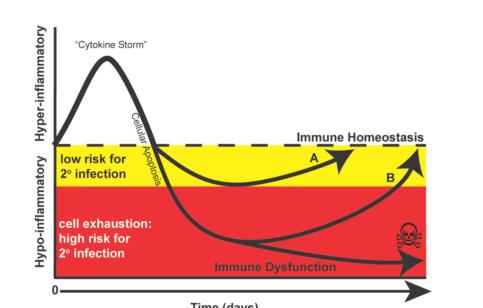
# Quantification of the innate immune function in wholeblood infection assays reveals pathogen-dependent immune defence of different sepsis phases

Ines Leonhardt<sup>1,2</sup>, Teresa Lehnert<sup>2,3</sup>, Kerstin Hünniger<sup>1,4</sup>, Oliver Kurzai<sup>1,2,4</sup>, Marc Thilo Figge<sup>2,3,5</sup>

# Introduction

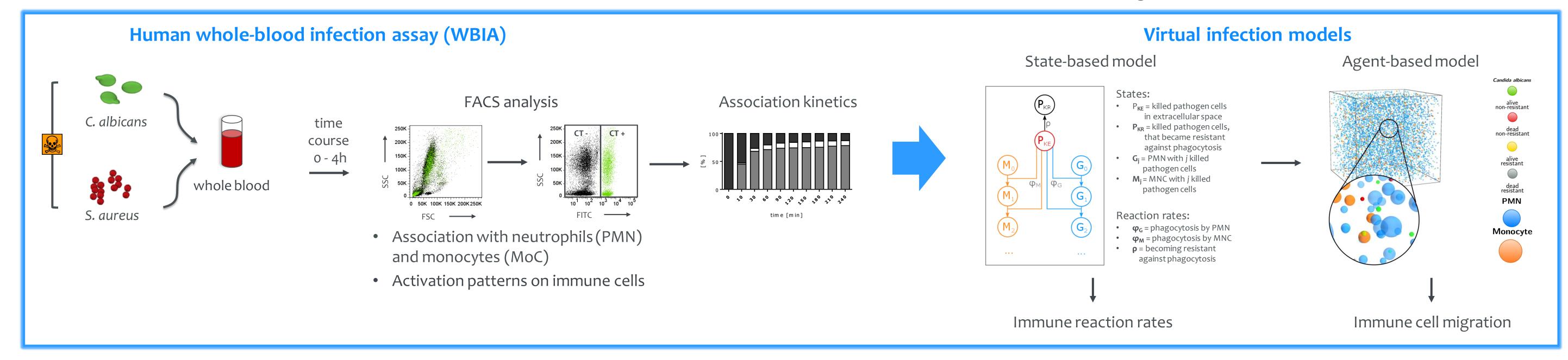
- Marked heterogeneity of sepsis as a clinical syndrome
- Caused by highly diverse pathological conditions and shows variable kinetics in individual patients
  - Classification of sepsis patients by their immune status is necessary for immunomodulatory therapy approaches



- Individualised quantification of altering immune effector functions of septic patients
- Are there pathogen-specific patterns of immune activation during whole blood infection?
- Are there immune effector functions that allow stratification of sepsis patients?

# Approach

Within this project, we will use data from a human whole blood model of infection combined with advanced mathematical modeling <sup>6,7</sup>.



## Results

Analysing pathogen association and immune activation in blood from healthy volunteers

