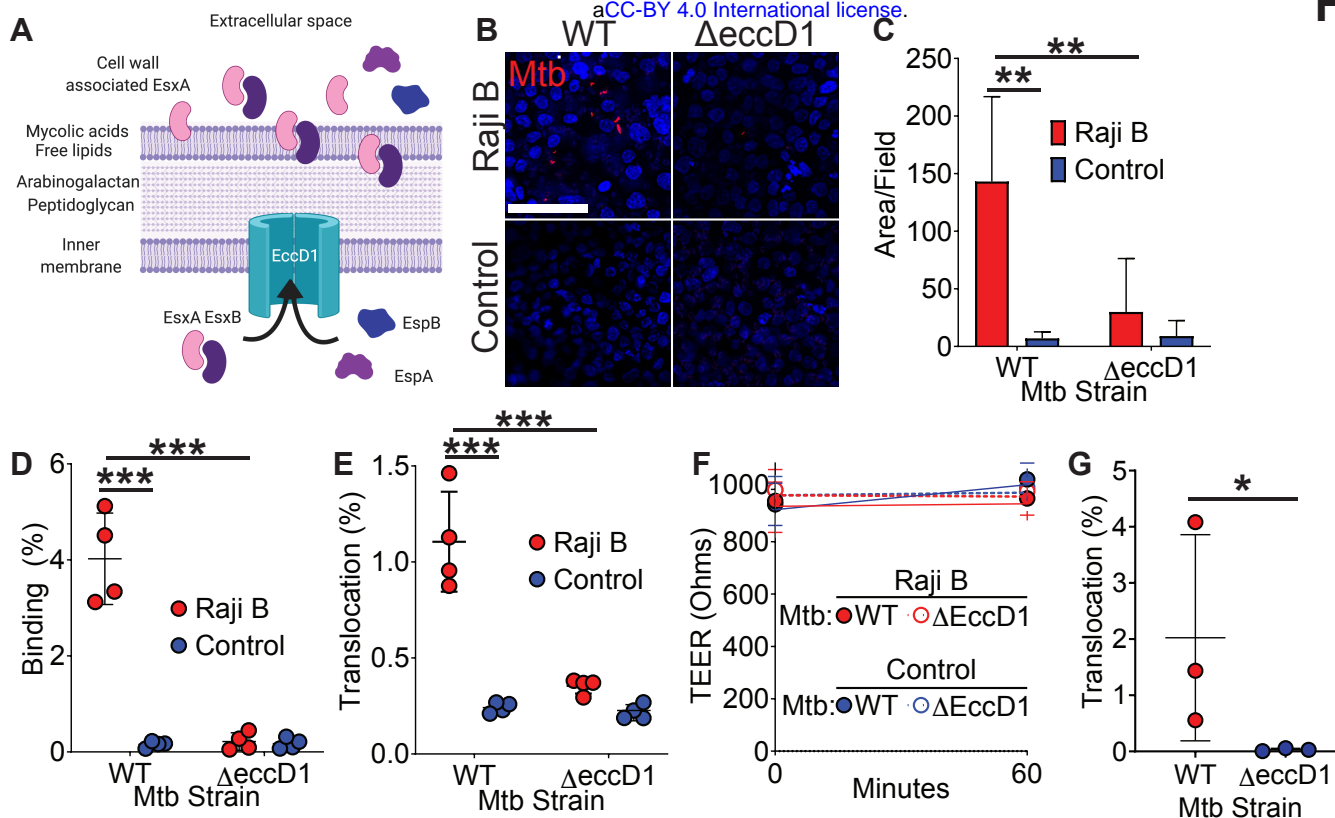
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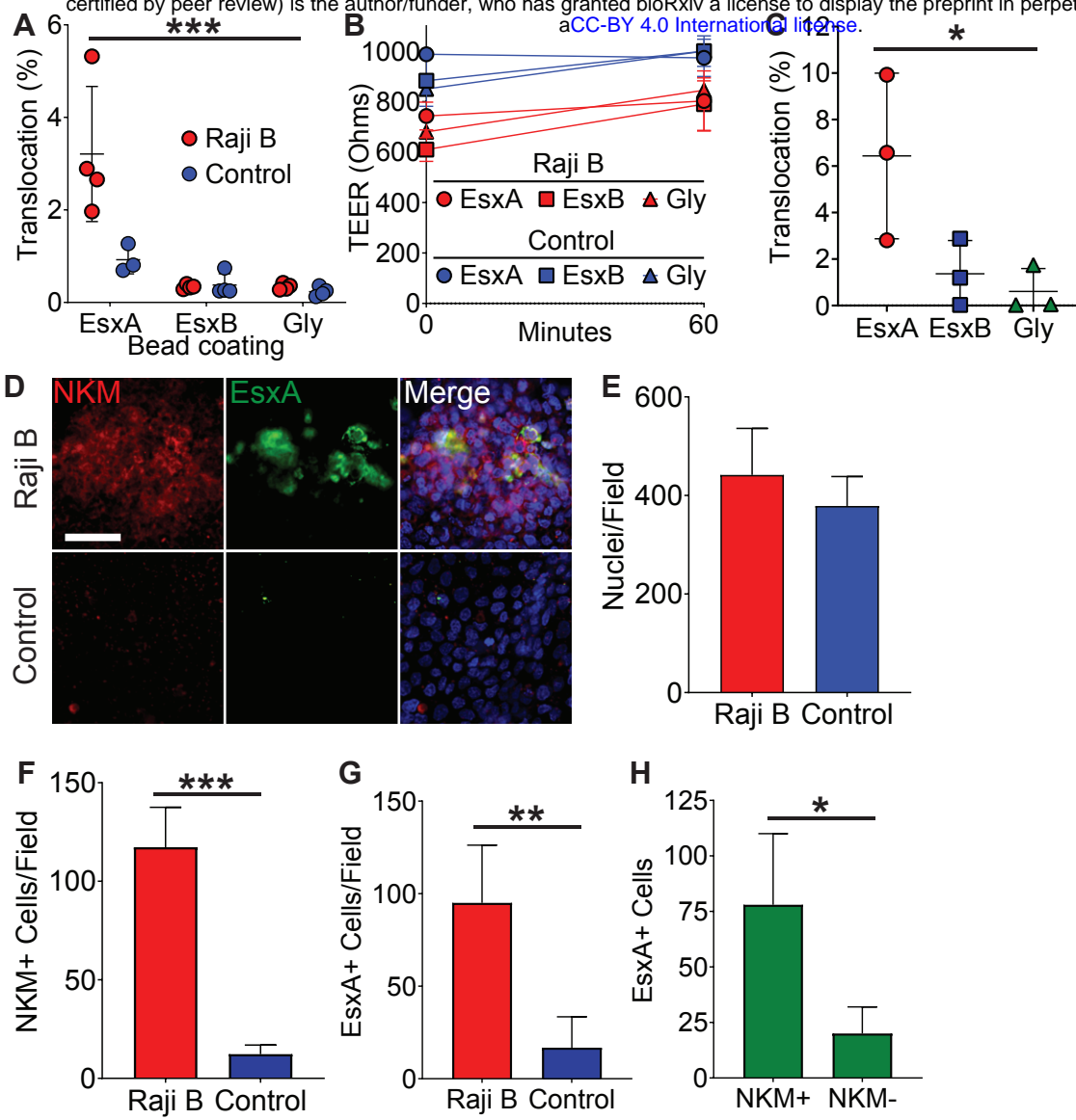
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760 Supervision, M.U.S.; Visualization, H.S.K.; Writing – original draft, H.S.K., M.U.S.; Writing –  
761 review & editing, All authors.

