

Viral dynamics of the Respiratory Syncytial Virus during human experimental challenge: insights for transmission and treatment

Clarisse Schumer¹, Andrew Catchpole², Slim Fourati^{3,4}, Pascal Lukas⁵, Frederik Graw⁵, Alex Mann², Jérémie Guedj¹

¹*Université Paris Cité and Université Paris Sorbonne Paris Nord, Inserm, IAME, F-75018 Paris, France*

²*hVIVO, London*

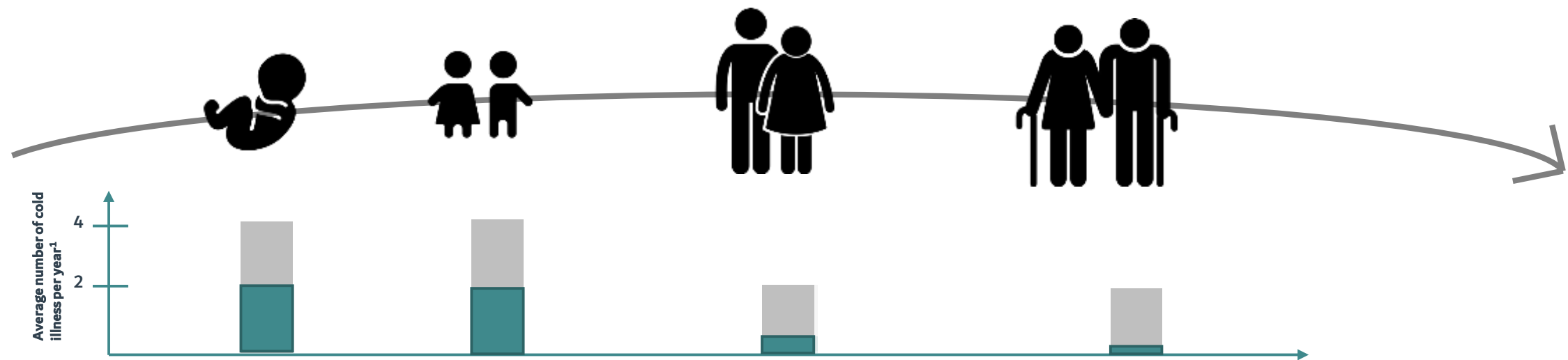
³*IMRB INSERM U955, Team « Viruses, Cancer », Hepatology, Créteil, France*

⁴*Department of Virology, Hôpitaux Universitaires Henri Mondor, Assistance Publique – Hôpitaux de Paris, Créteil, INSERM U955 France*

⁵*Department of Medicine 5, Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nürnberg and Universitätsklinikum Erlangen, Erlangen, Germany*

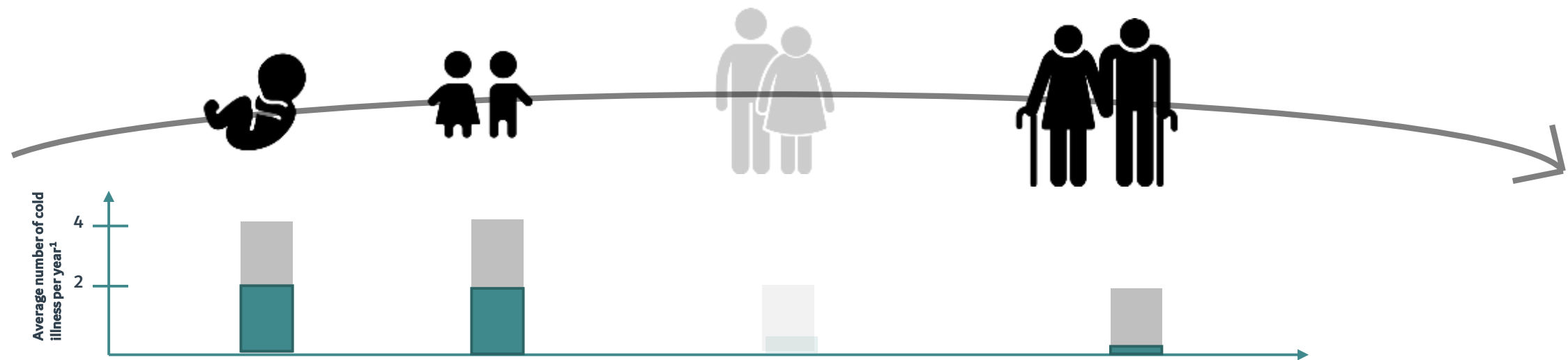


RSV: A common virus with large global impact



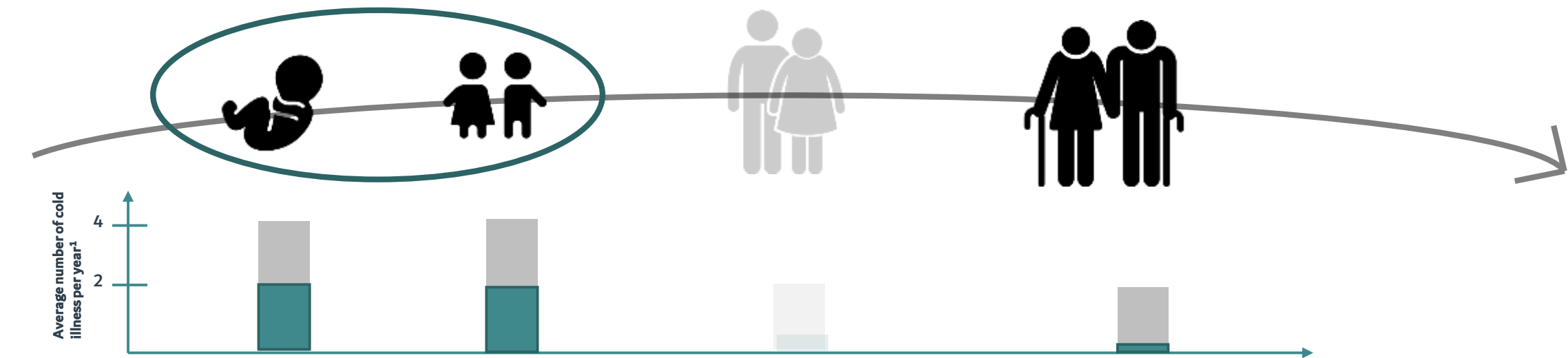
1- CDC, Common cold and RSV, 2025
2- Li et al., The Lancet, 2022
3- Shi et al., Lancet Resp Med, 2023

RSV: A common virus with large global impact



1- CDC, Common cold and RSV, 2025
2- Li et al., The Lancet, 2022
3- Shi et al., Lancet Resp Med, 2023

RSV: A common virus with large global impact



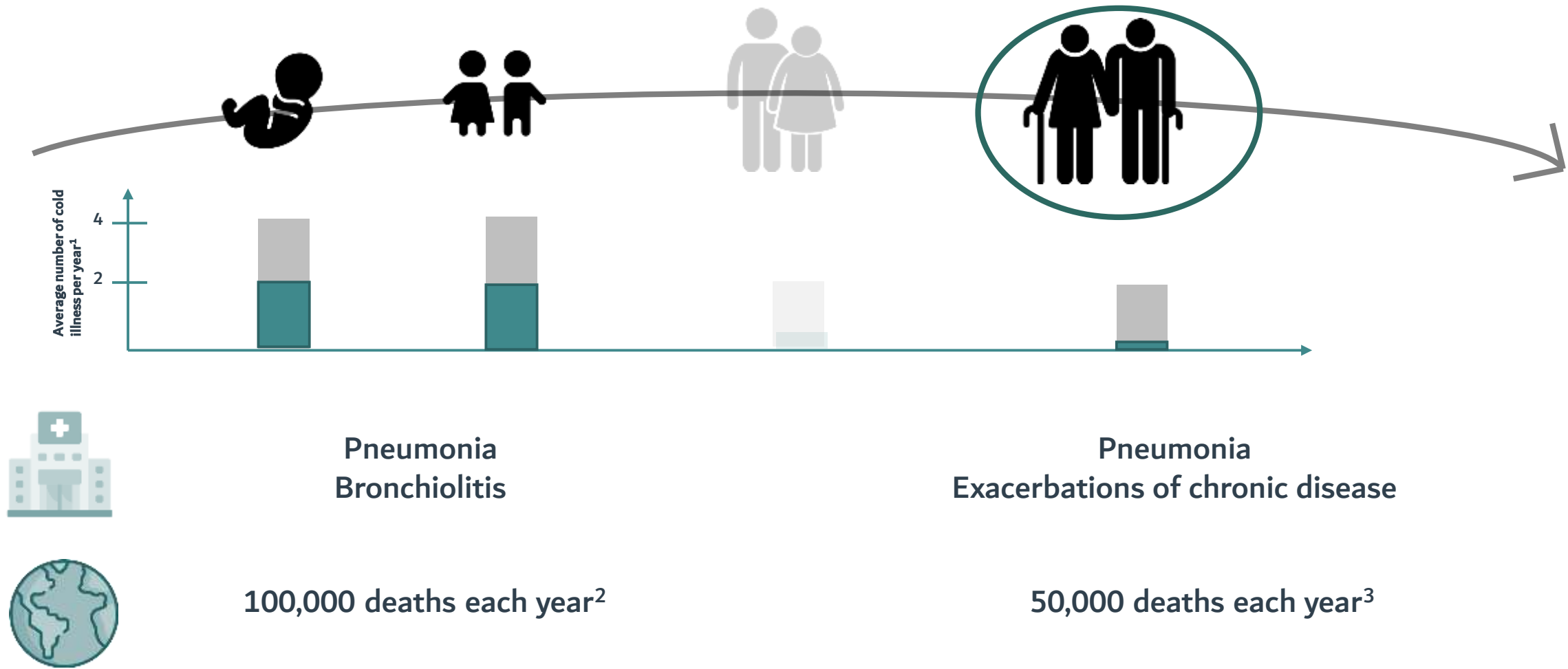
Pneumonia
Bronchiolitis



100,000 deaths each year²

1- CDC, Common cold and RSV, 2025
2- Li et al., The Lancet, 2022
3- Shi et al., Lancet Resp Med, 2023

RSV: A common virus with large global impact



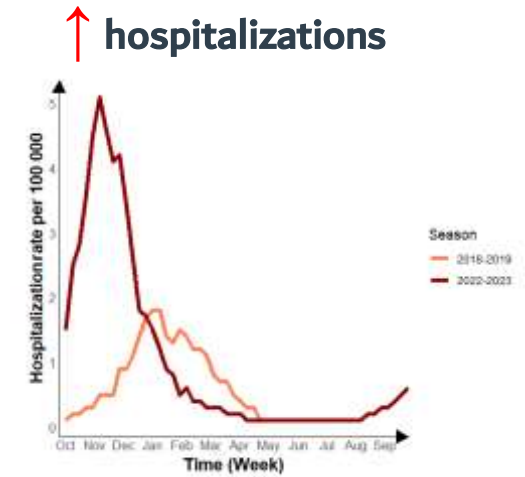
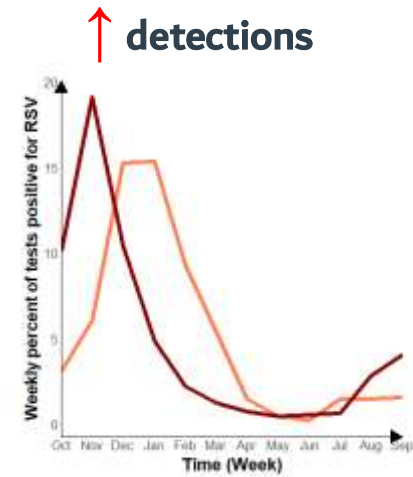
1- CDC, Common cold and RSV, 2025
2- Li et al., The Lancet, 2022
3- Shi et al., Lancet Resp Med, 2023

The changing landscape in RSV circulation and prophylaxis



Increase in RSV incidence⁴

- More detections in the general population
- More hospitalizations



4- European Respiratory Virus Surveillance, 2025

5- FDA, Approval of RSV vaccine, 2023

6- EMA, Approval of Palivizumab, 1998

7- FDA, Approval of Nirsevimab, 2023

8- Drysdale et al., The New England Journal of medicine, 2023

9- Zar et al., Open Forum Infectious Diseases, 2025

The changing landscape in RSV circulation and prophylaxis



Increase in RSV incidence⁴

- More detections in the general population
- More hospitalizations



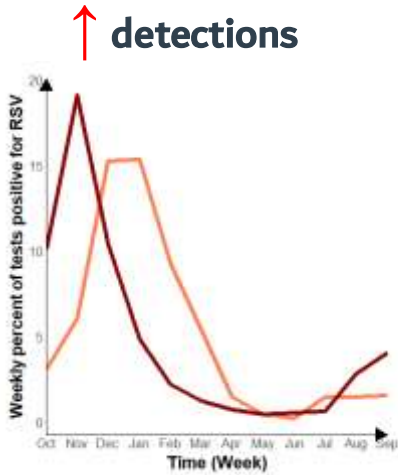
Evolving prevention strategies



Vaccine

Abrysvo (2023)⁵
Arexvy (2023)⁵

Arexvy (2023)⁵



4- European Respiratory Virus Surveillance, 2025

5- FDA, Approval of RSV vaccine, 2023

6- EMA, Approval of Palivizumab, 1998

7-FDA, Approval of Nirsevimab, 2023

8- Drysdale et al., The New England Journal of medicine, 2023

9- Zar et al., Open Forum Infectious Diseases, 2025

The changing landscape in RSV circulation and prophylaxis



Increase in RSV incidence⁴

- More detections in the general population
- More hospitalizations



Evolving prevention strategies



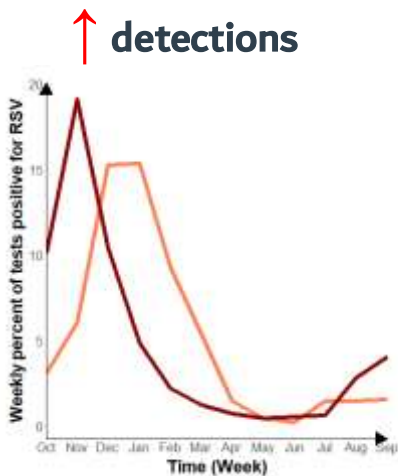
Vaccine

Monoclonal antibody

Abrysvo (2023)⁵
Arexvy (2023)⁵

Arexvy (2023)⁵

Palivizumab (1998)⁶



4- European Respiratory Virus Surveillance, 2025

5- FDA, Approval of RSV vaccine, 2023

6- EMA, Approval of Palivizumab, 1998

7-FDA, Approval of Nirsevimab, 2023

8- Drysdale et al., The New England Journal of medicine, 2023

9- Zar et al., Open Forum Infectious Diseases, 2025

The changing landscape in RSV circulation and prophylaxis



Increase in RSV incidence⁴

- More detections in the general population
- More hospitalizations



Evolving prevention strategies



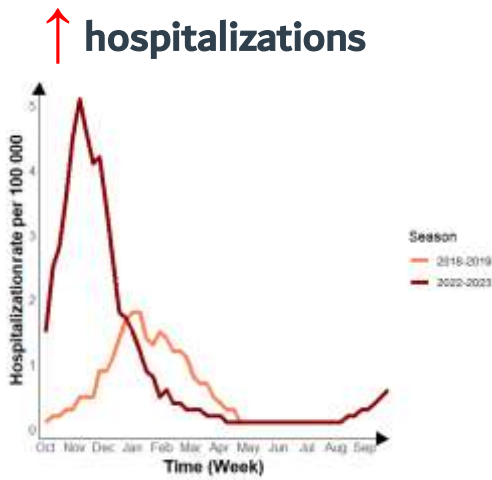
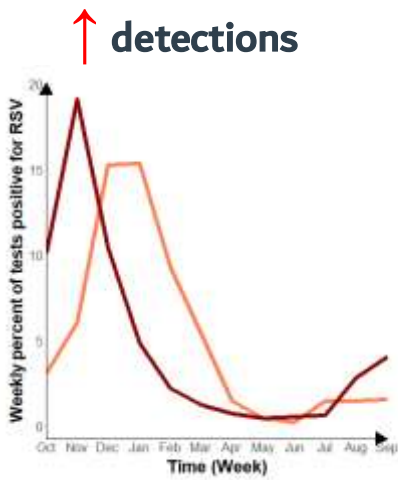
Vaccine

Monoclonal antibody

Abrysvo (2023)⁵
Arexvy (2023)⁵

Arexvy (2023)⁵

Palivizumab (1998)⁶
Nirsevimab (2023)^{7,8}



4- European Respiratory Virus Surveillance, 2025

5- FDA, Approval of RSV vaccine, 2023

6- EMA, Approval of Palivizumab, 1998

7-FDA, Approval of Nirsevimab, 2023

8- Drysdale et al., The New England Journal of medicine, 2023

9- Zar et al., Open Forum Infectious Diseases, 2025

The changing landscape in RSV circulation and prophylaxis



Increase in RSV incidence⁴

- More detections in the general population
- More hospitalizations



Evolving prevention strategies



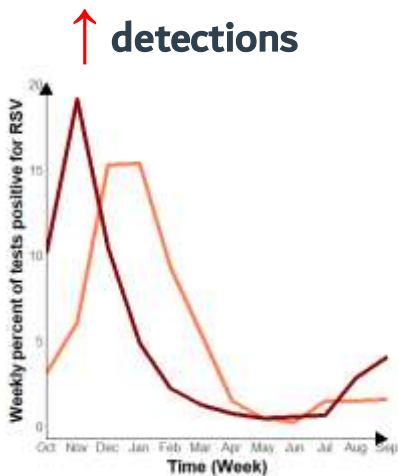
Vaccine

Monoclonal antibody

Abrysvo (2023)⁵
Arexvy (2023)⁵

Arexvy (2023)⁵

Palivizumab (1998)⁶
Nirsevimab (2023)^{7,8}
Clesrovimab⁹



4- European Respiratory Virus Surveillance, 2025

5- FDA, Approval of RSV vaccine, 2023

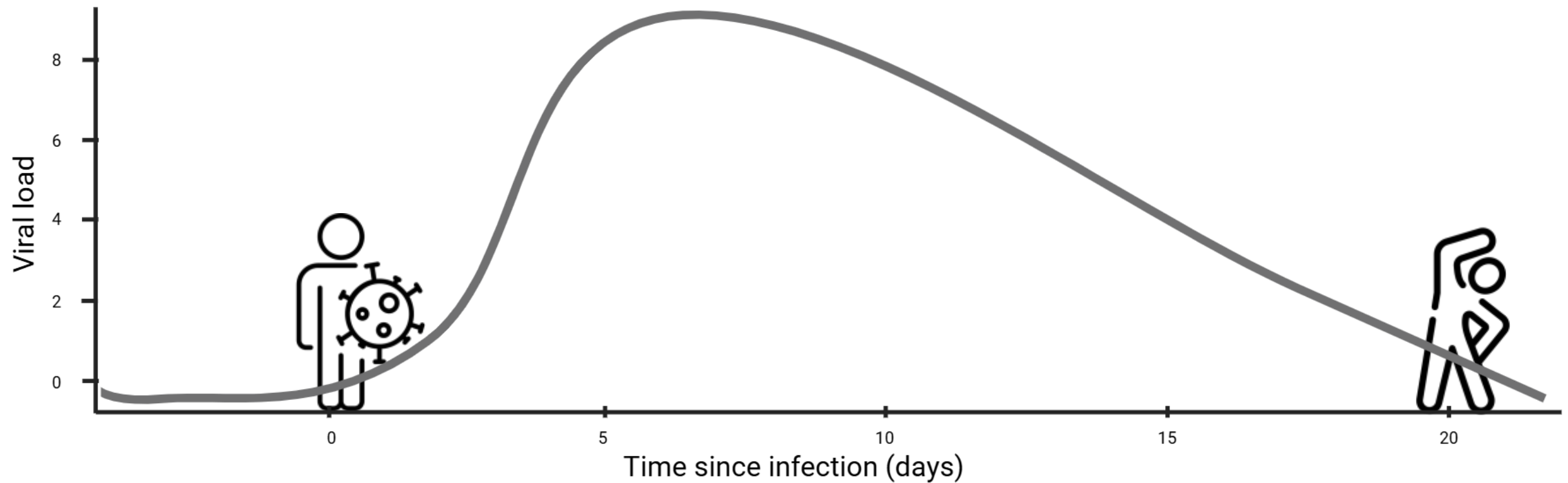
6- EMA, Approval of Palivizumab, 1998

7-FDA, Approval of Nirsevimab, 2023

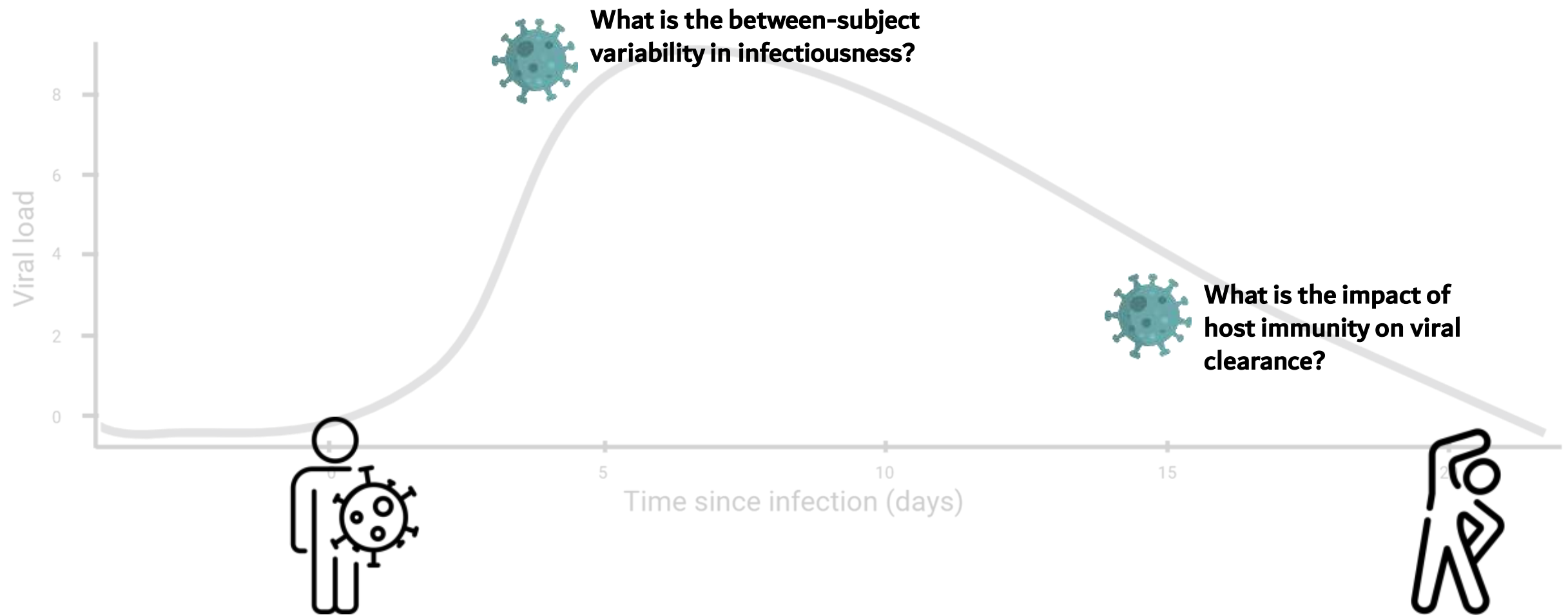
8- Drysdale et al., The New England Journal of medicine, 2023