#### Quantification of immune effector mechanisms by biomathematical analyses

Activation of immune cells

Association with immune cells

PMN MoC

Model simulation results

Immune reaction rates

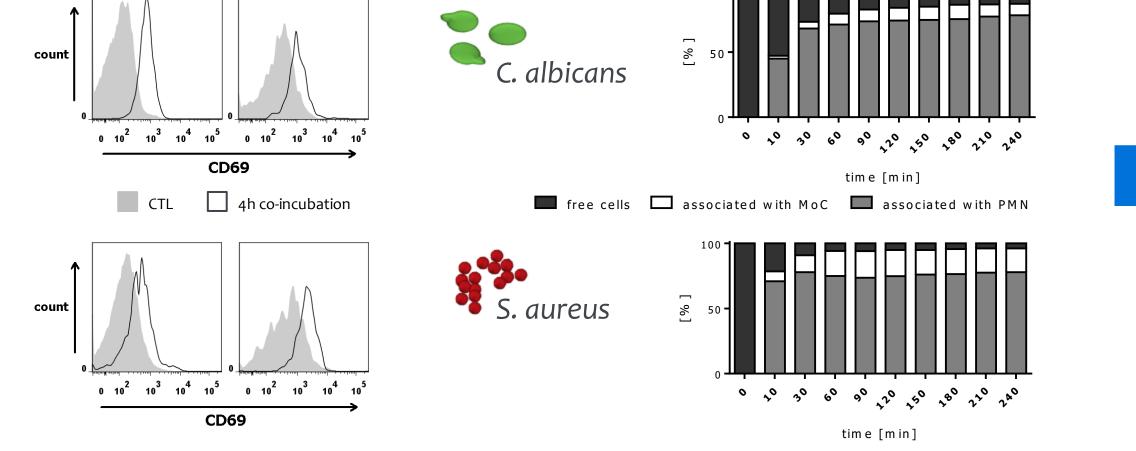
Free cells

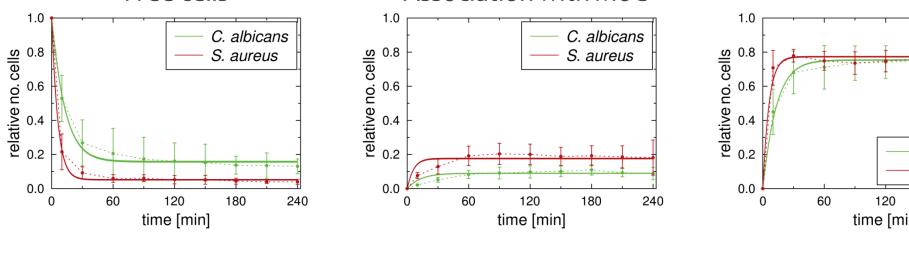
Association with MoC

Association with PMN

C. albicans

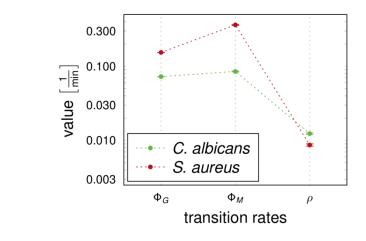
S. aureus







- Greater association of *S. aureus* cells with MoC
- Larger number of free C. albicans cells
- S. aureus infection causes steeper slope of immune cell association kinetics

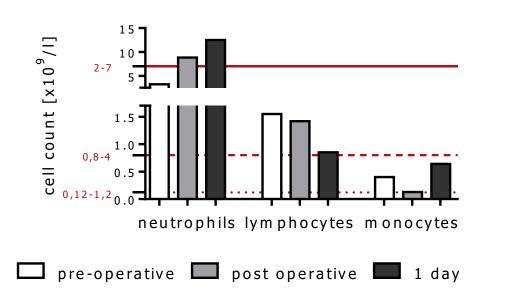


• Larger phagocytosis rates for whole-blood infection with *S. aureus* 

#### Analysing pathogen association and innate immune activation in blood from HLM patients

- Within a pilot study, blood samples of 3 patients that underwent cardiac surgery with extracorporeal circulation (heart-lung machine, HLM) were analysed
- Blood samples were obtained before cardiac surgery (pre-operative), immediately after surgery (post-operative), and 1 day after admission to ICU