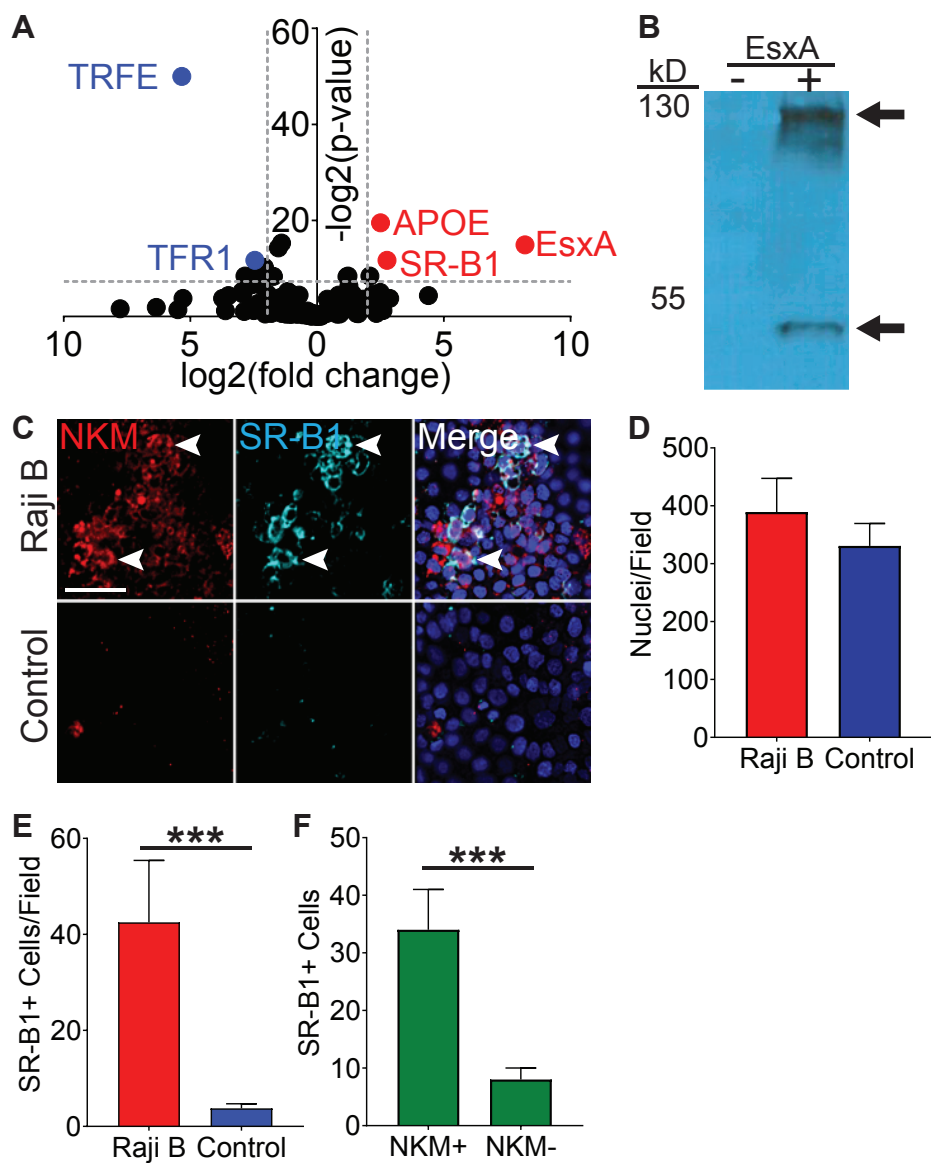
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763 **Data and materials availability:** All material is available upon request. All data is available in  
764 the manuscript or the supplementary materials.