9- Zar et al., Open Forum Infectious Diseases, 2025

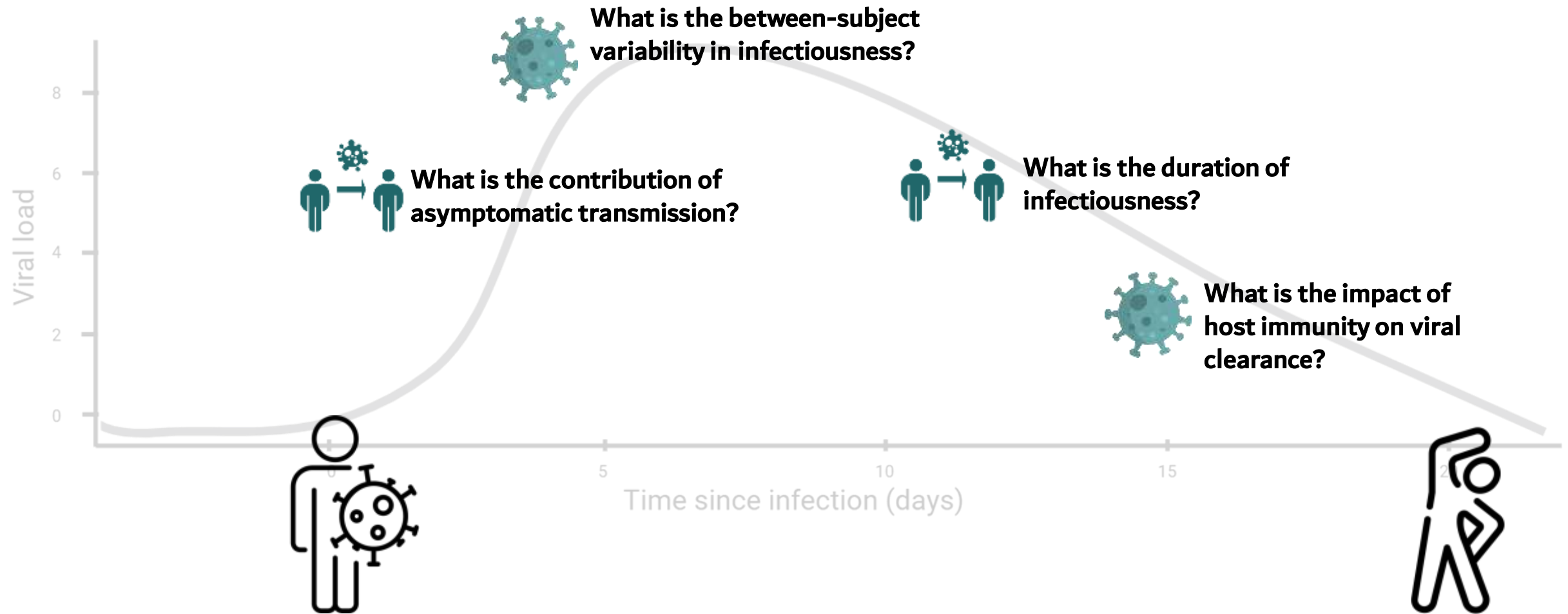
Viral kinetics to better understand RSV pathogenesis & transmission



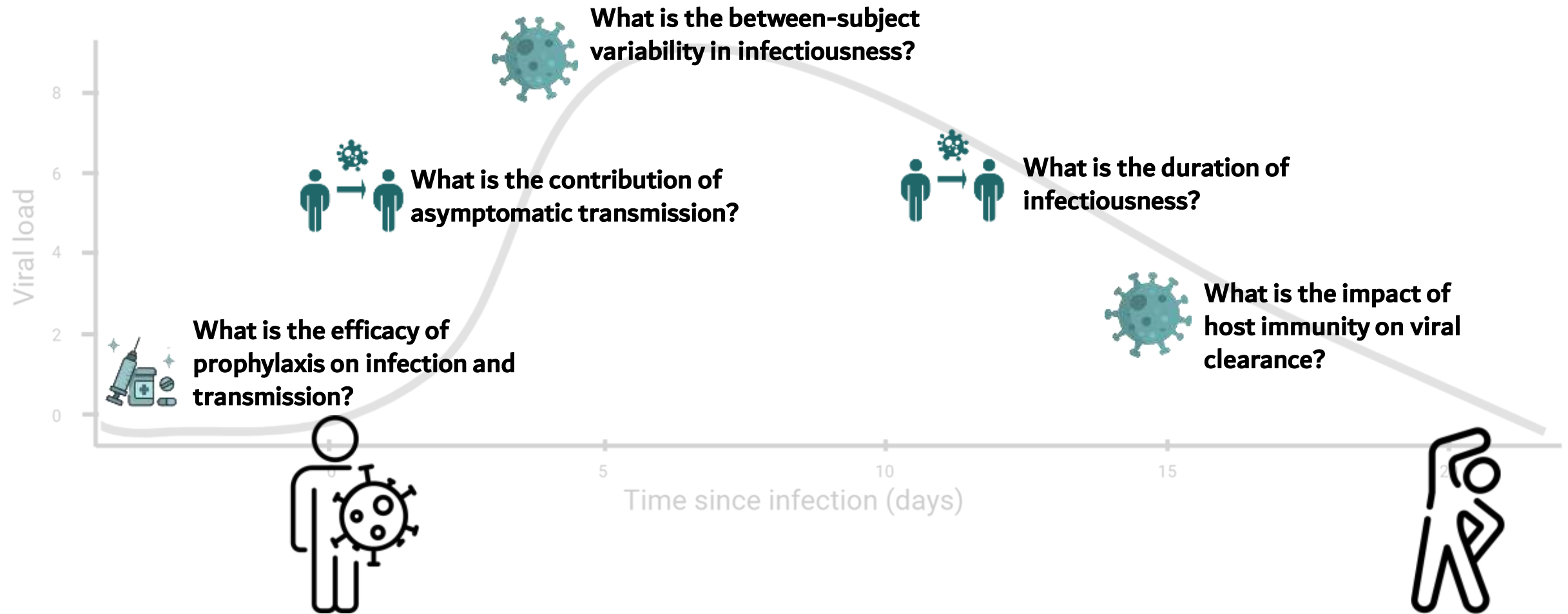
Viral kinetics to better understand RSV pathogenesis & transmission



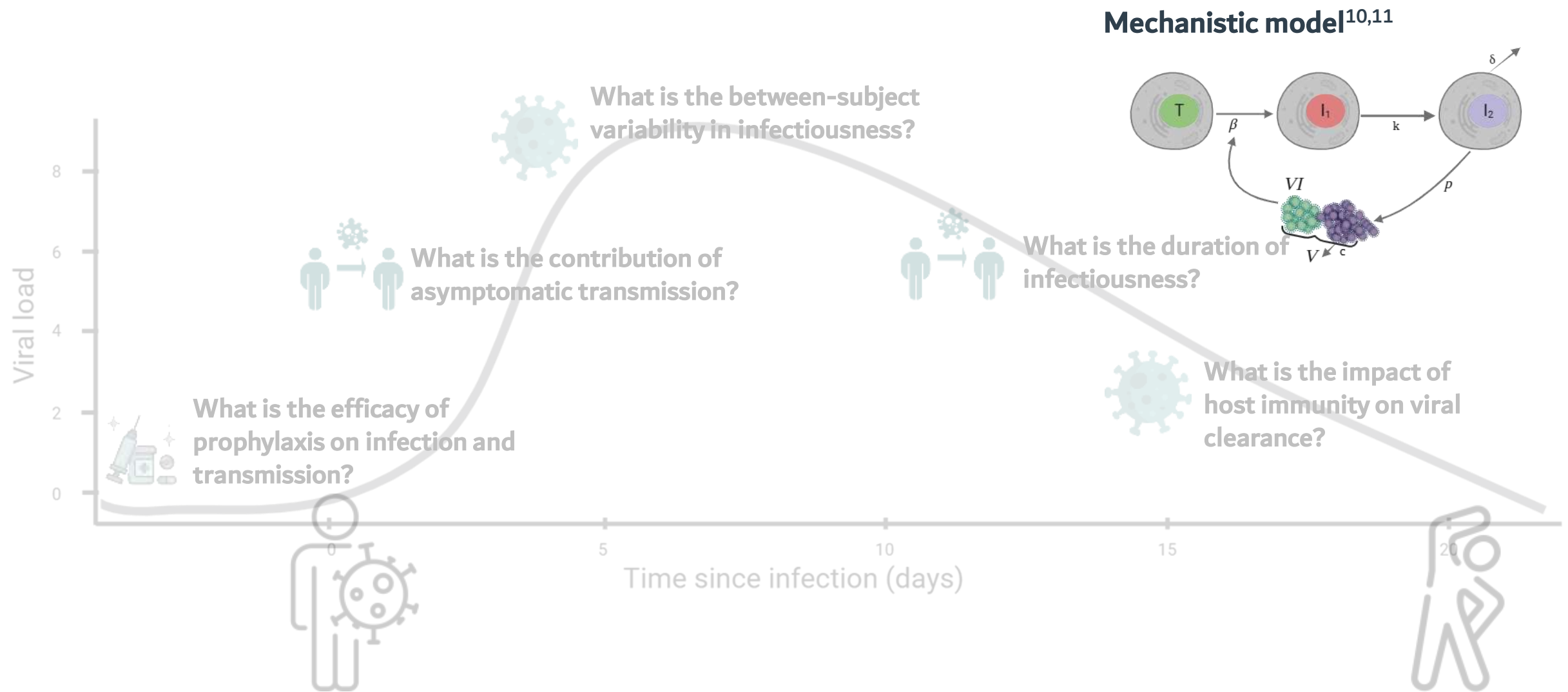
Viral kinetics to better understand RSV pathogenesis & transmission



Viral kinetics to better understand RSV pathogenesis & transmission



Viral kinetics to better understand RSV pathogenesis & transmission



10- Baccam et al., Journal of Virology, 2006
11- Néant et al., PNAS, 2021

Experimental challenges: A unique opportunity to track viral kinetics

- Experimental human challenge allows to have highly-detailed kinetics



Experimental challenges: A unique opportunity to track viral kinetics

- Experimental human challenge allows to have highly-detailed kinetics
- 252 healthy individuals aged 18-49, inoculated with RSV Memphis-37b

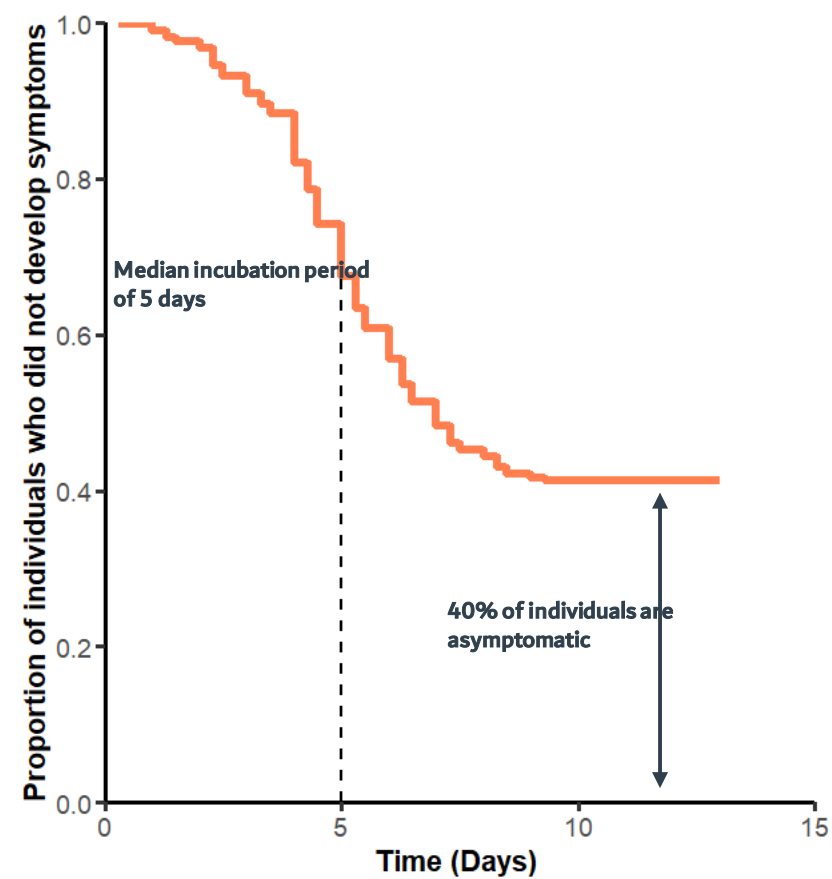
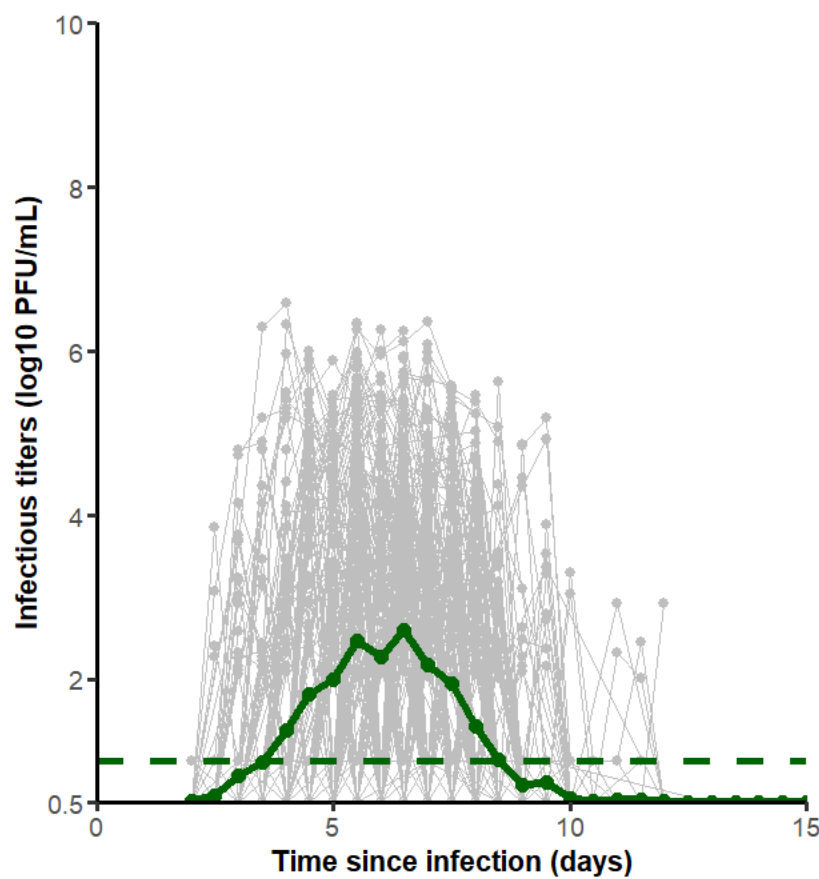
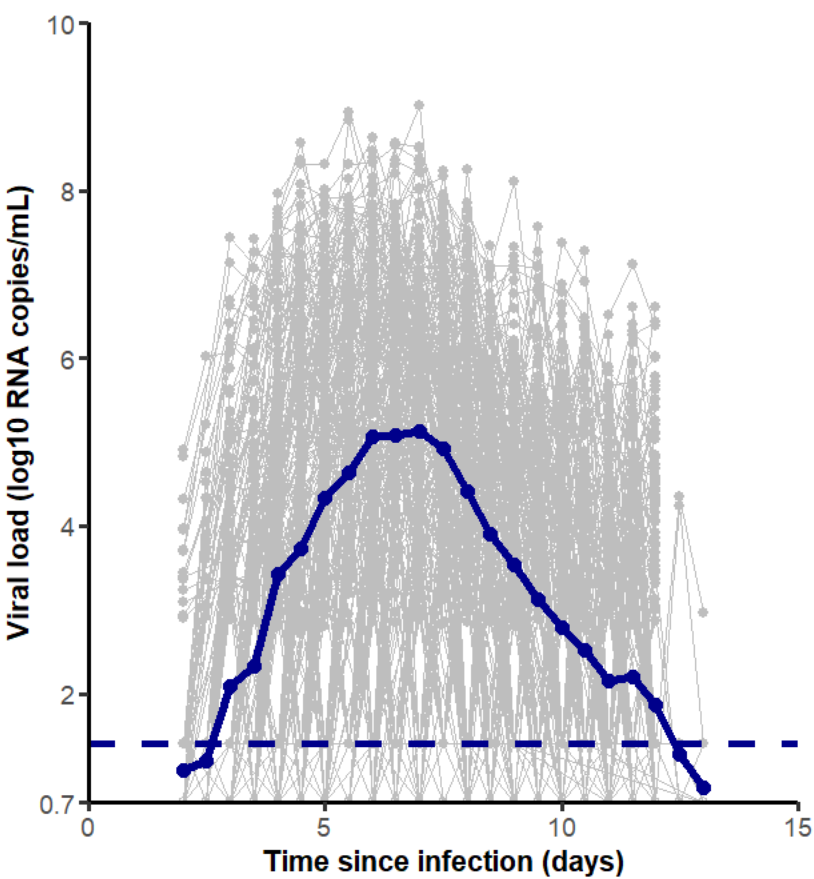


Experimental challenges: A unique opportunity to track viral kinetics

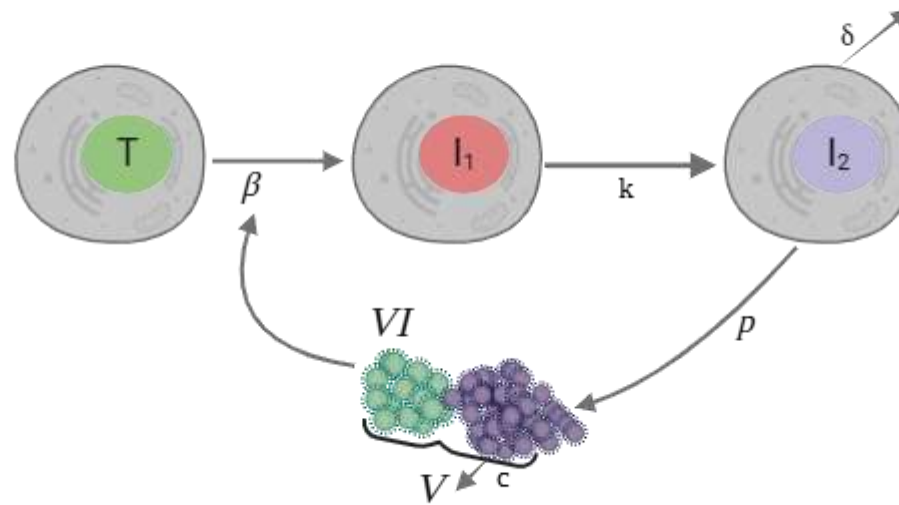
- Experimental human challenge allows to have highly-detailed kinetics
- 252 healthy individuals aged 18-49, inoculated with RSV Memphis-37b
- Measurements:
 - Viral load
 - Infectious titers
 - Symptom score



Overview of data



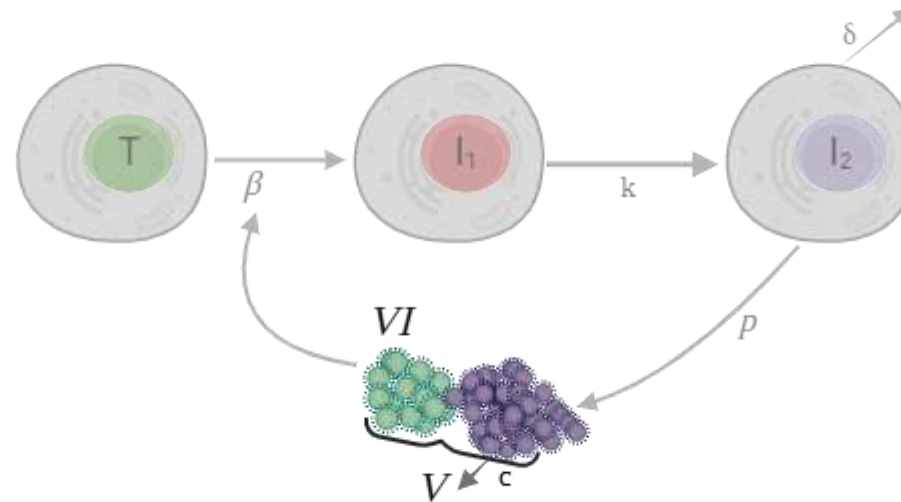
Building a within-host model



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm

Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?



Linear relation

$$VI = aV$$



Power relation

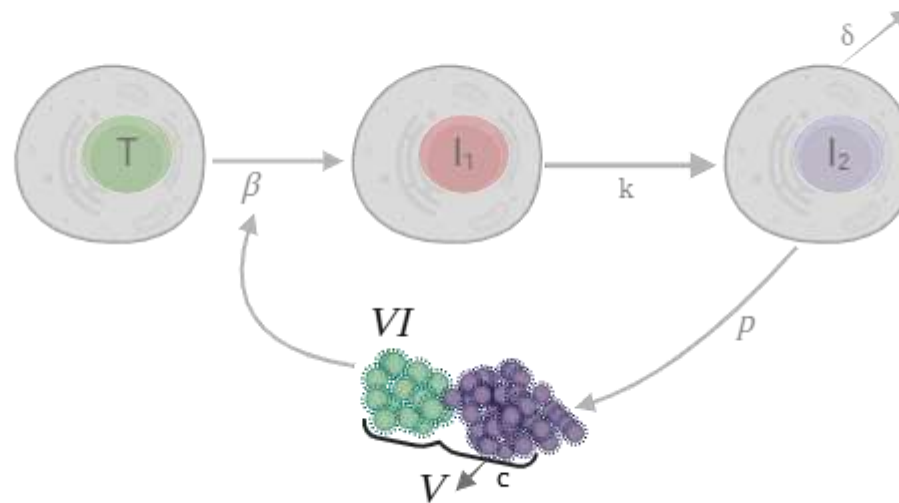
$$VI = aV^b$$



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm

Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?



Linear relation

$$VI = aV$$



Power relation

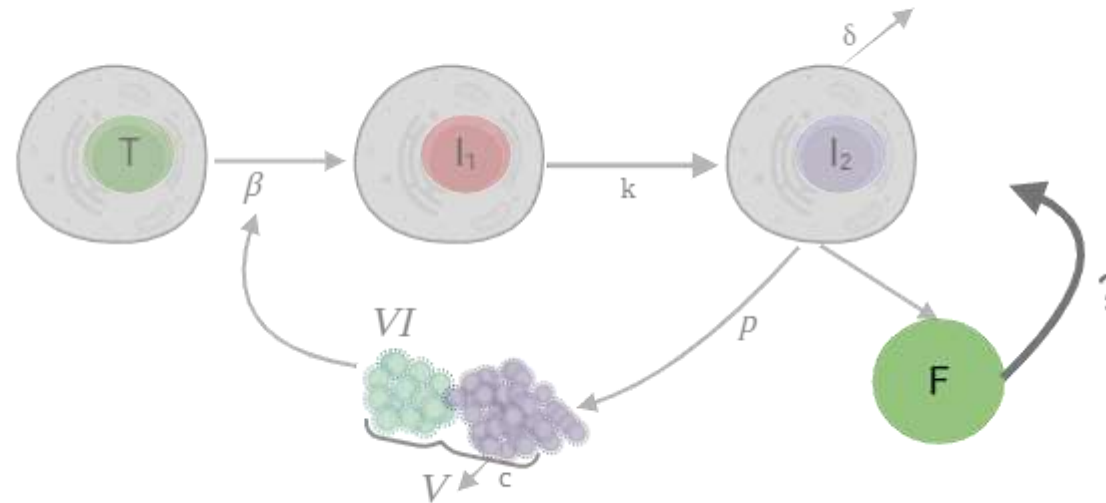
$$VI = aV^b$$



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm

Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?