White blood cell count

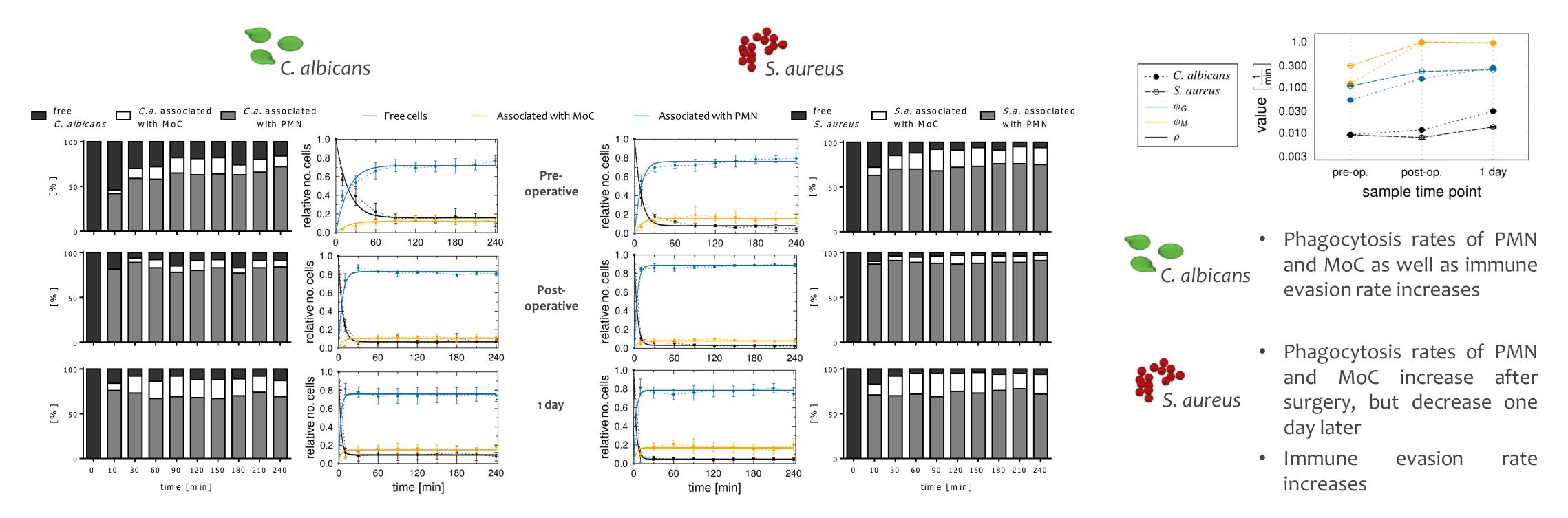


Blood cell count was quantified via hematological analyzer.

• Increase in white blood cell count after

#### Association with immune cells

Immune reaction rates



- surgery with a maximum at one day
- High neutrophil numbers exceeding the reference range after surgery
- Monocyte number increases
- Lymphocyte number decreases

### Conclusions

Once optimized, analyses of blood samples from sepsis patients and patients who have survived severe sepsis will follow. This will allow identifying patterns of of the dysregulated immune homeostasis providing functional classifiers for the differentiation of sepsis patients, and thereby forming a basis for future patient stratification.

#### Affiliations:

<sup>1</sup>Research Group Fungal Septomics, Leibniz Institute for Natural Product Research and Infection Biology - Hans Knöll Institute, Jena. <sup>2</sup>Center for Sepsis Control and Care (CSCC), Jena University Hospital, Jena.

<sup>3</sup>Research Group Applied Systems Biology, Leibniz Institute for Natural Product Research and Infection Biology - Hans Knöll Institute, Jena.

<sup>4</sup>Institute for Hygiene and Microbiology, University of Würzburg, Würzburg.

<sup>5</sup>Institute for Biology and Pharmacy, Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Jena.

References: <sup>6</sup>Hünniger *et al.* 2014, <sup>7</sup>Lehnert *et al.* 2015



Teresa LehnertInes Leonhardtteresa.lehnert@leibniz-hki.deines.leonhardt@leibniz-hki.de