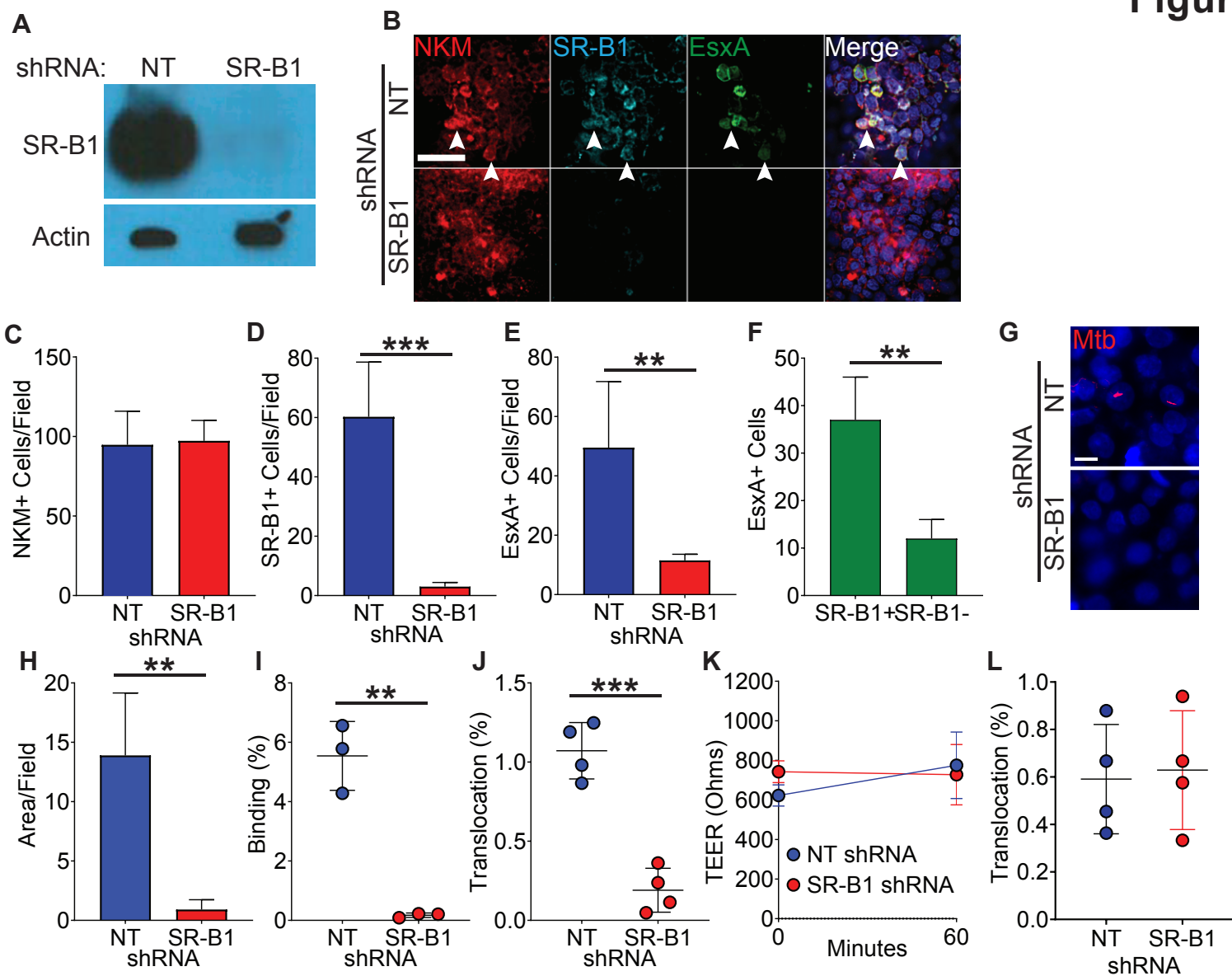




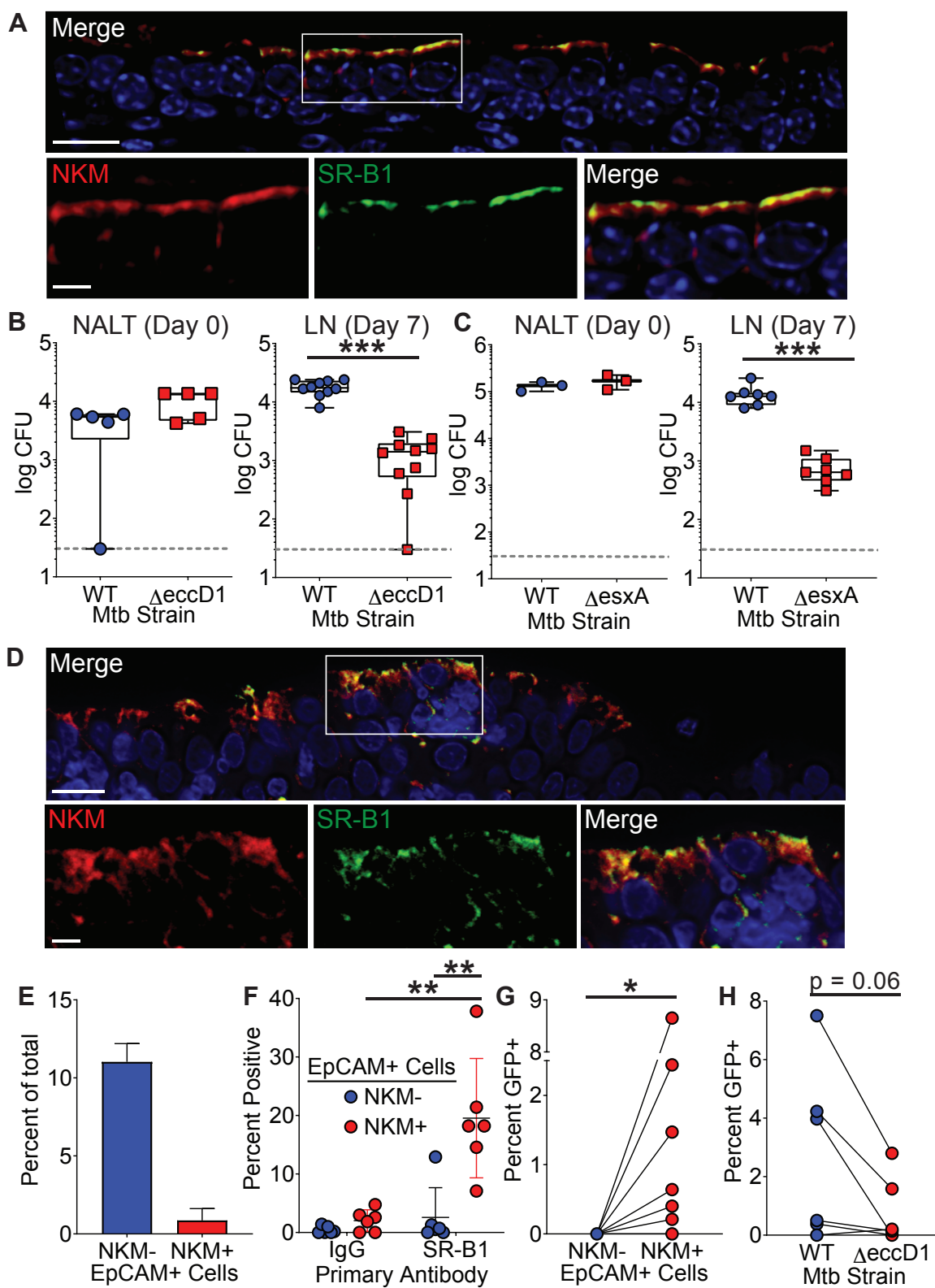