Step 2: What are the effects of innate immunity?



Power relation

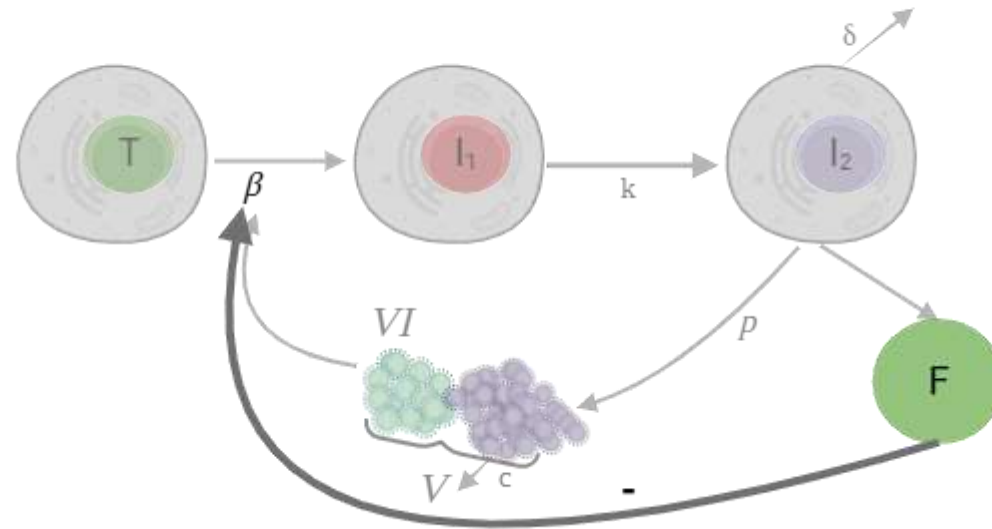
$$VI = aV^b$$



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm

Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?

Step 2: What are the effects of innate immunity?

β \downarrow infectivity rate

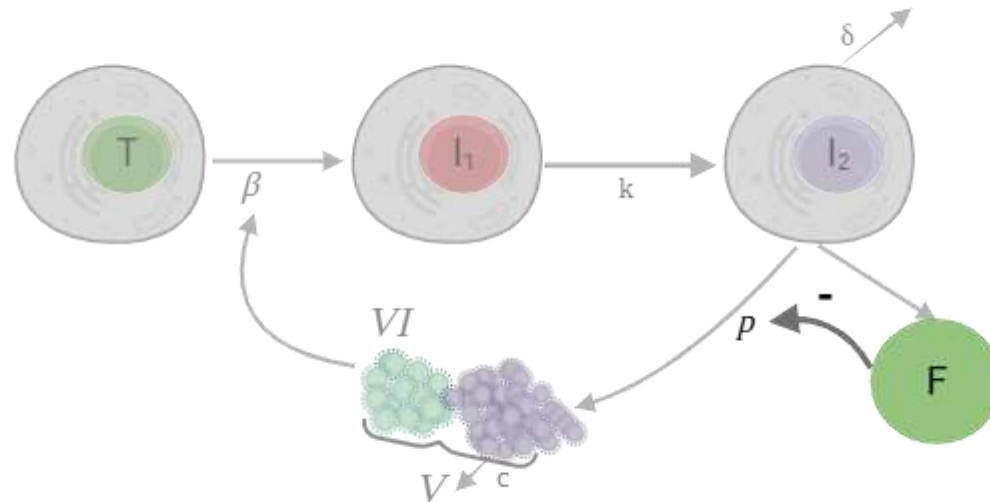
\blacklozenge Power relation
 $VI = aV^b$



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm

Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?

◆ Power relation
 $VI = aV^b$

Step 2: What are the effects of innate immunity?

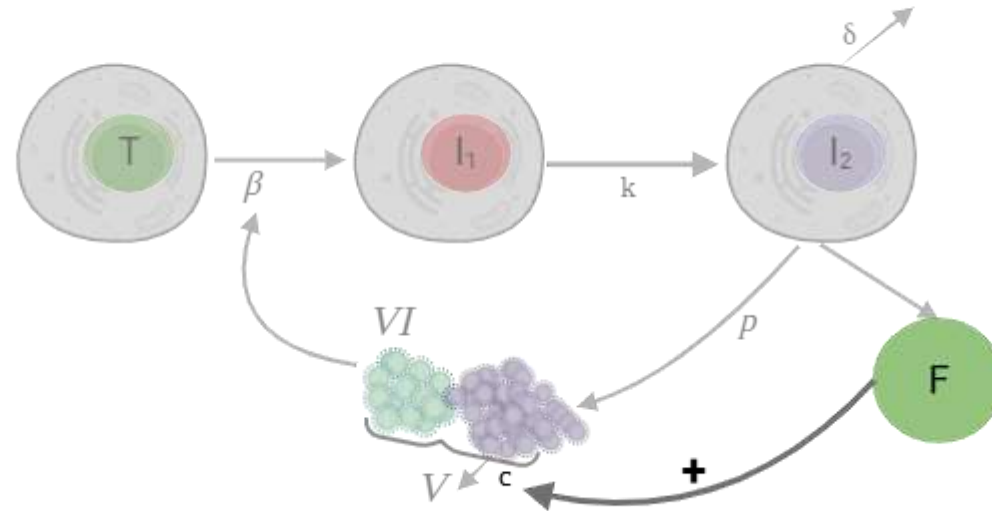
◆ β ↓ infectivity rate
◆ p ↓ production rate



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm

Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?

Step 2: What are the effects of innate immunity?

- β ↓ infectivity rate
- p ↓ production rate
- c ↑ viral clearance rate

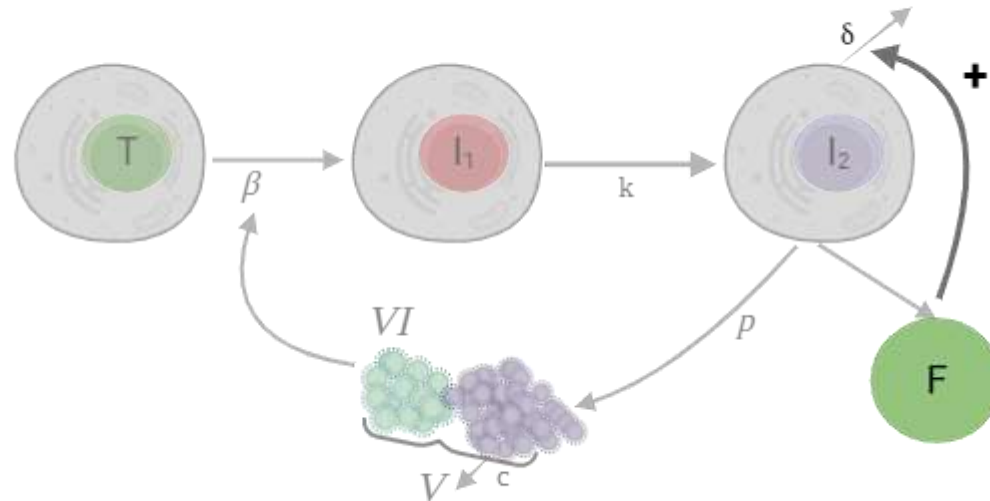
◆ Power relation
 $VI = aV^b$



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm

Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?

Step 2: What are the effects of innate immunity?

- β ↓ infectivity rate
- p ↓ production rate
- c ↑ viral clearance rate
- δ ↑ cell death rate

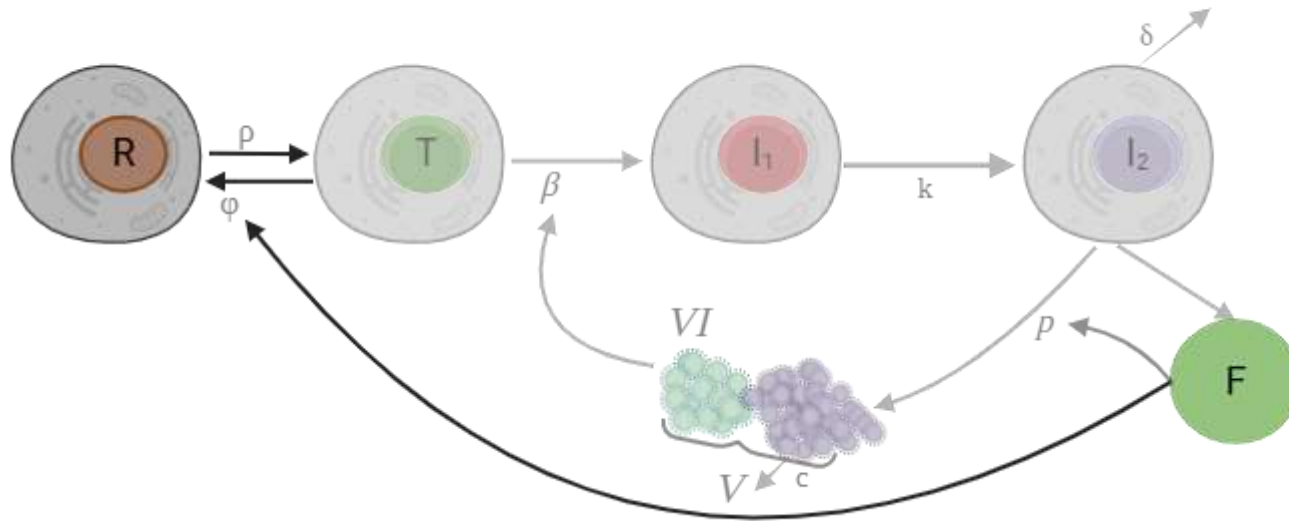
◆ Power relation
 $VI = aV^b$



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm

Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?

Step 2: What are the effects of innate immunity?

- β ↓ infectivity rate
- p ↓ production rate
- c ↑ viral clearance rate
- δ ↑ cell death rate
- R Induce refractory status

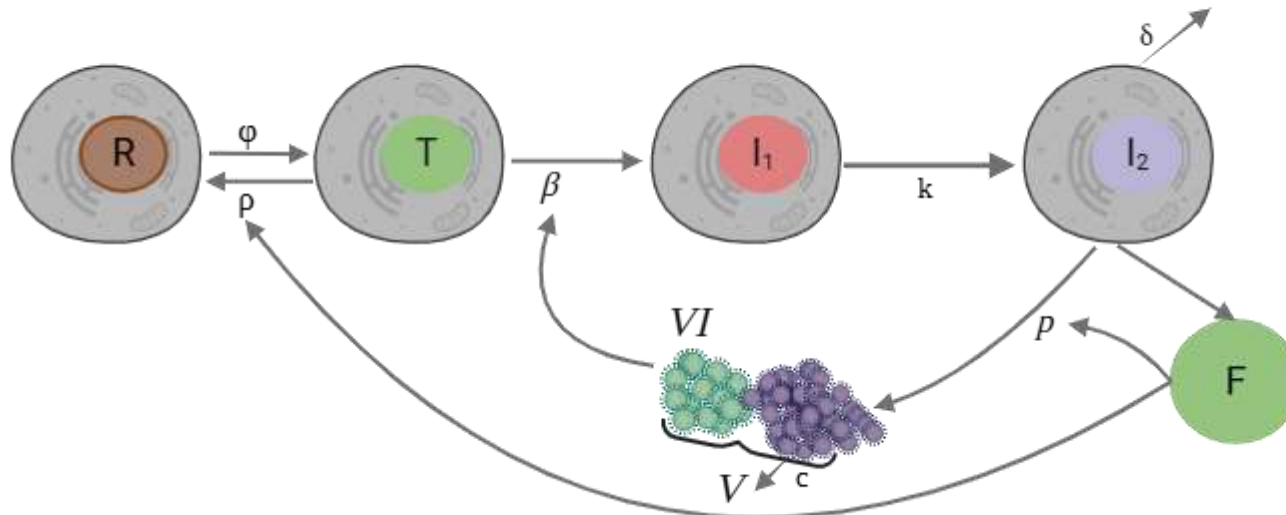
◆ Power relation
 $VI = aV^b$



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm

Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?

Step 2: What are the effects of innate immunity?

β ↓ infectivity rate
 p ↓ production rate
 c ↑ viral clearance rate

δ ↑ cell death rate

R Induce refractory status

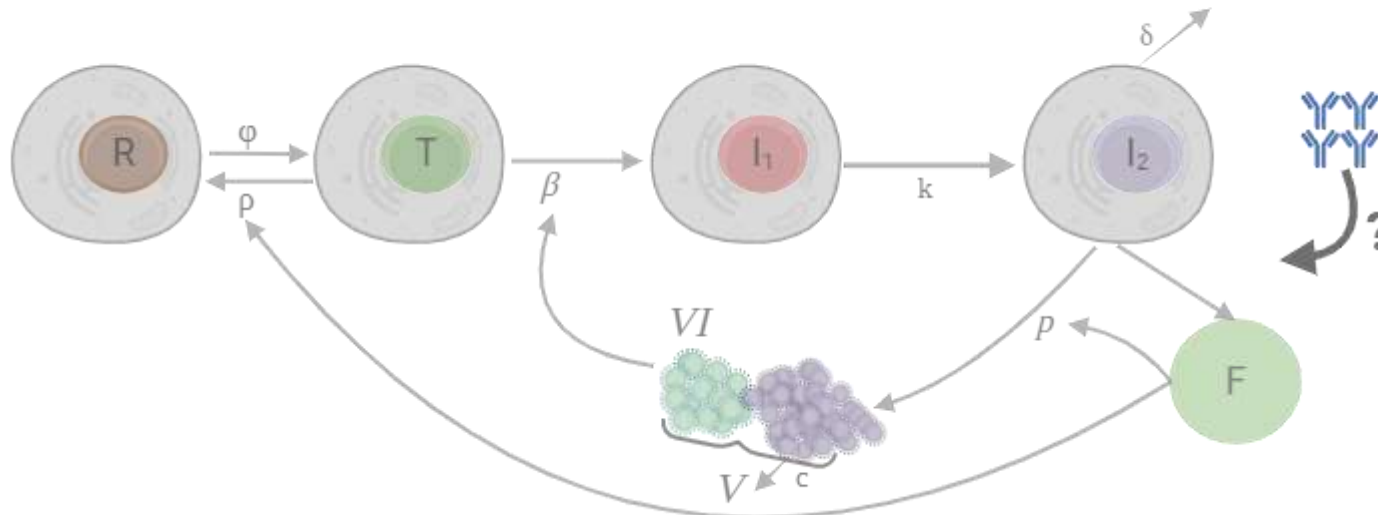
◆ Power relation
 $VI = aV^b$



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm

Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?

Step 2: What are the effects of innate immunity?

Step 3: What are the effects of adaptive immunity?

◆ Power relation
 $VI = aV^b$

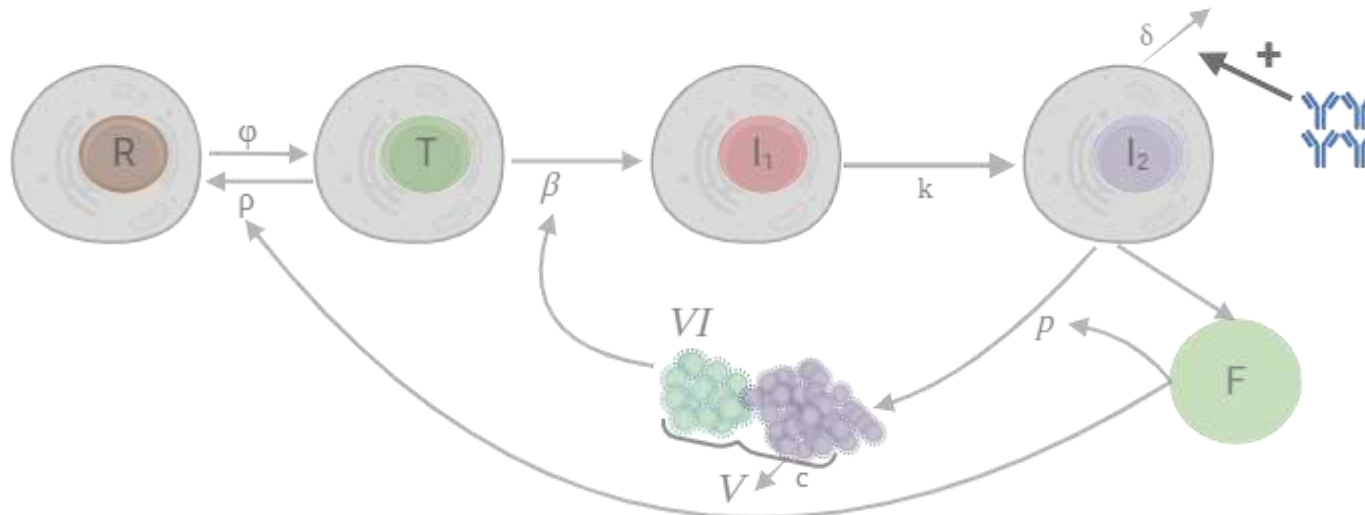
◆ p ↓ production rate
◆ R Induce refractory status



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm

Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?

Step 2: What are the effects of innate immunity?

Step 3: What are the effects of adaptive immunity?

◆ Power relation
 $VI = aV^b$

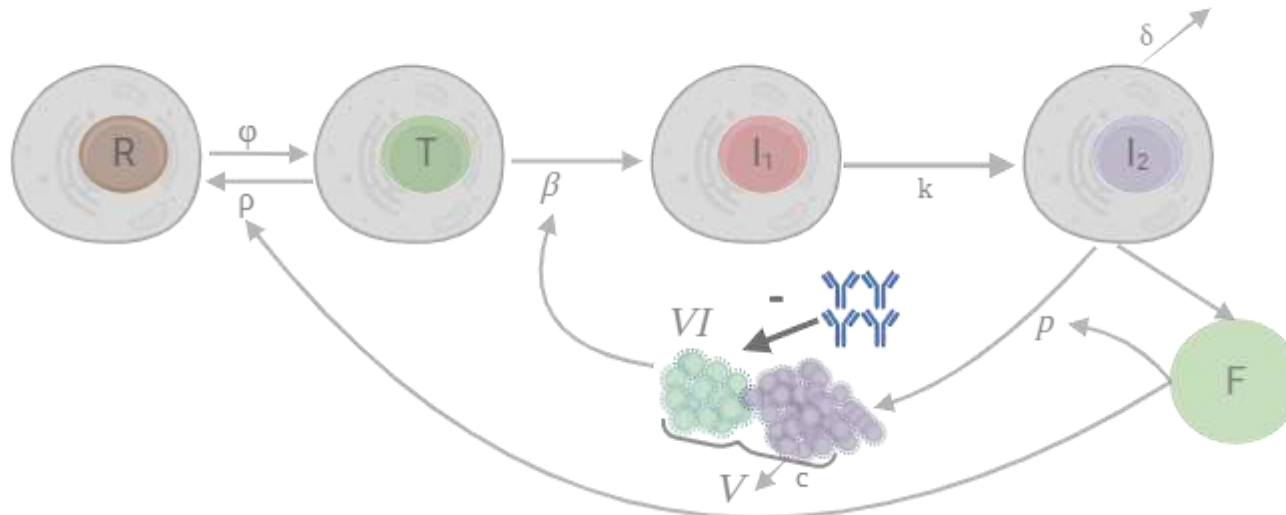
◆ p ↓ production rate
 ◆ R Induce refractory status

◆ δ ↑ cell death rate



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm
 Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?

◆ Power relation
 $VI = aV^b$

Step 2: What are the effects of innate immunity?

◆ p ↓ production rate
 ◆ R Induce refractory status

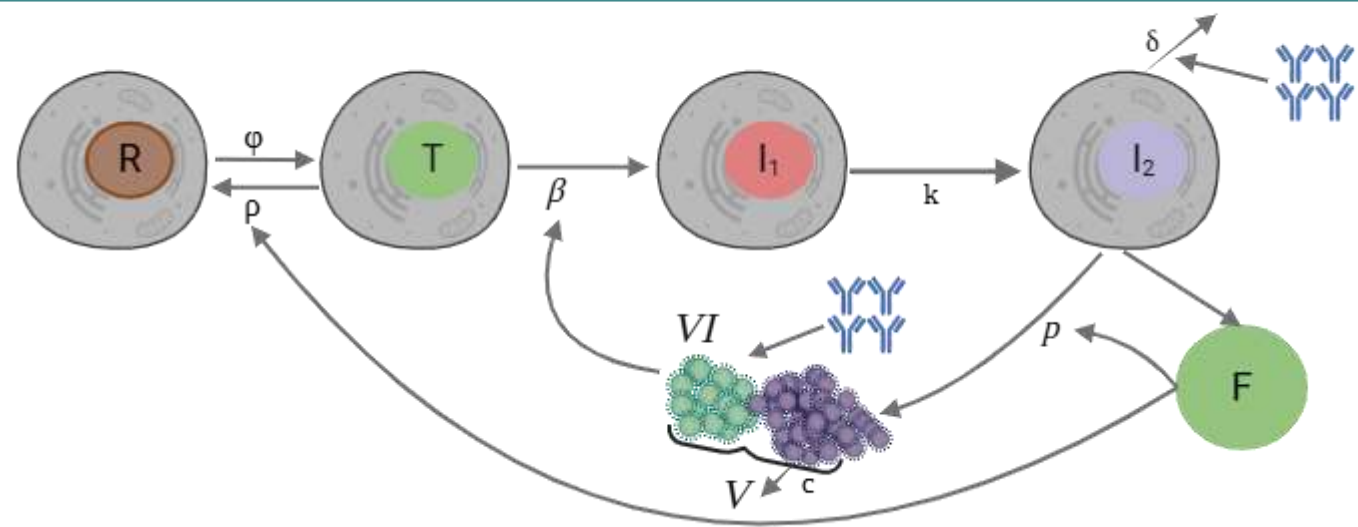
Step 3: What are the effects of adaptive immunity?

◆ δ ↑ cell death rate
 ◆ VI ↓ Infectivity



Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm
 Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Step 1: Which model to describe interaction between viral load (V) and infectious titers (VI) ?

Step 2: What are the effects of innate immunity?

Step 3: What are the effects of adaptive immunity?