## Figure 3



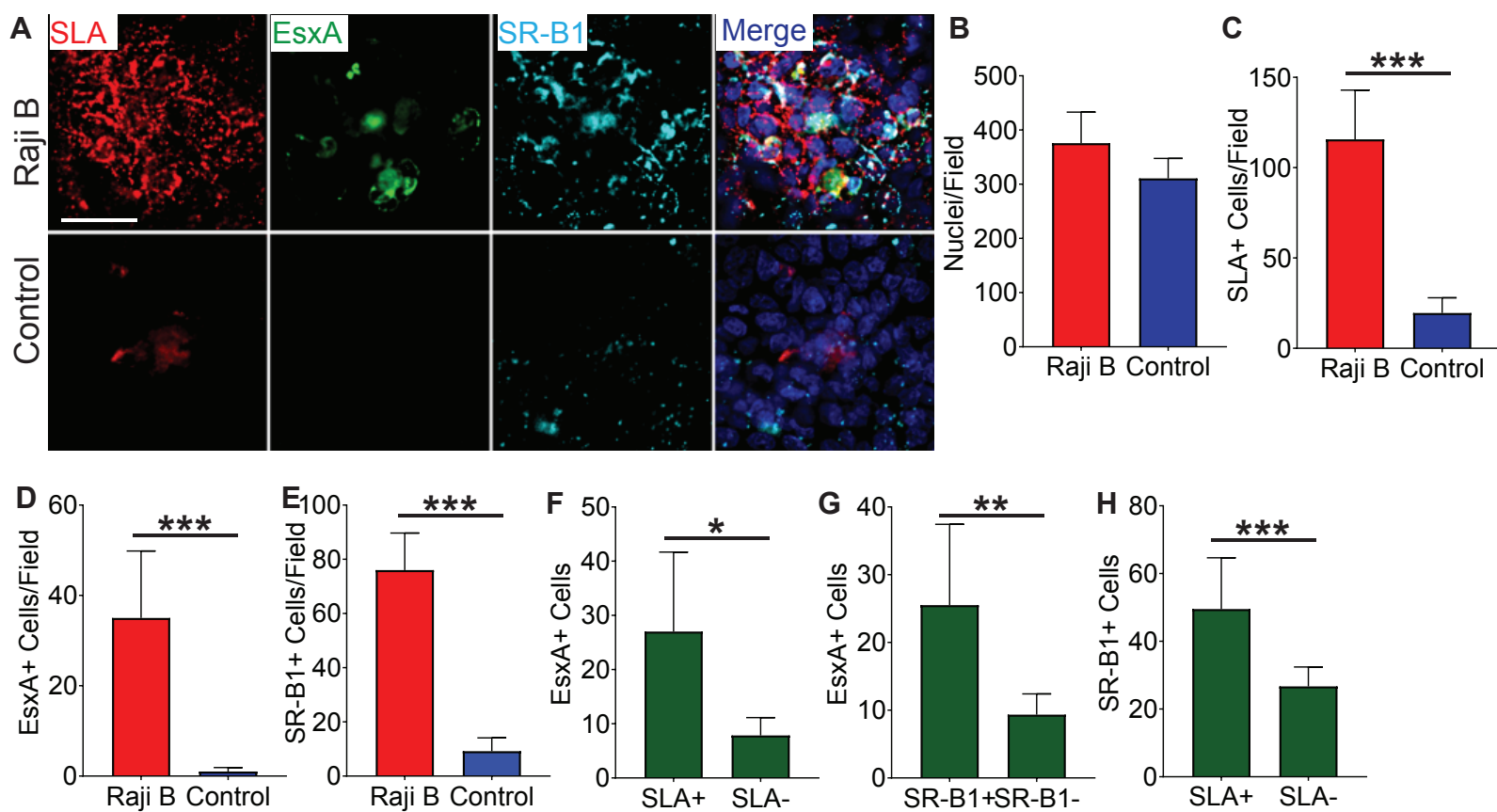
## Figure 4



## Figure 5



## Supplemental Figure 1





## Supplemental Figure 2