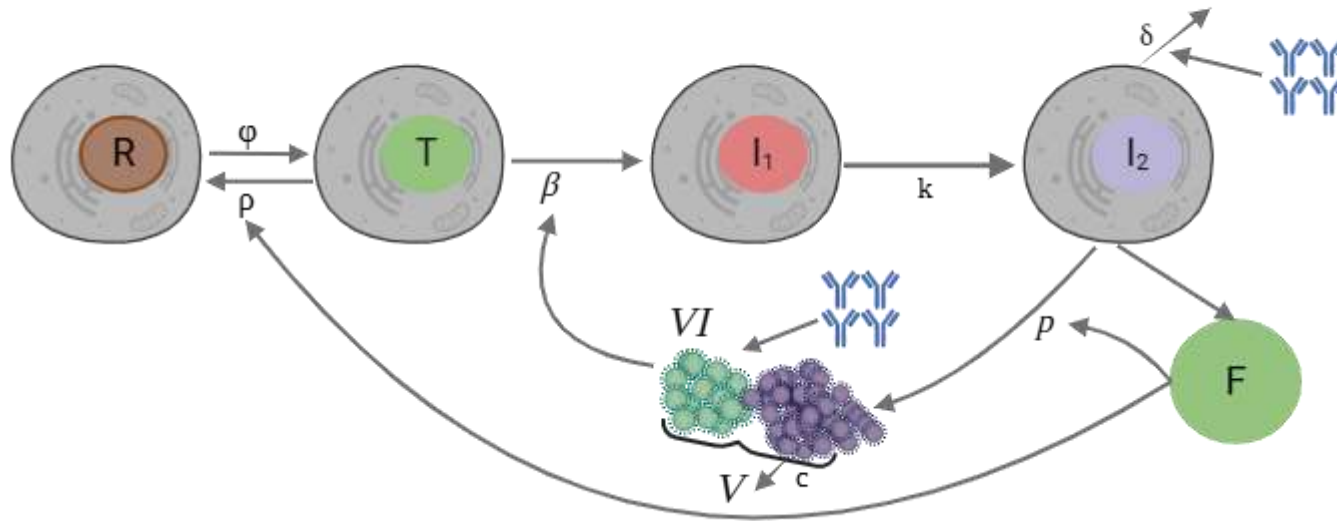
- ρ ↓ production rate
- R Induce refractory status

- δ ↑ cell death rate
- VI ↓ Infectivity

◆ Power relation
 $VI = aV^b$

Parameters are estimated using SAEM algorithm
Model selection using Bayesian Information Criteria Corrected (BICc)

Building a within-host model



Final model

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{dT}{dt} &= \beta VIT - \phi FT + \rho R \\ \frac{dR}{dt} &= \phi FT - \rho R \\ \frac{dI_1}{dt} &= \beta VIT - kE \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{dI_2}{dt} &= kE - \delta(t)I_2 \\ \frac{dV}{dt} &= pI_2 \left(1 - \frac{F}{F + \theta}\right) - cV \\ \frac{dF}{dt} &= I - d_F F \end{aligned}$$

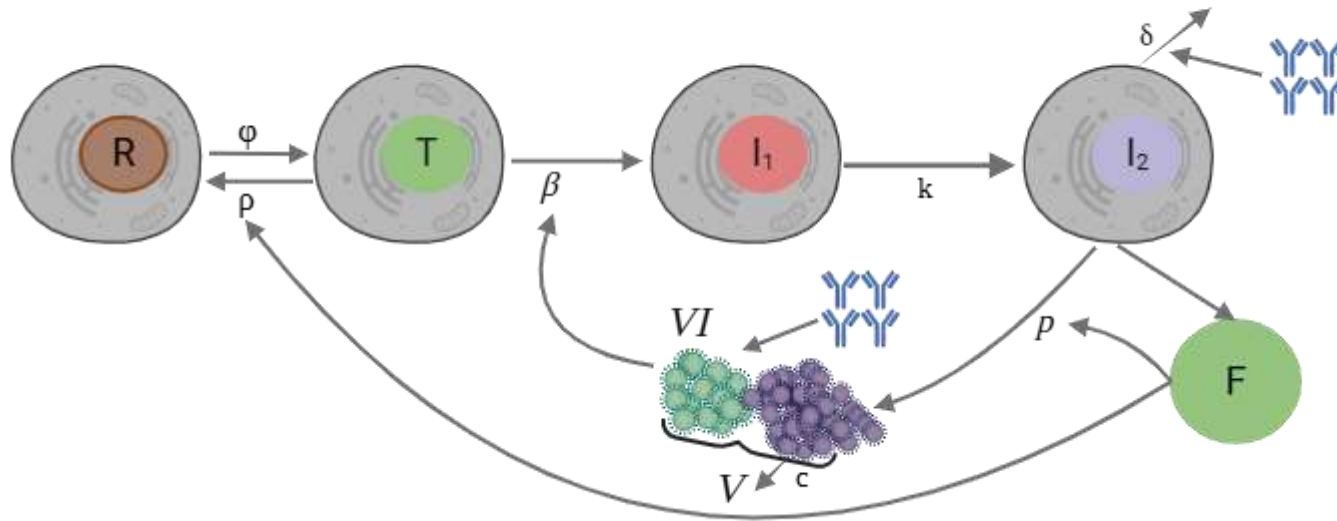
$$VI = aV^{b(t)}$$

At time of adaptive immune activation τ

$$b(t) = \begin{cases} b_0, & t < \tau \\ b_0 \exp(-\sigma(t - \tau)), & t \geq \tau \end{cases}$$

$$\delta(t) = \begin{cases} \delta_0, & t < \tau \\ \delta_1, & t \geq \tau \end{cases}$$

Building a within-host model



Final model

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{dT}{dt} &= \phi FT - \beta VIT - \rho R \\ \frac{dR}{dt} &= \phi FT - \rho R \\ \frac{dI_1}{dt} &= \beta VIT - kI_1 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{dI_2}{dt} &= kI_1 - \delta(t)I_2 \\ \frac{dV}{dt} &= pI_2 \left(1 - \frac{F}{F + \theta}\right) - cV \\ \frac{dF}{dt} &= I_2 - d_F F \end{aligned}$$

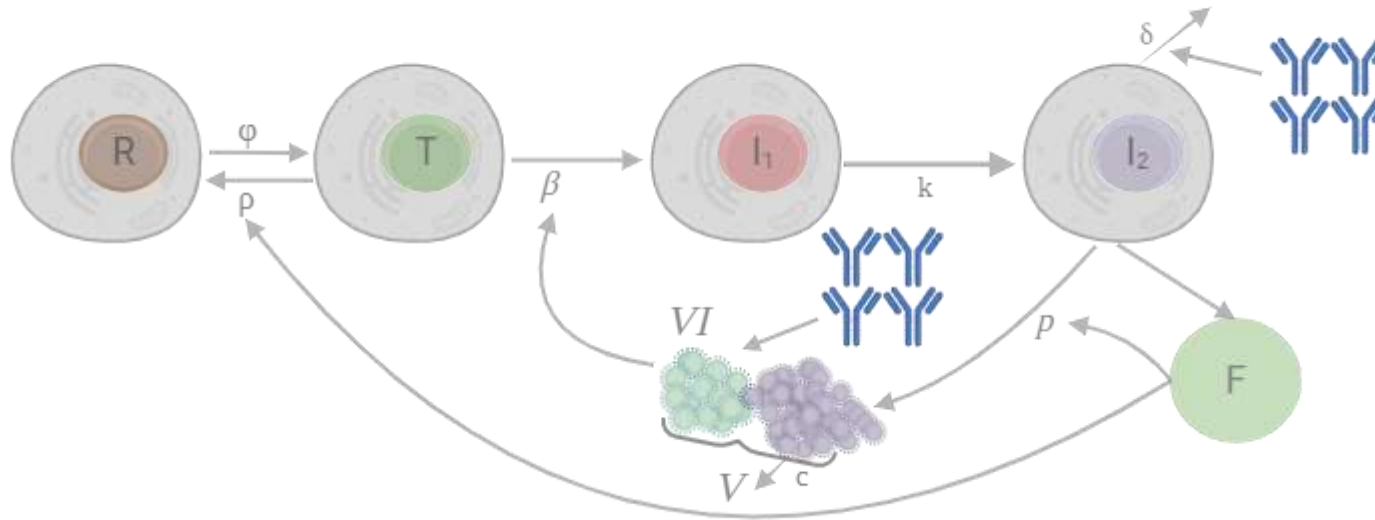
$$VI = aV^{b(t)}$$

At time of adaptive immune activation τ

$$b(t) = \begin{cases} b_0, & t < \tau \\ b_0 \exp(-\sigma(t - \tau)), & t \geq \tau \end{cases}$$

$$\delta(t) = \begin{cases} \delta_0, & t < \tau \\ \delta_1, & t \geq \tau \end{cases}$$

Building a within-host model



Final model

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{dT}{dt} &= \phi FT - \rho RT - \beta VIT \\ \frac{dR}{dt} &= \phi FT - \rho R \\ \frac{dI1}{dt} &= \beta VIT - kI1 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{dI2}{dt} &= kI1 - \delta(t)I2 \\ \frac{dV}{dt} &= pI2 \left(1 - \frac{F}{F + \theta}\right) - cV \\ \frac{dF}{dt} &= I - d_F F \end{aligned}$$

$$VI = aV^{b(t)}$$

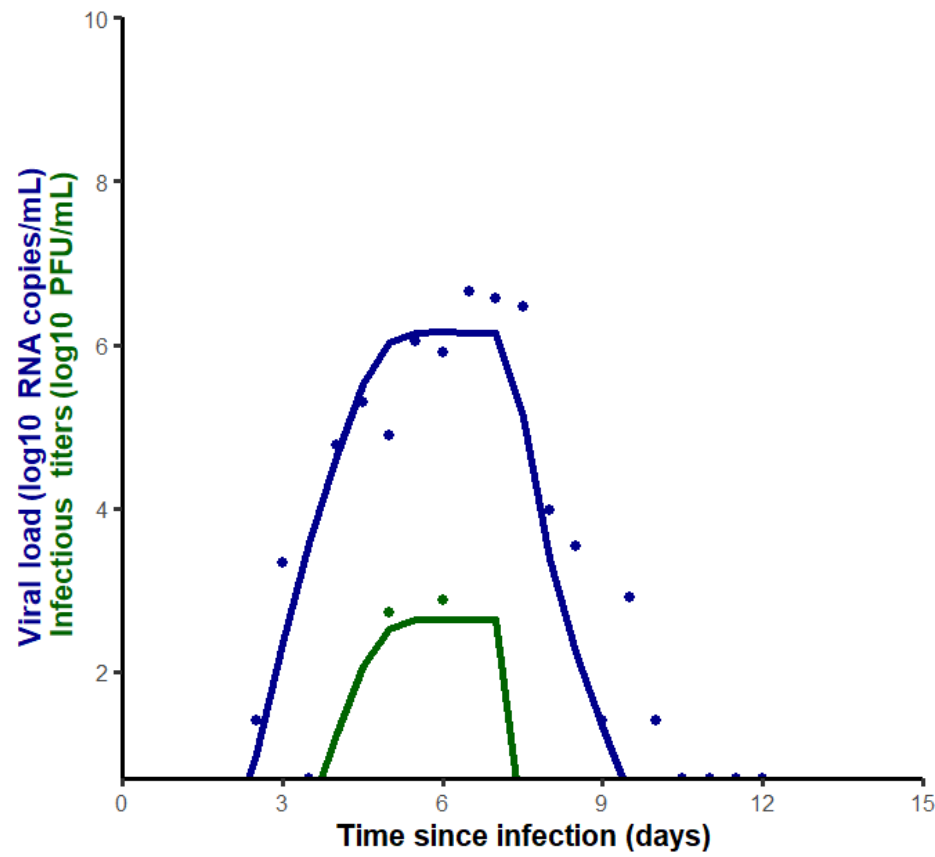
At time of adaptive immune activation τ

$$b(t) = \begin{cases} b_0, & t < \tau \\ b_0 \exp(-\sigma(t - \tau)), & t \geq \tau \end{cases}$$

$$\delta(t) = \begin{cases} \delta_0, & t < \tau \\ \delta_1, & t \geq \tau \end{cases}$$

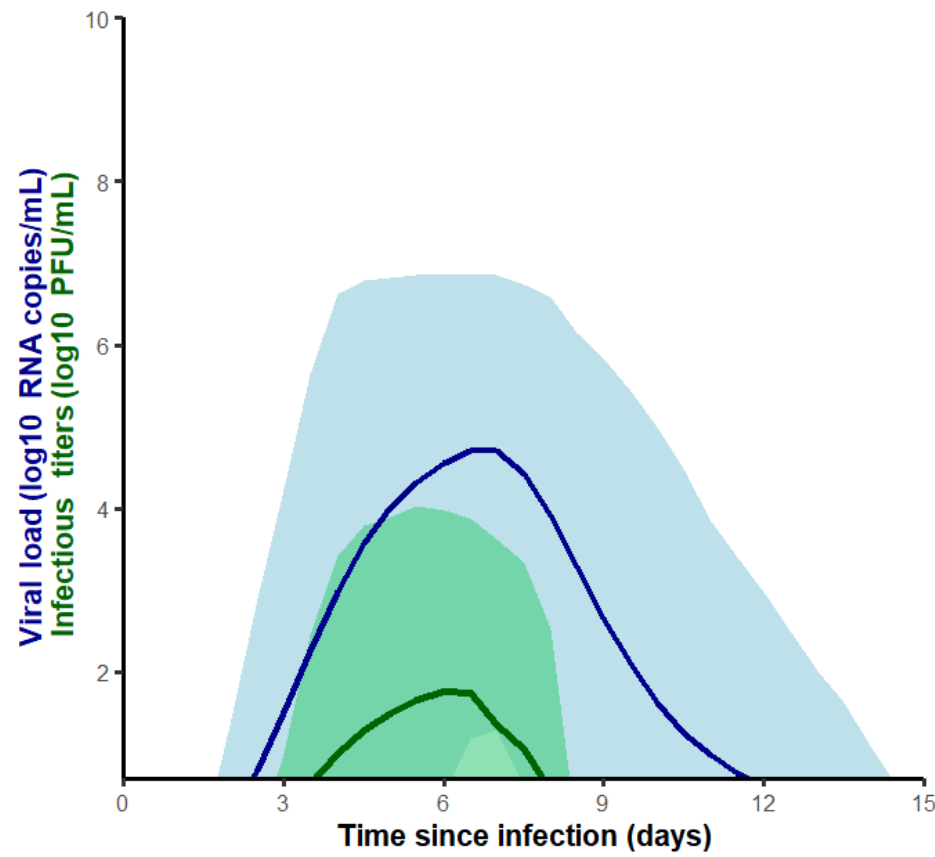
Prediction insights at the individual and population level

Individual level



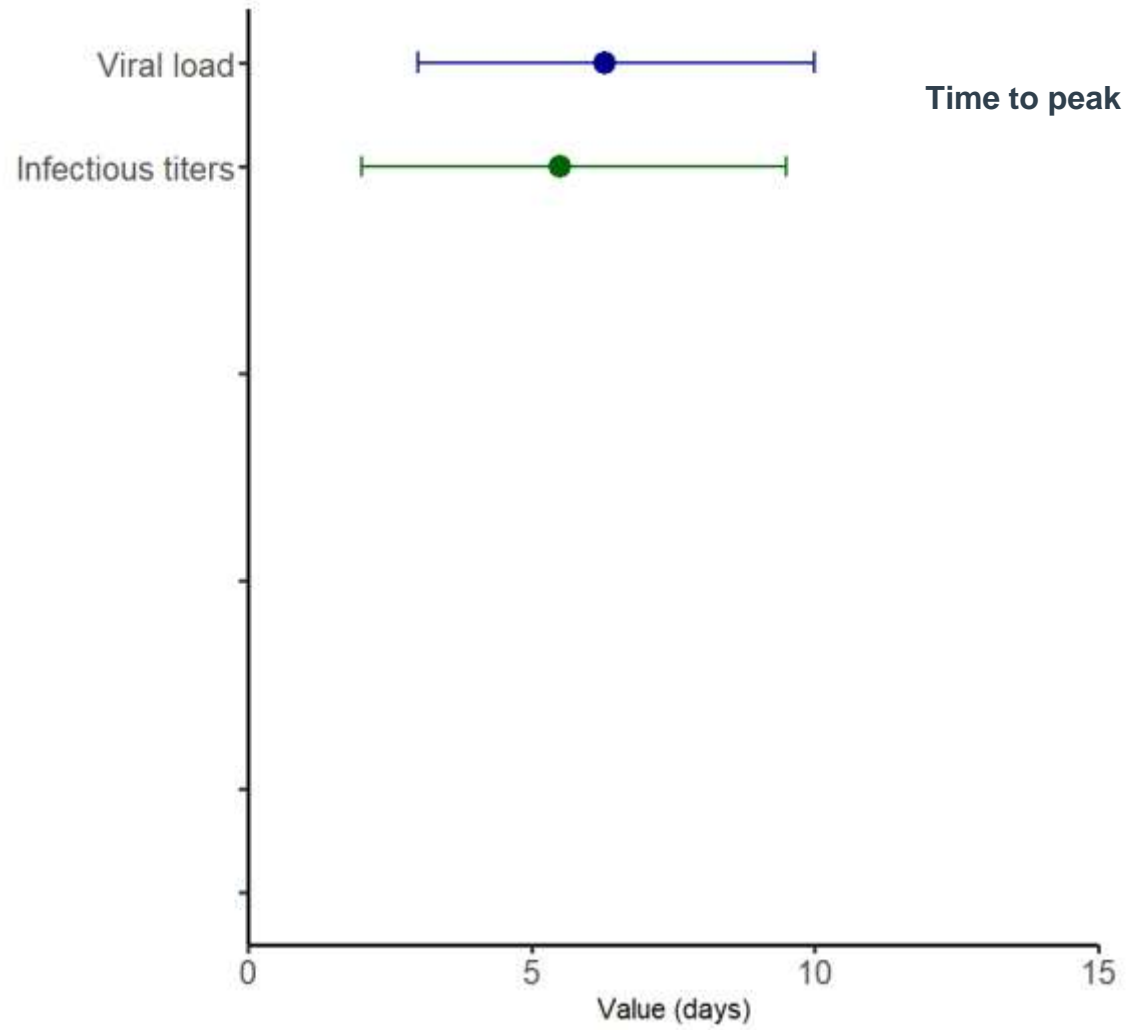
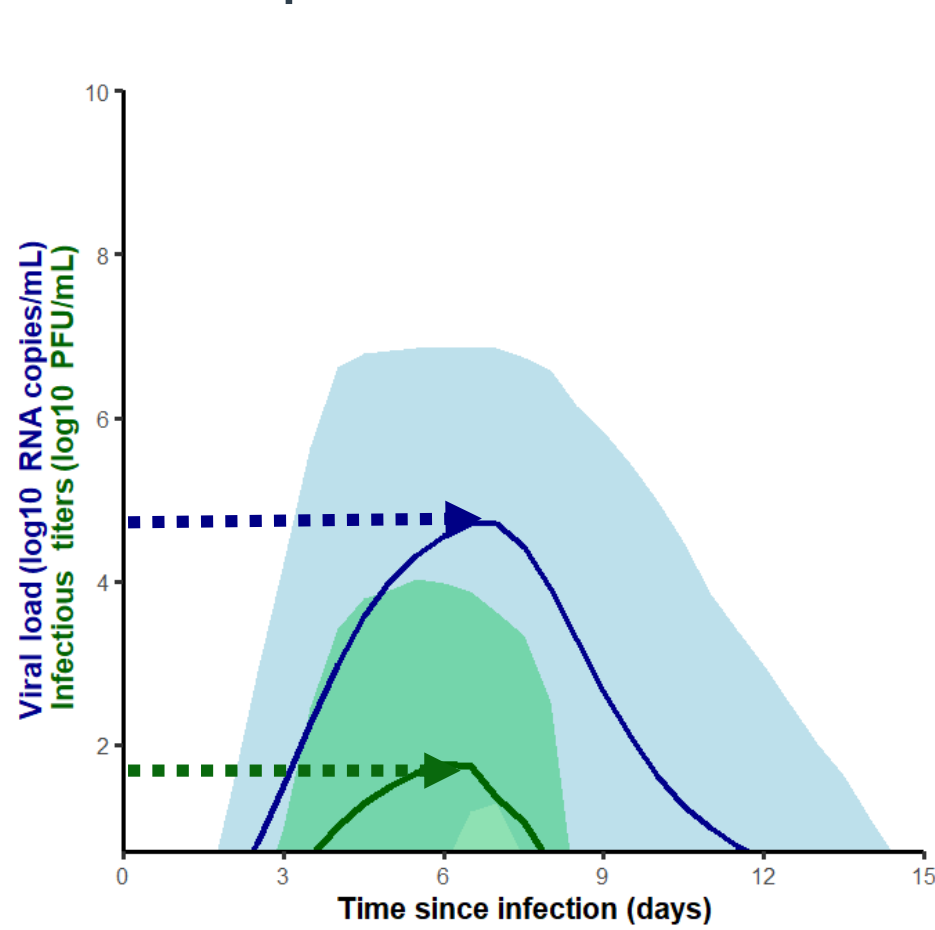
Prediction insights at the individual and population level

Population level



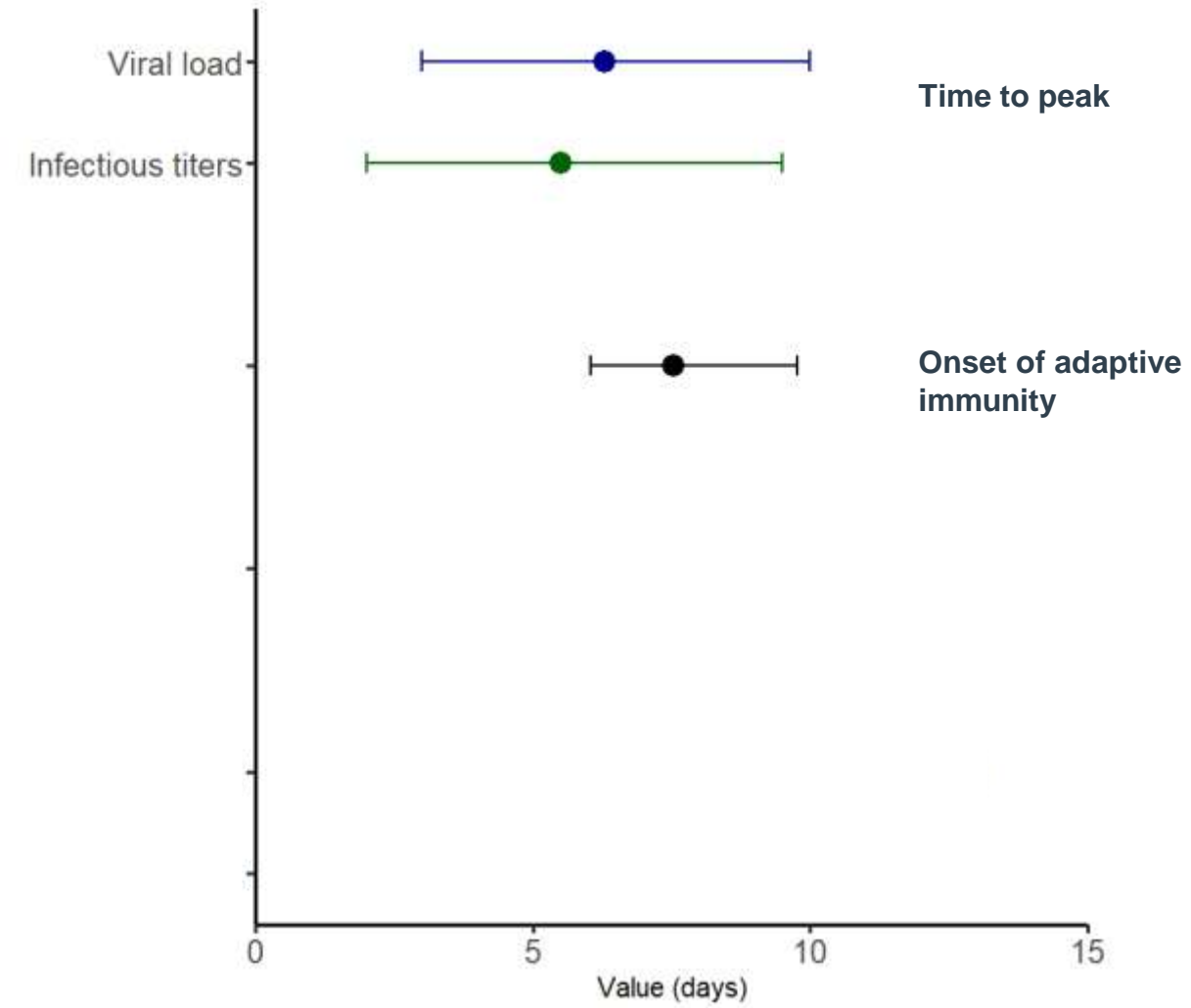
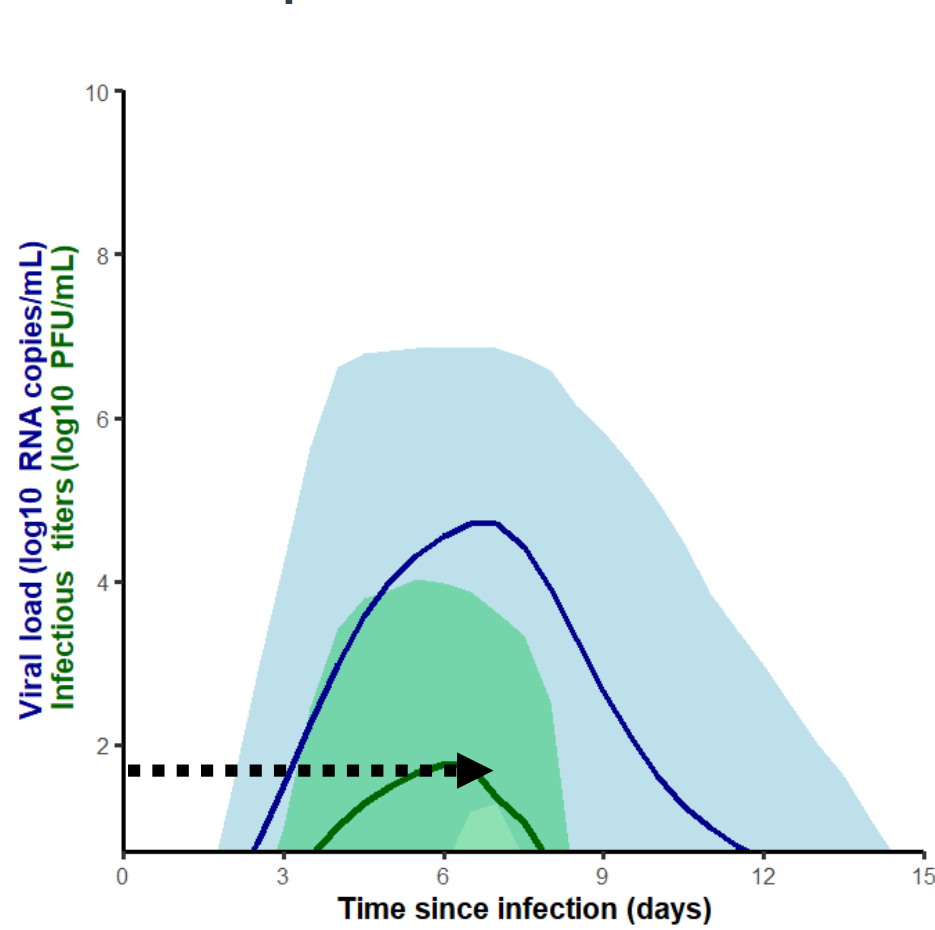
Prediction insights at the individual and population level

Population level



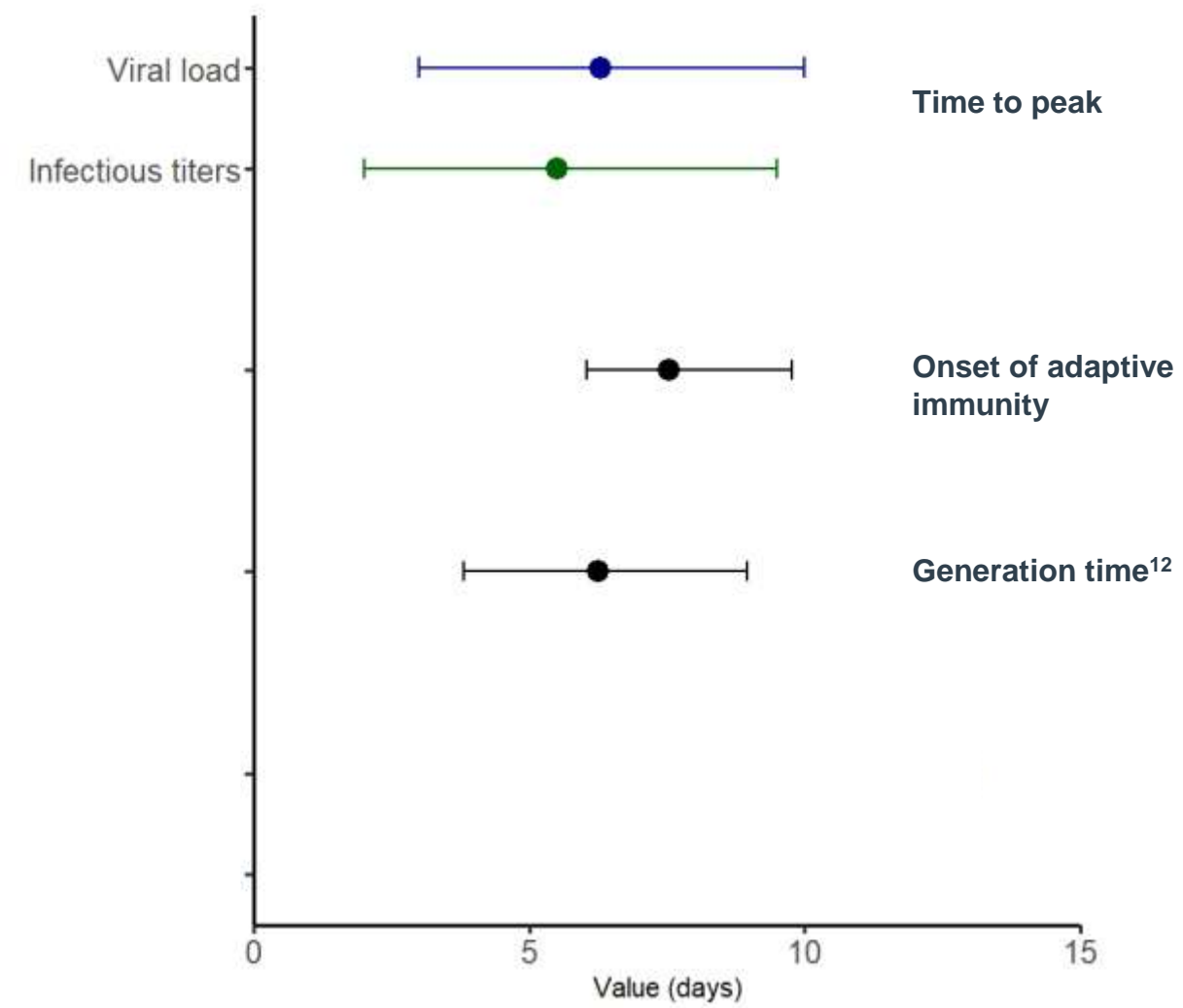
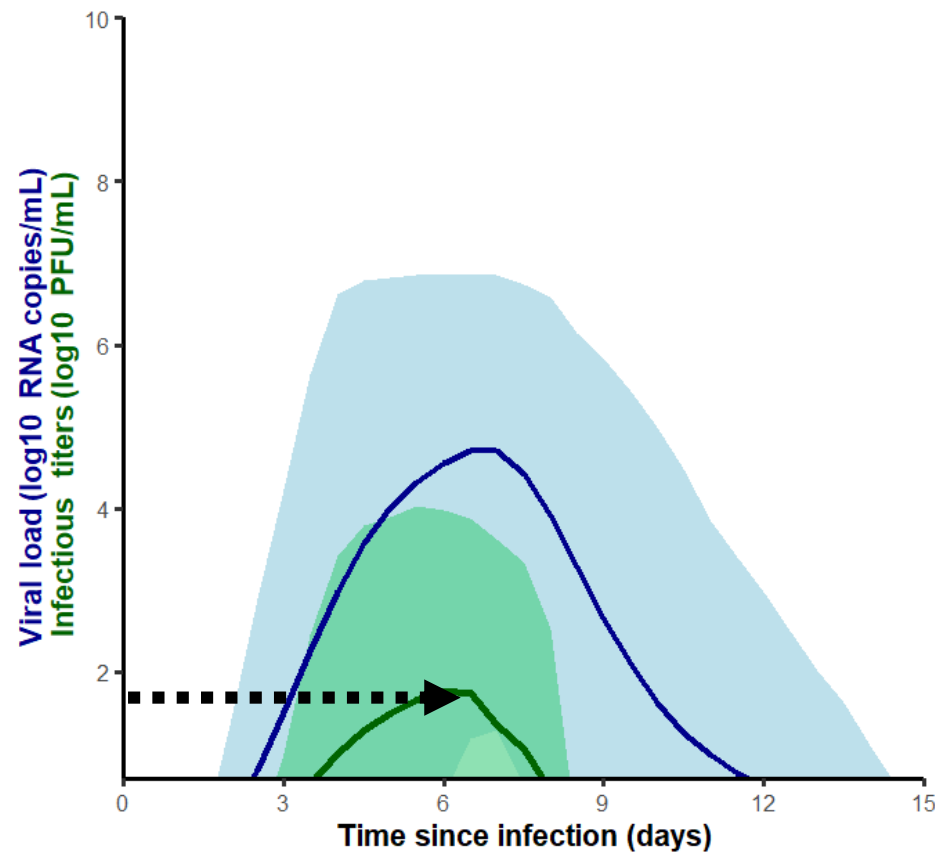
Prediction insights at the individual and population level

Population level



Prediction insights at the individual and population level

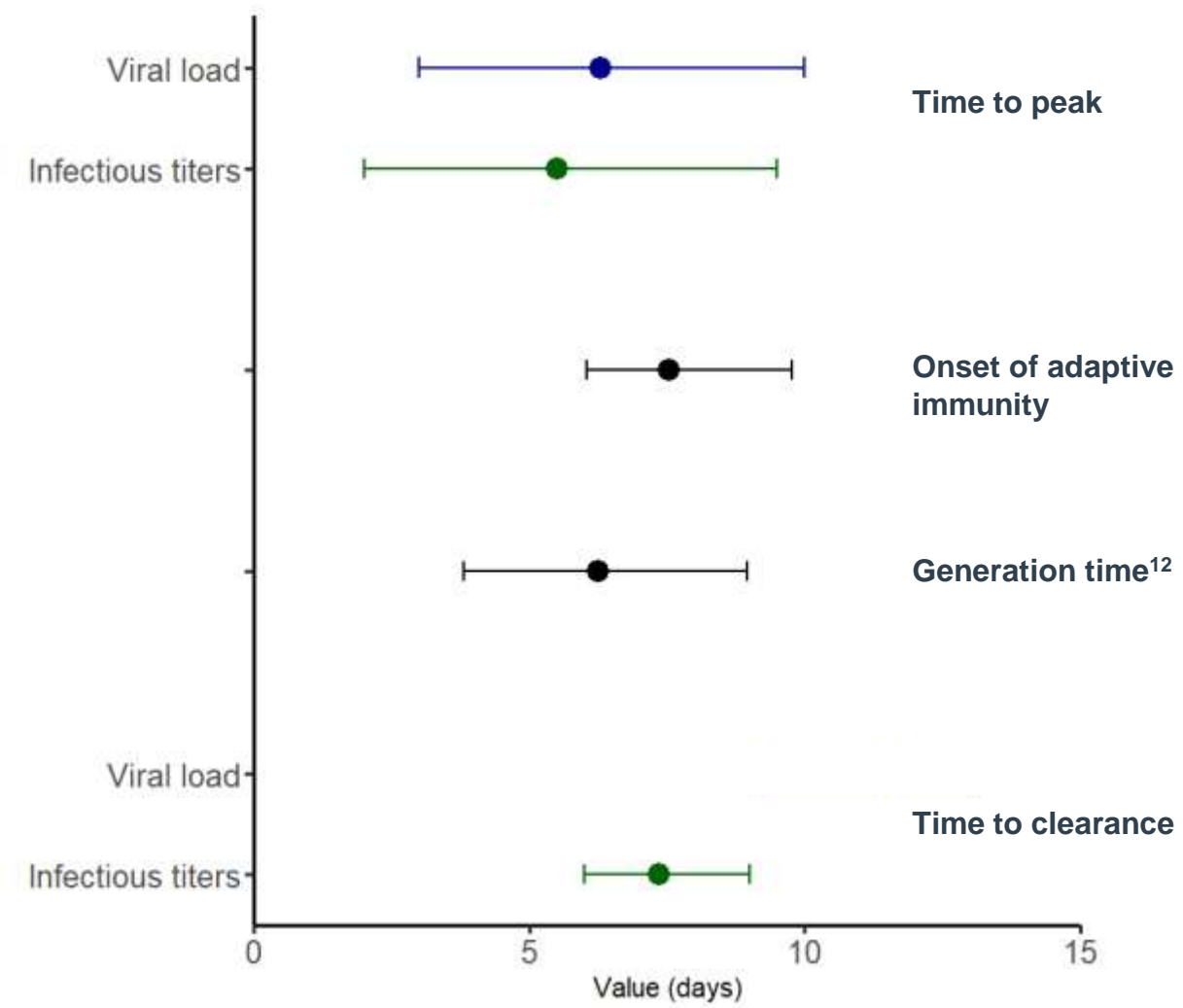
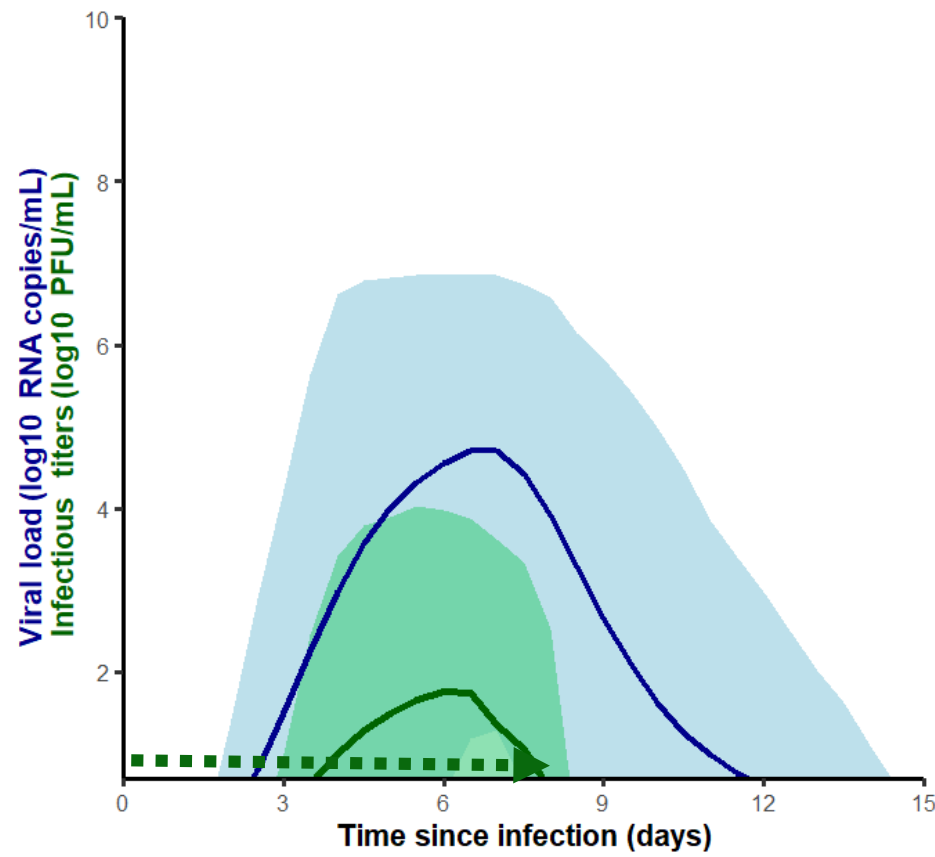
Population level



13- Canini et Carrat., Journal of virology, 2010

Prediction insights at the individual and population level

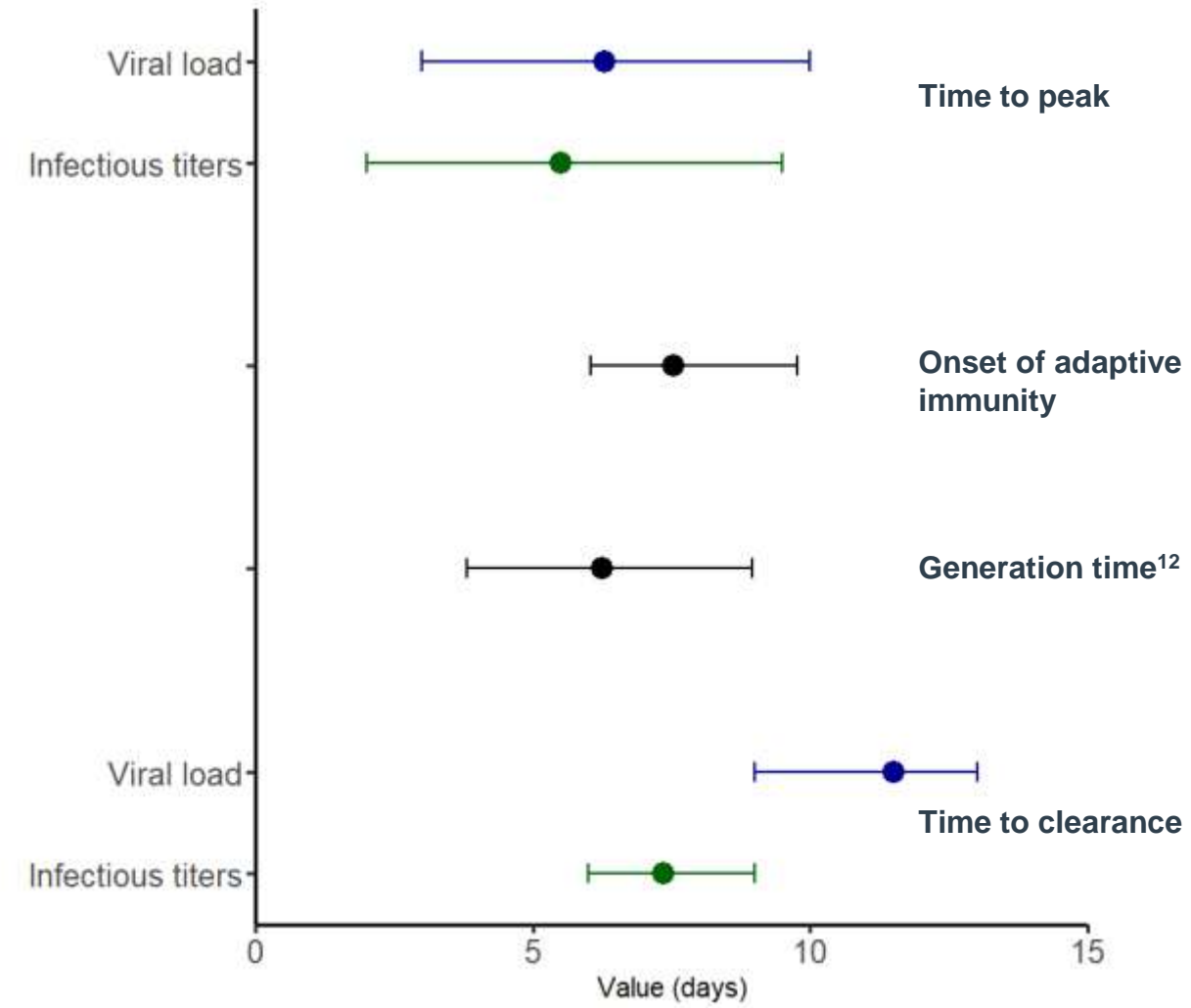
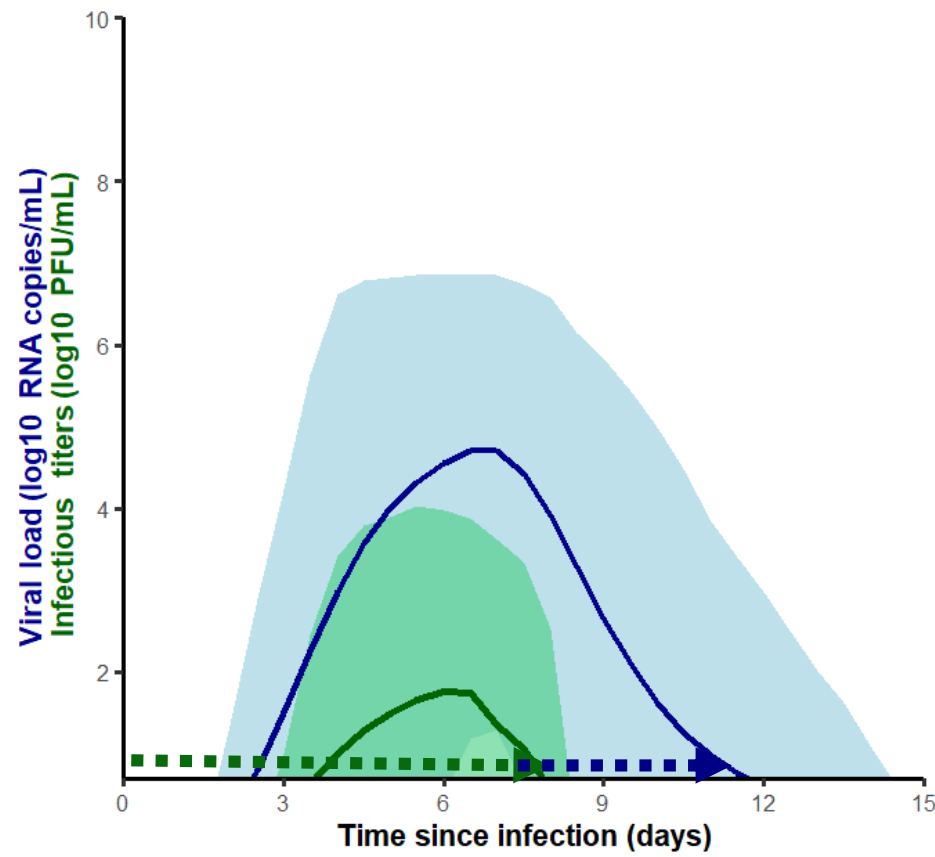
Population level



13- Canini et Carrat., Journal of virology, 2010

Prediction insights at the individual and population level

Population level



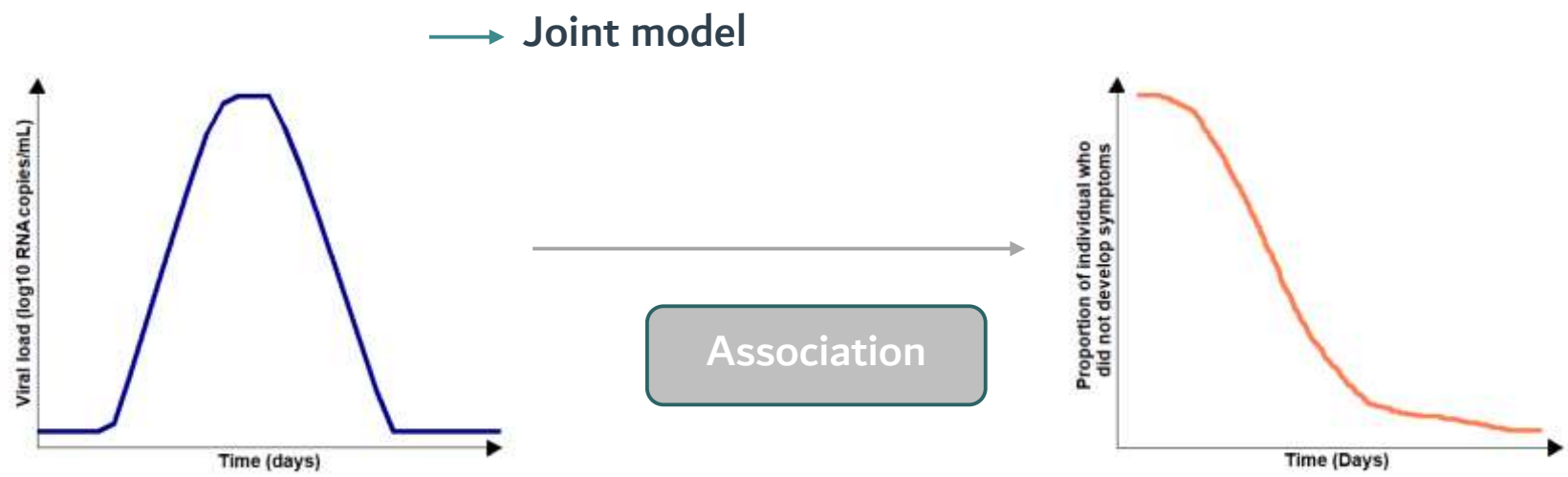
13- Canini et Carrat., Journal of virology, 2010

Linking viral load to symptom onset timing

Step 4: Associate **time to symptom onset to **viral load****

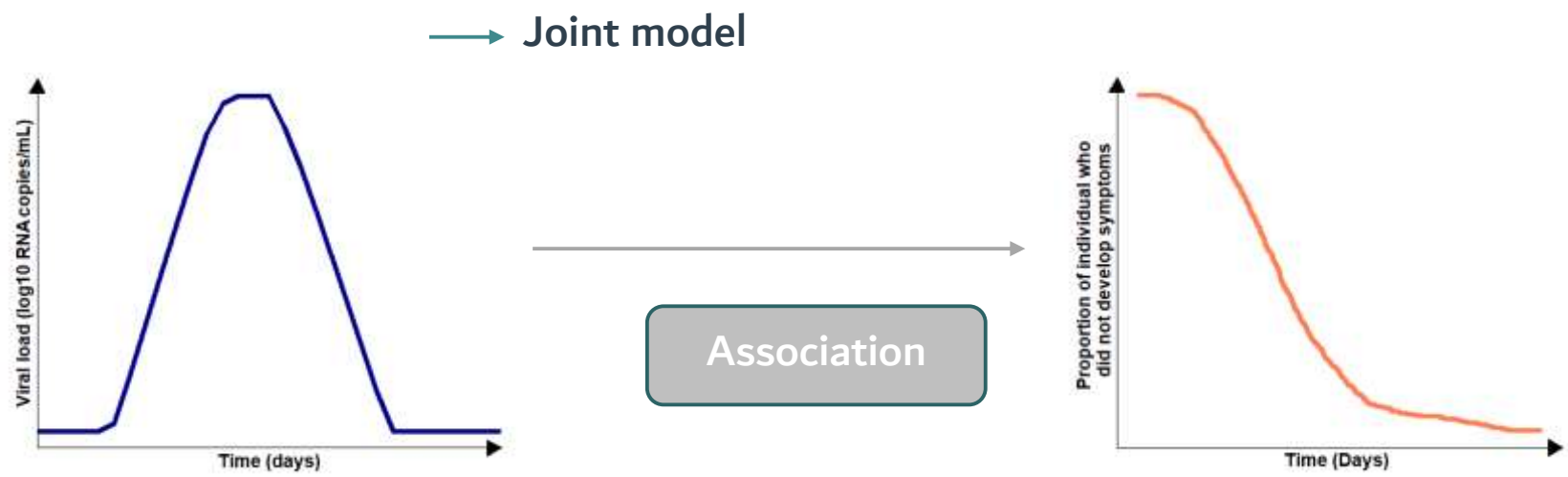
Linking viral load to symptom onset timing

Step 4: Associate **time to symptom onset** to **viral load**



Linking viral load to symptom onset timing

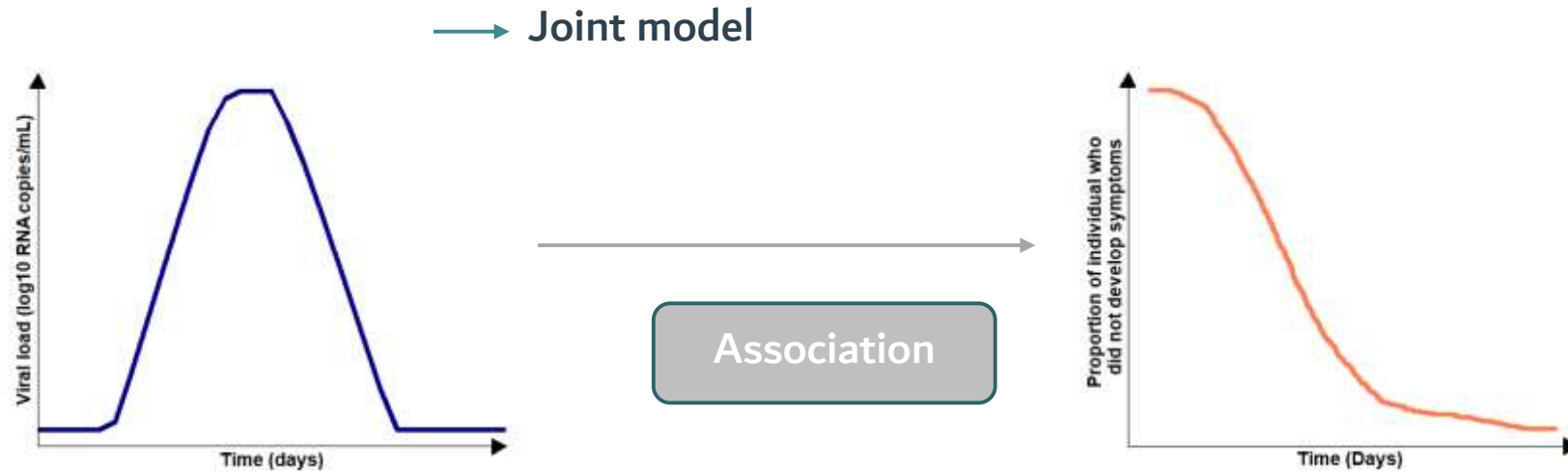
Step 4: Associate **time to symptom onset** to **viral load**



$h(t)$: instantaneous risk of developing symptom at time t

Linking viral load to symptom onset timing

Step 4: Associate **time to symptom onset** to **viral load**



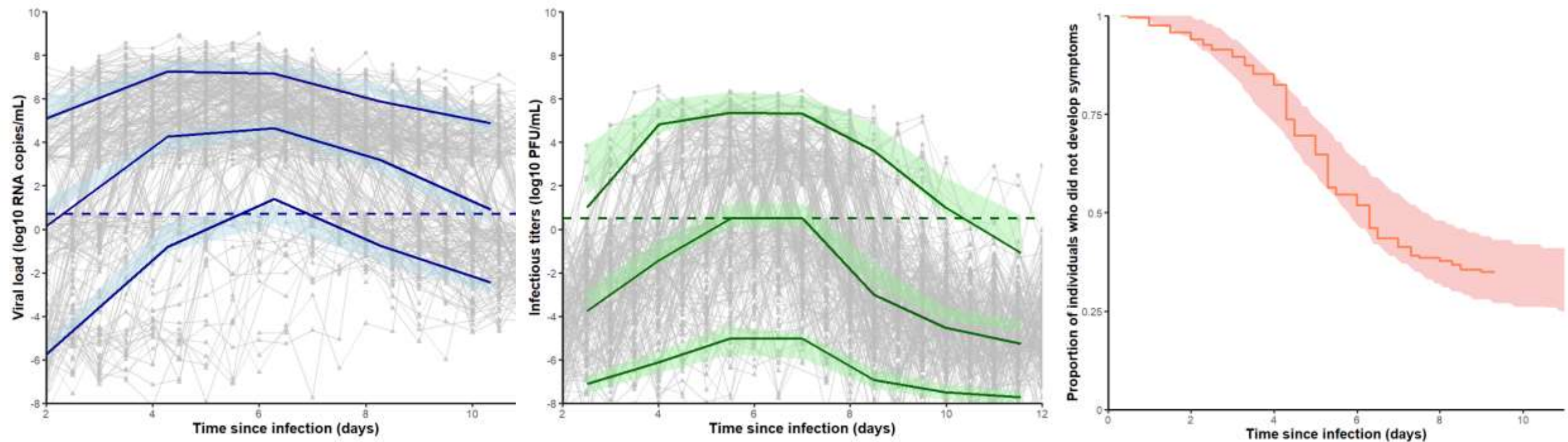
$h(t)$: instantaneous risk of developing symptom at time t

$$h(t) = h_0(t) \exp(\alpha \times \log(V(t)))$$

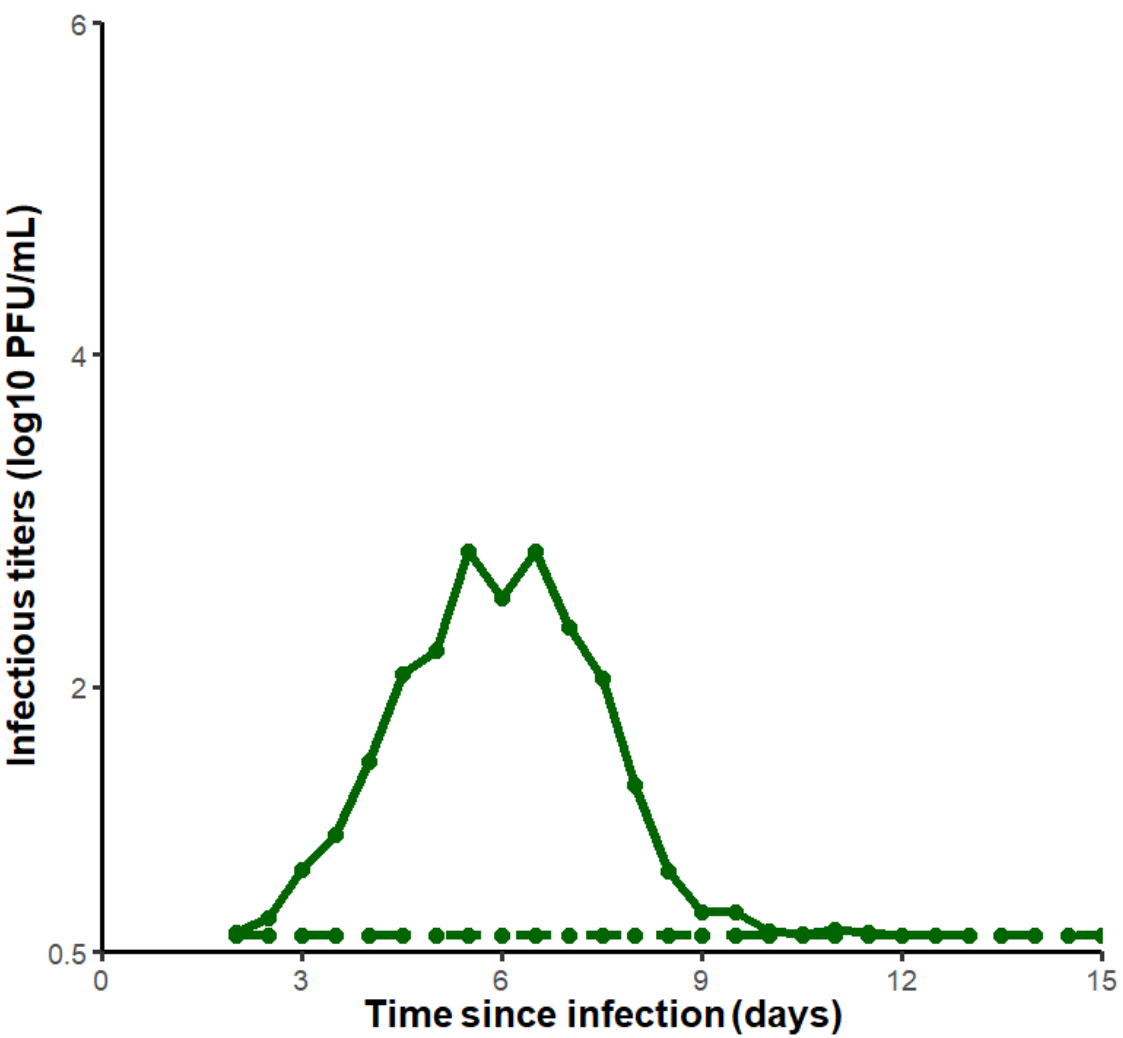
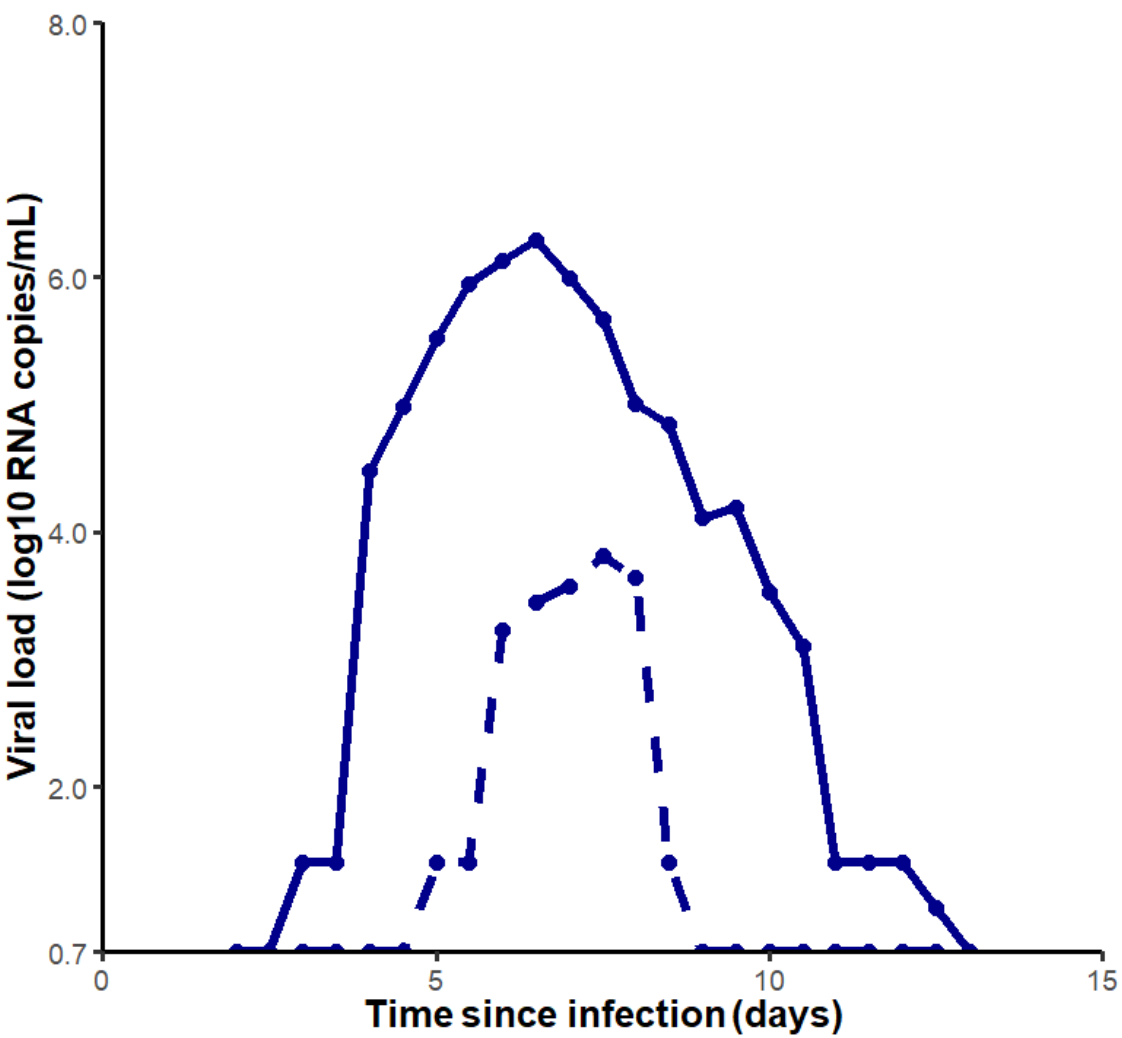
Weibull hazard:

$$h_0(t) = \frac{k}{\lambda} \left(\frac{t}{\lambda}\right)^{k-1}$$

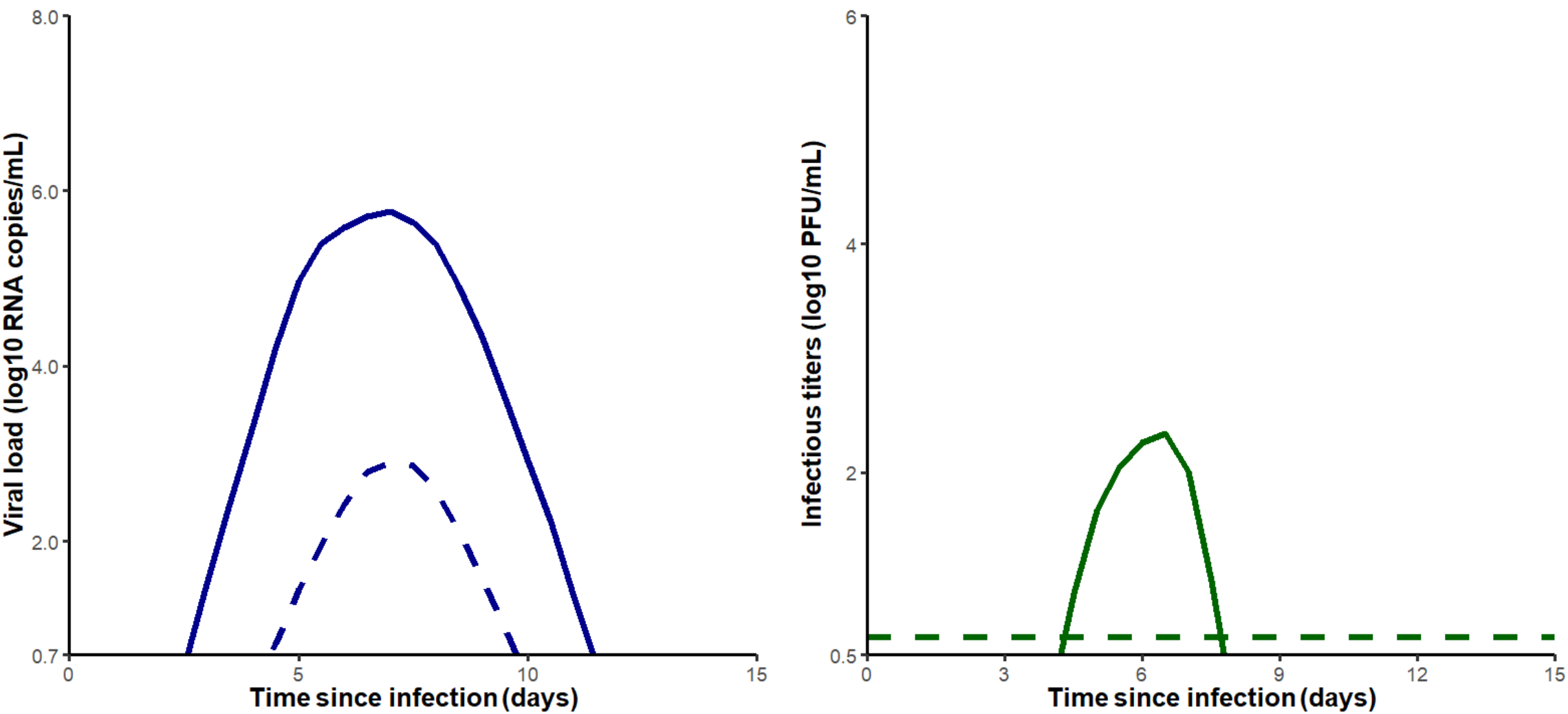
Model adequately describes observed kinetics



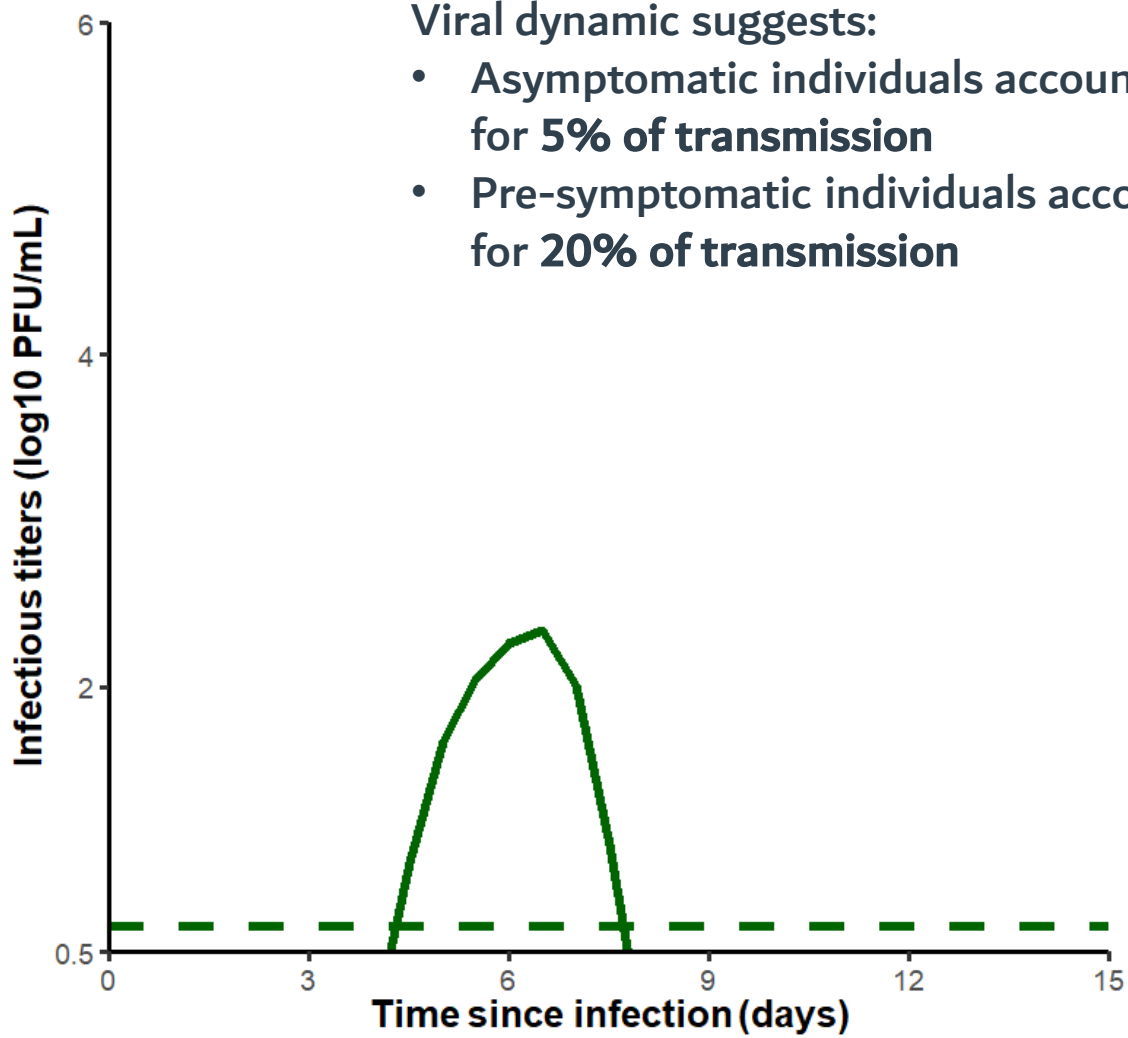
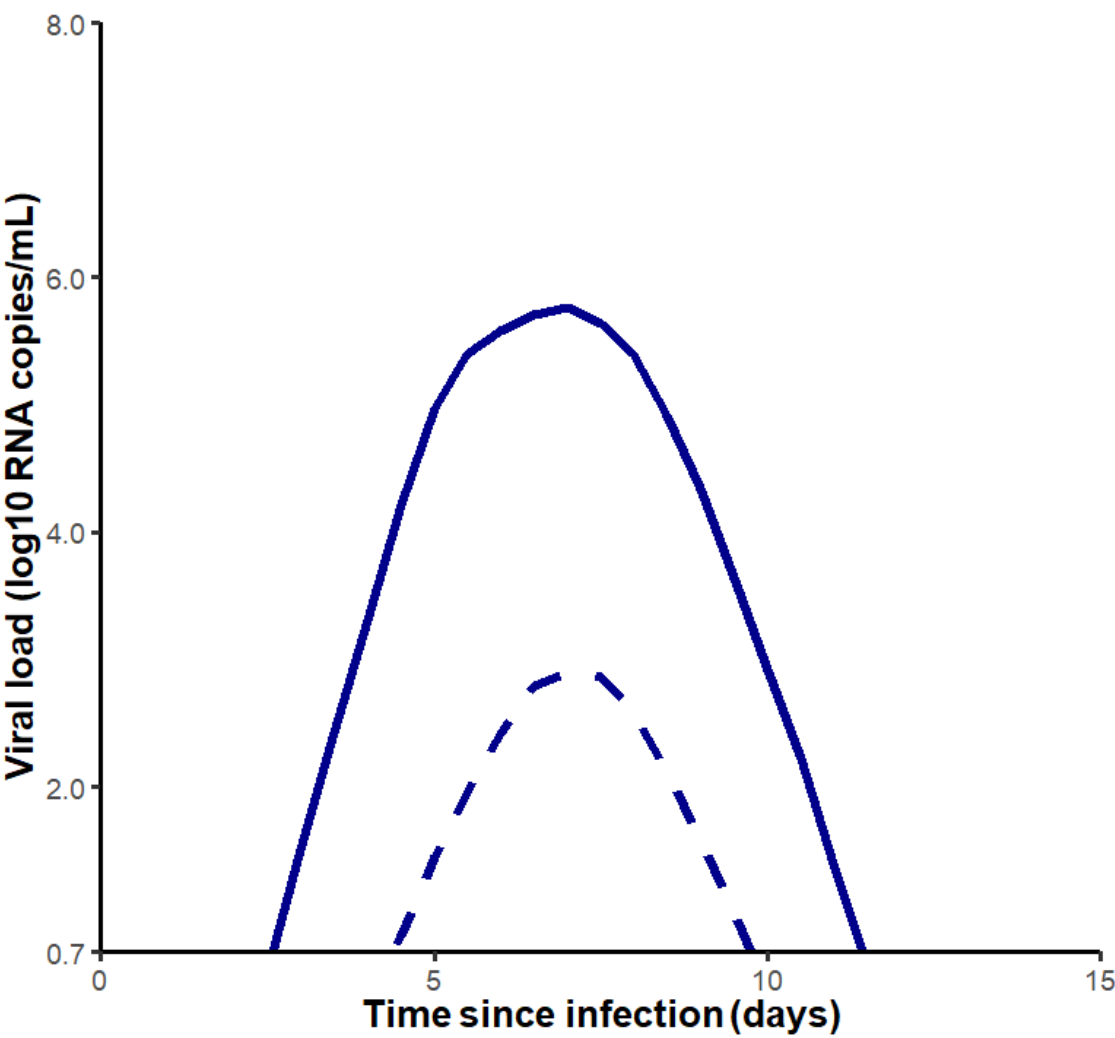
Observed data shows higher viral replication in symptomatic vs asymptomatic individuals



Model accurately captures kinetics in symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals



Model accurately captures kinetics in symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals

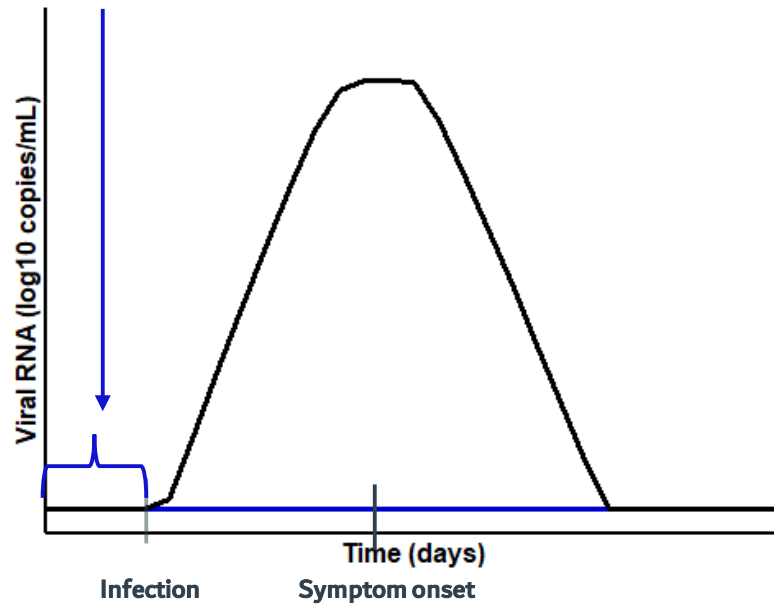


- Viral dynamic suggests:
- Asymptomatic individuals account for **5% of transmission**
 - Pre-symptomatic individuals account for **20% of transmission**

Evaluation of the protection given by monoclonal antibodies

Initiation of treatment

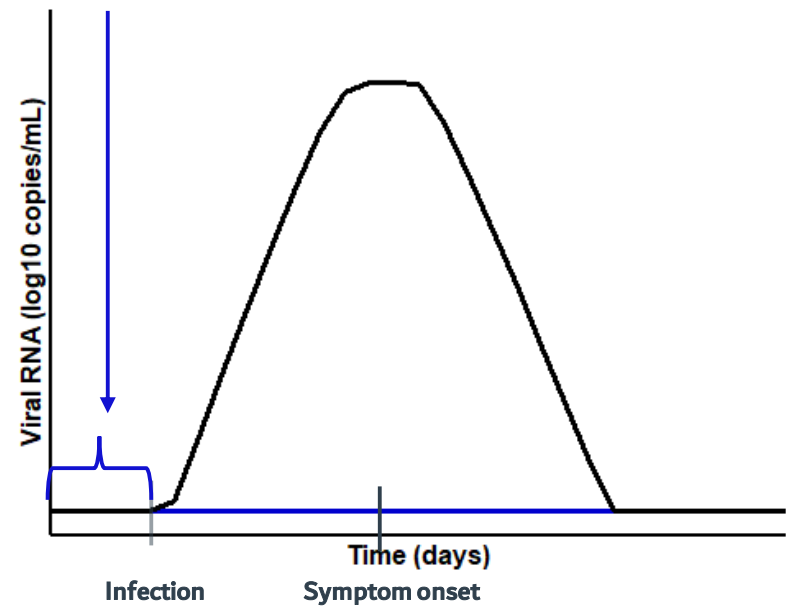
Pre-exposure prophylaxis



Evaluation of the protection given by monoclonal antibodies

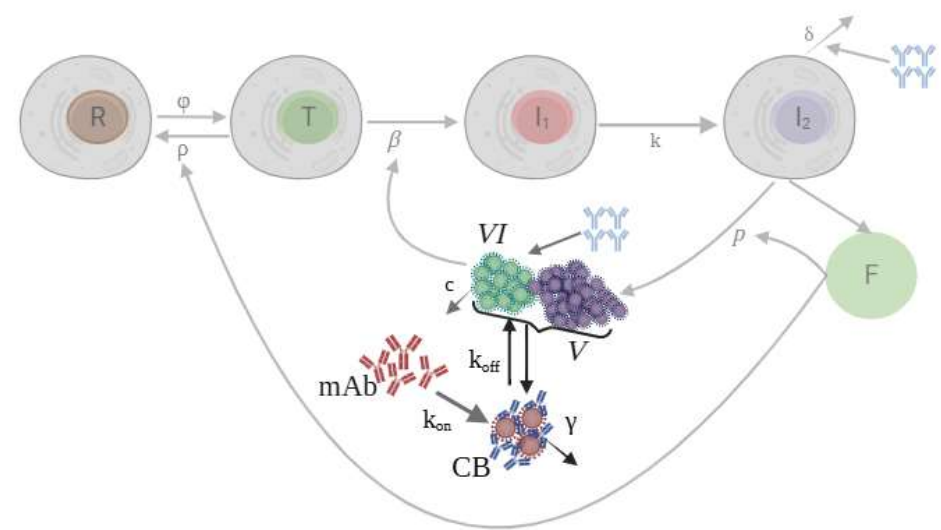
Initiation of treatment

Pre-exposure prophylaxis



Simulation of protection

Modeling

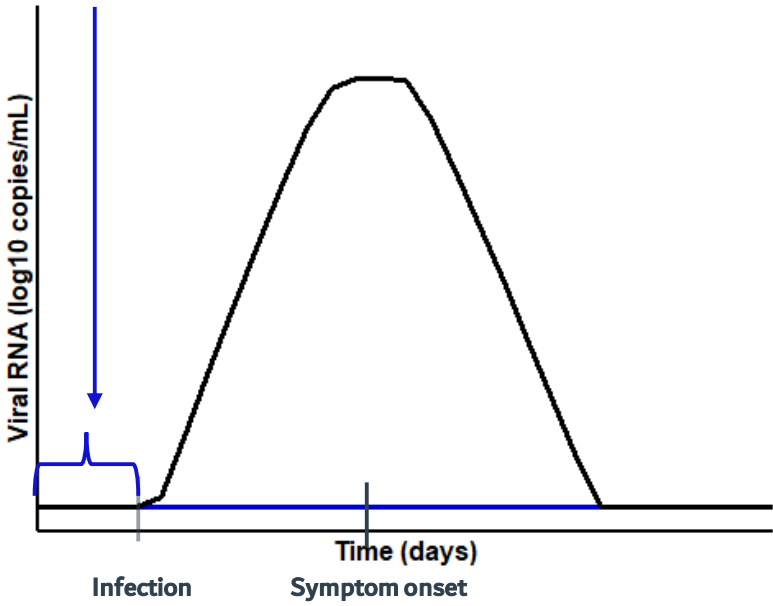


14- Beaulieu et al., JAC, 2024

Evaluation of the protection given by monoclonal antibodies

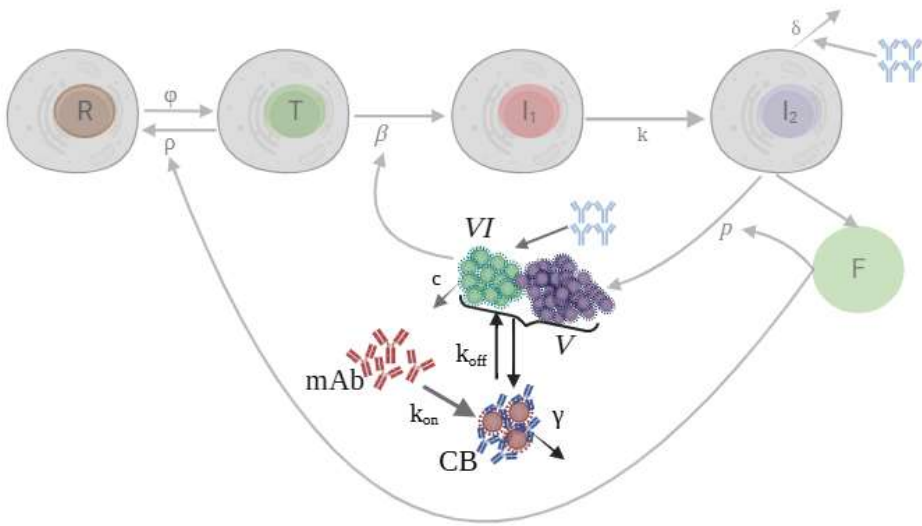
Initiation of treatment

Pre-exposure prophylaxis



Simulation of protection

Modeling



Binding parameters

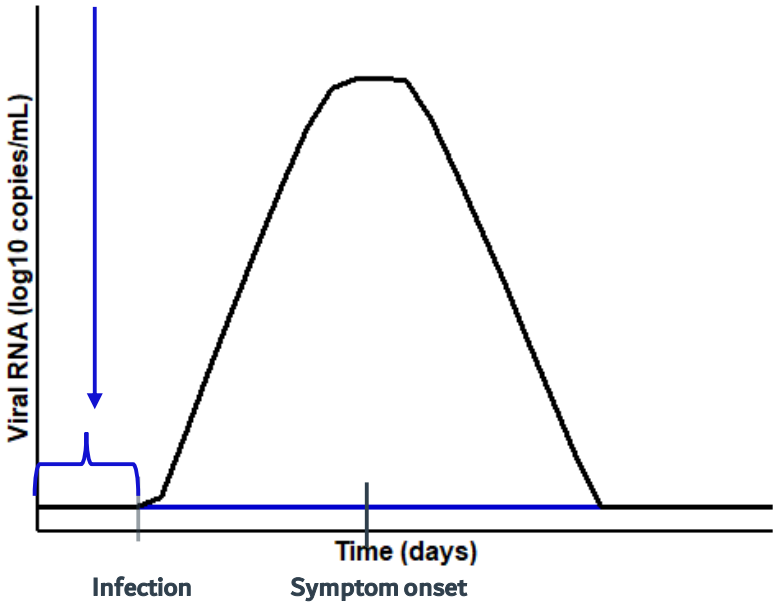
mAb	K_{on} (M ⁻¹ S ⁻¹)	K_{off} (S ⁻¹)
Nirsevimab	$3.34 \cdot 10^5$ <small>[15]</small>	$6.87 \cdot 10^{-6}$ <small>[15]</small>
Palivizumab	$5.4 \cdot 10^4$ <small>[16]</small>	$1.5 \cdot 10^{-3}$ <small>[16]</small>
Clesrovimab	$7.35 \cdot 10^6$ <small>[18]</small>	$1.64 \cdot 10^{-4}$ <small>[18]</small>

14- Beaulieu et al., JAC, 2024
15- Griffin et al., Antimicrob Agents Chemother, 2017
16- Astra-Zeneca- Synagis Product Information, 2022
17- Zhu et al., Sci Trans Med, 2017

Evaluation of the protection given by monoclonal antibodies

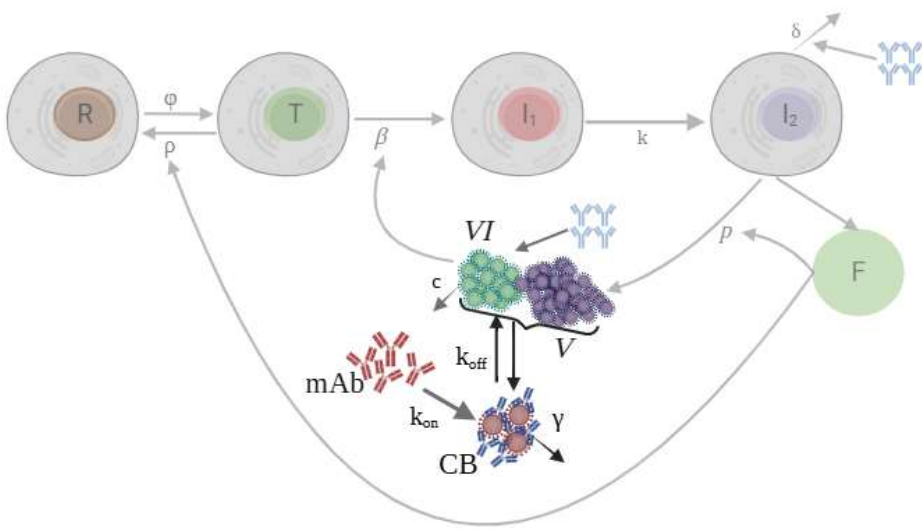
Initiation of treatment

Pre-exposure prophylaxis



Simulation of protection

Modeling



Binding and pharmaco-kinetic parameters

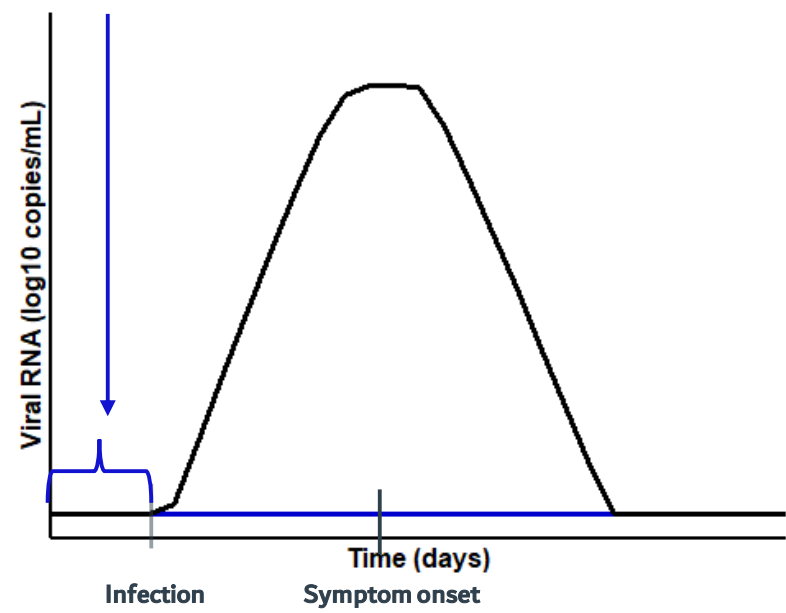
mAb	K_{on} ($M^{-1}S^{-1}$)	K_{off} (s^{-1})	C_{max} (Sd) $\mu g/mL$	$t_{1/2}$ (Sd) (days)
Nirsevimab	$3.34 \cdot 10^5$ [15]	$6.87 \cdot 10^{-6}$ [15]	47.5 (12.5) [15]	74.3 (26.3) [15]
Palivizumab	$5.4 \cdot 10^4$ [16]	$1.5 \cdot 10^{-3}$ [16]	32.6 (8.14) [17]	19.8 (11.7) [17]
Clesrovimab	$7.35 \cdot 10^6$ [18]	$1.64 \cdot 10^{-4}$ [18]	31.2 (11.6) [19]	82.4 (22.5) [19]

14- Beaulieu et al., JAC, 2024
15- Griffin et al., Antimicrob Agents Chemother, 2017
16- Astra-Zeneca- Synagis Product Information, 2022
17- Zhu et al., Sci Trans Med, 2017
18- Bates et al., Virology, 2015
19- Tang et al., Nature Communications, 2019

Evaluation of the protection given by monoclonal antibodies

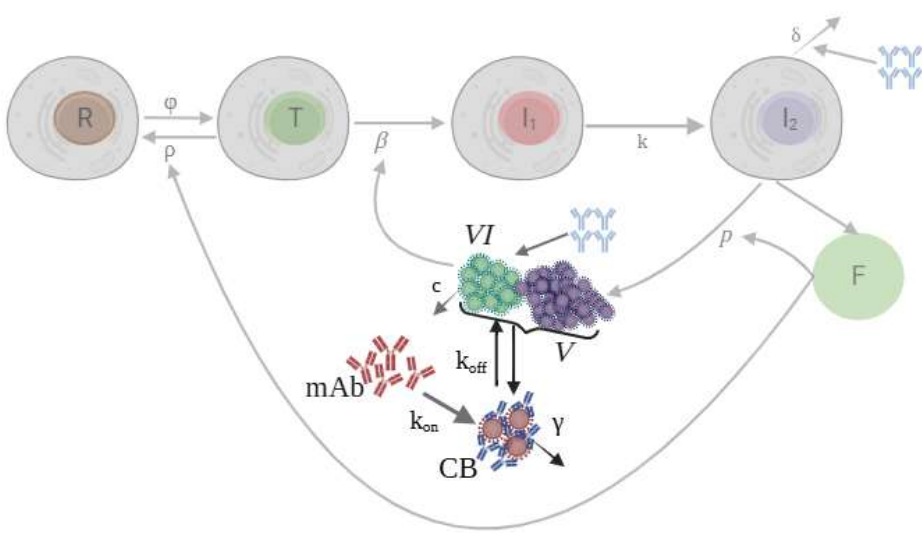
Initiation of treatment

Pre-exposure prophylaxis



Simulation of protection

Modeling



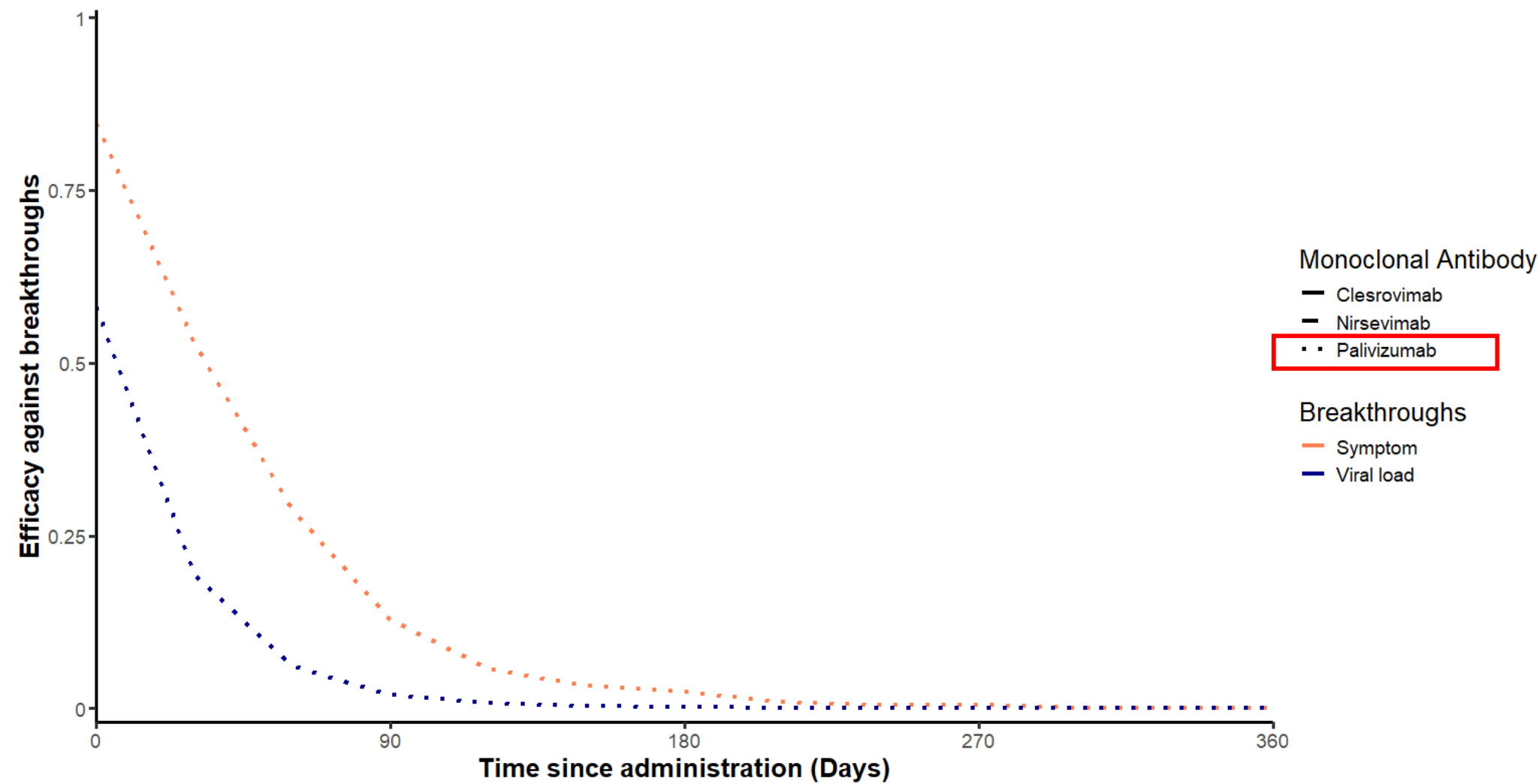
Binding and pharmaco-kinetic parameters

mAb	K_{on} (M ⁻¹ S ⁻¹)	K_{off} (S ⁻¹)	C_{max} (Sd) μ g/mL	$t_{1/2}$ (Sd) (days)
Nirsevimab	$3.34 \cdot 10^5$ [15]	$6.87 \cdot 10^{-6}$ [15]	47.5 (12.5) [15]	74.3 (26.3) [15]
Palivizumab	$5.4 \cdot 10^4$ [16]	$1.5 \cdot 10^{-3}$ [16]	32.6 (8.14) [17]	19.8 (11.7) [17]
Clesrovimab	$7.35 \cdot 10^6$ [18]	$1.64 \cdot 10^{-4}$ [18]	31.2 (11.6) [19]	82.4 (22.5) [19]

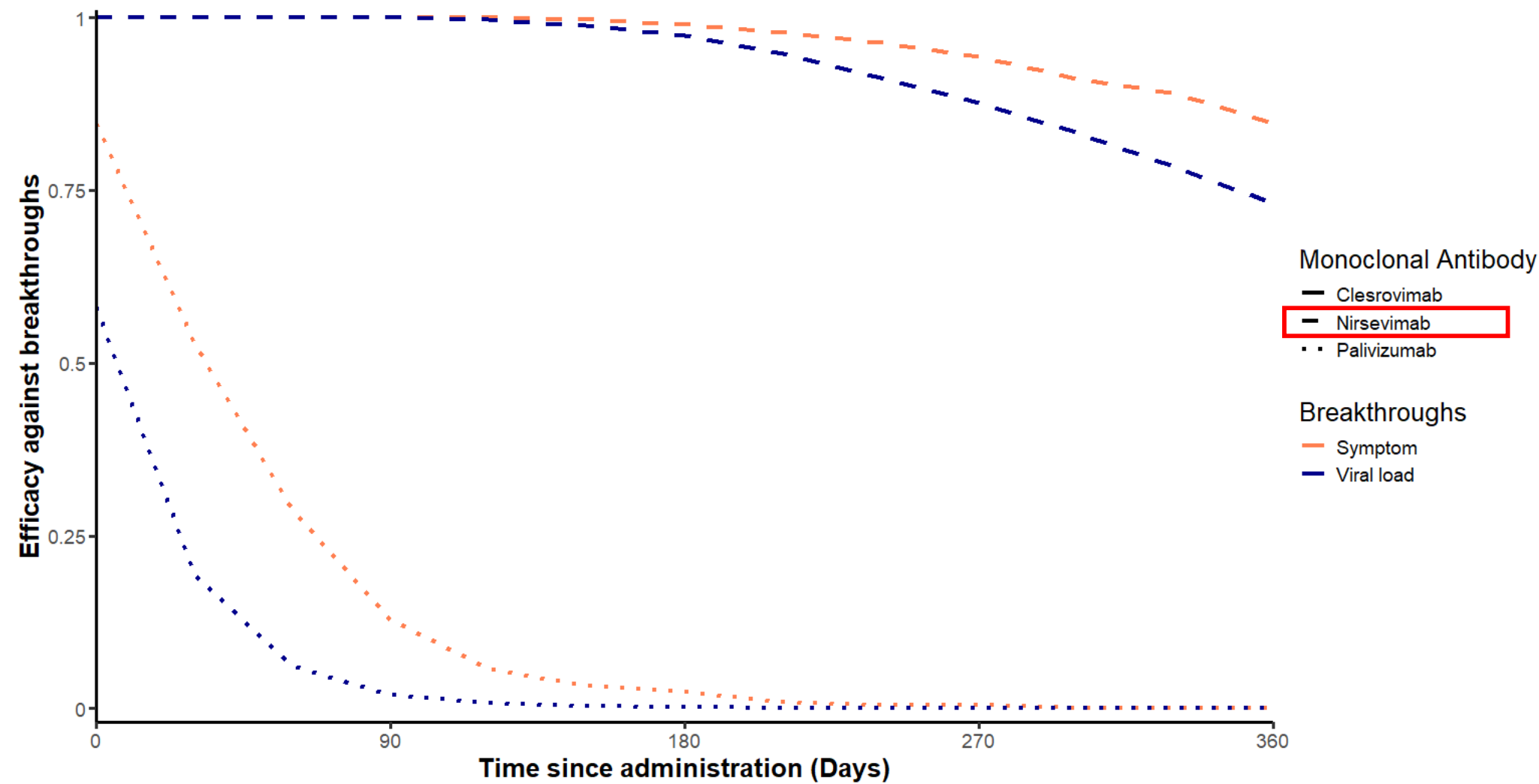
Criteria of efficacy:
Symptom breakthrough prevention
Viral load breakthrough prevention

14- Beaulieu et al., JAC, 2024
15- Griffin et al., Antimicrob Agents Chemother, 2017
16- Astra-Zeneca- Synagis Product Information, 2022
17- Zhu et al., Sci Trans Med, 2017
18- Bates et al., Virology, 2015
19- Tang et al., Nature Communications, 2019

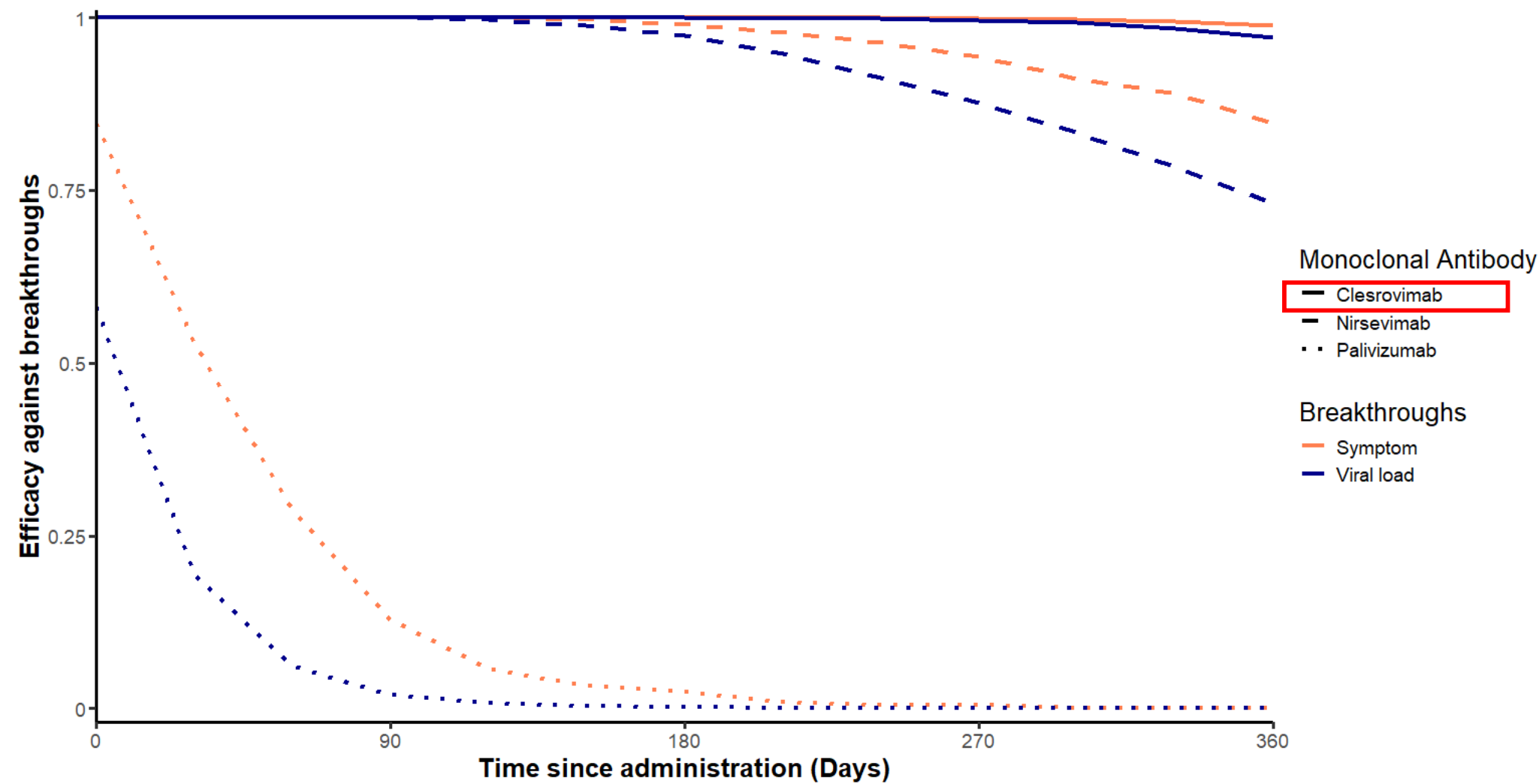
Palivizumab provides lower protection than Nirsevimab and Clesrovimab



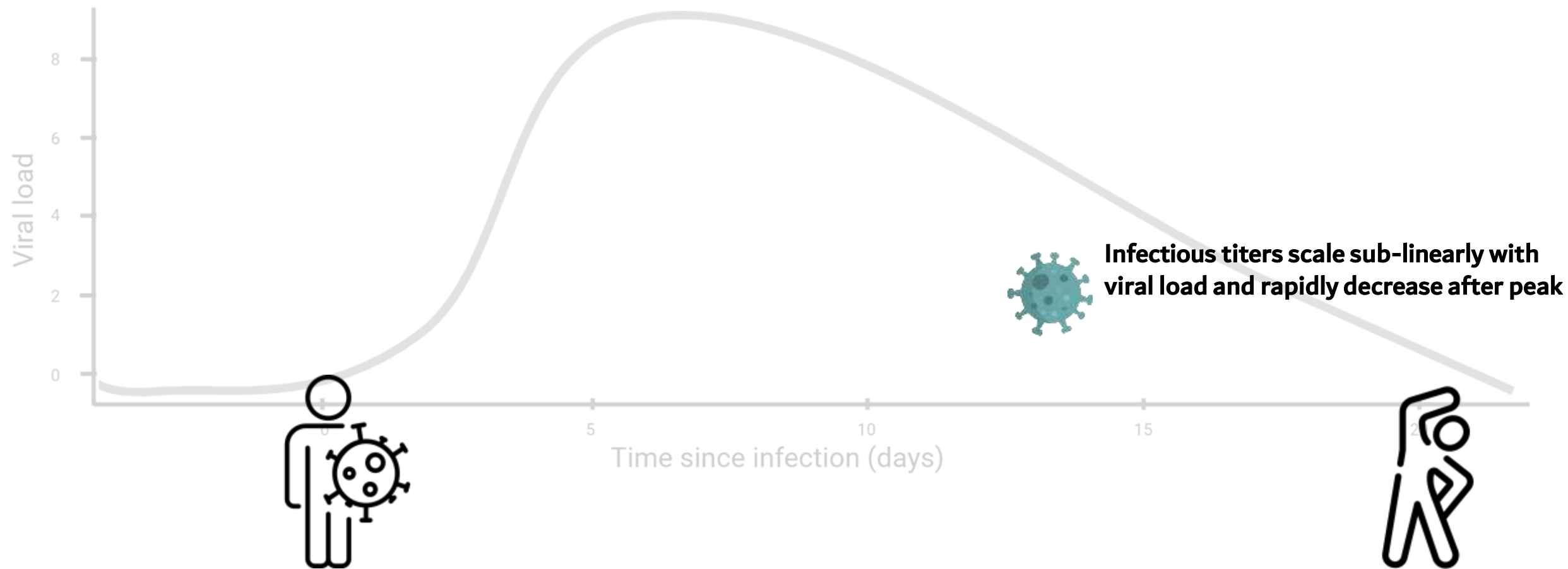
Palivizumab provides lower protection than Nirsevimab and Clesrovimab



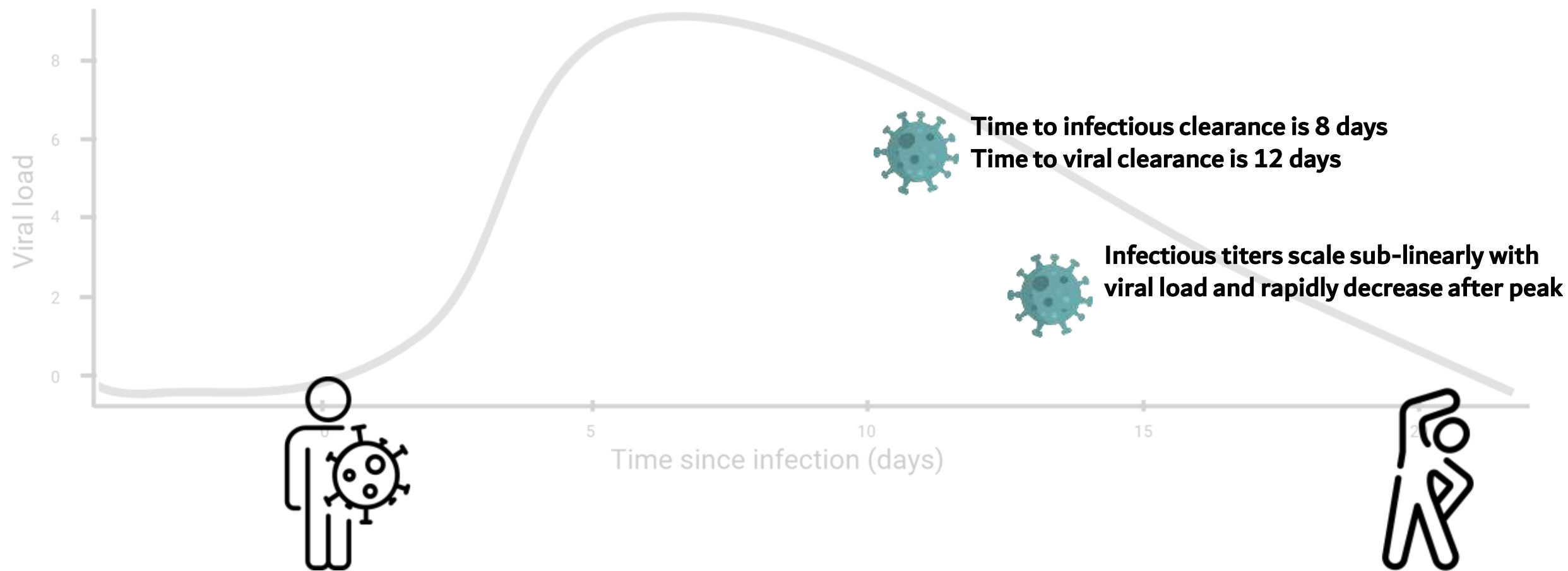
Palivizumab provides lower protection than Nirsevimab and Clesrovimab



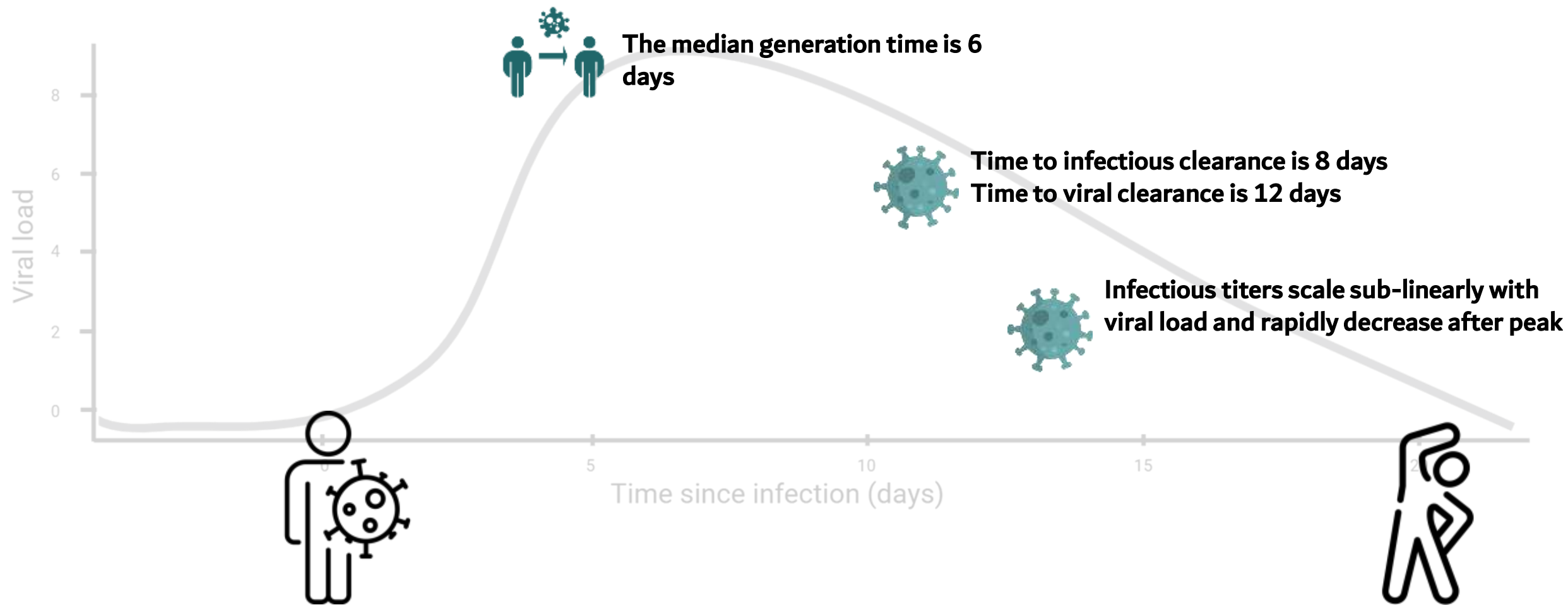
Conclusion



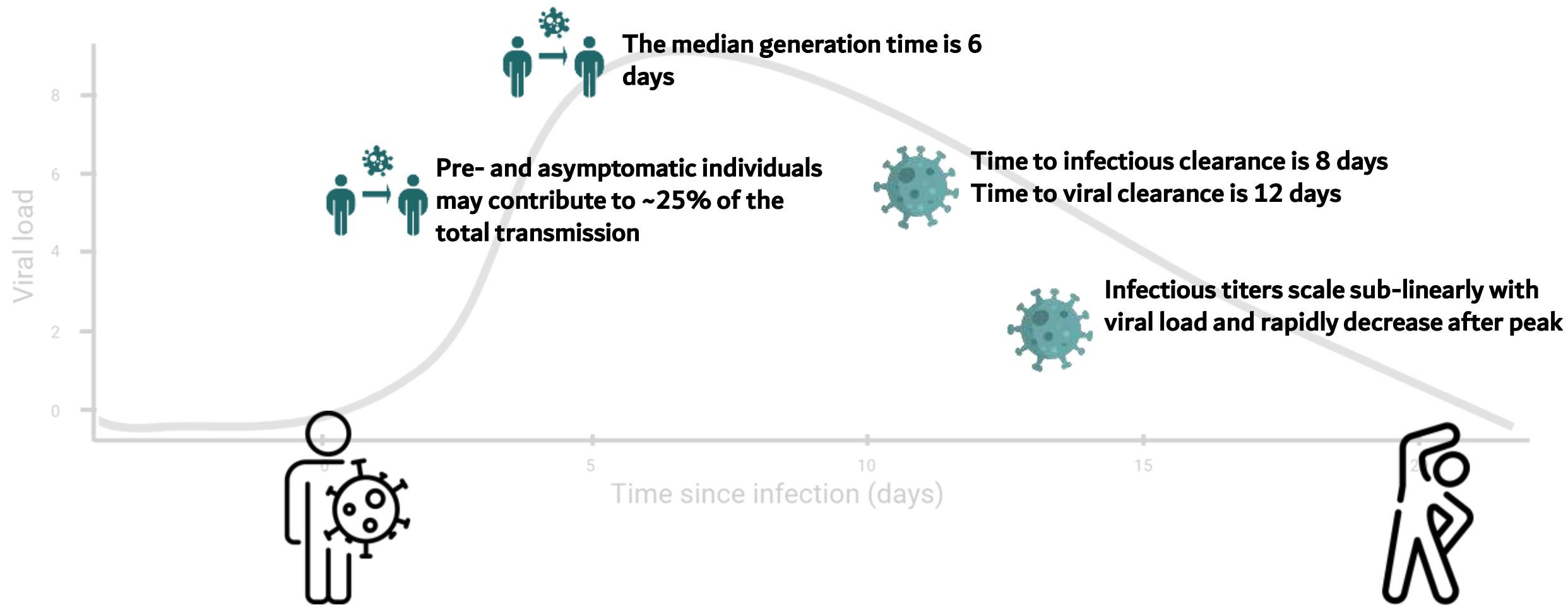
Conclusion



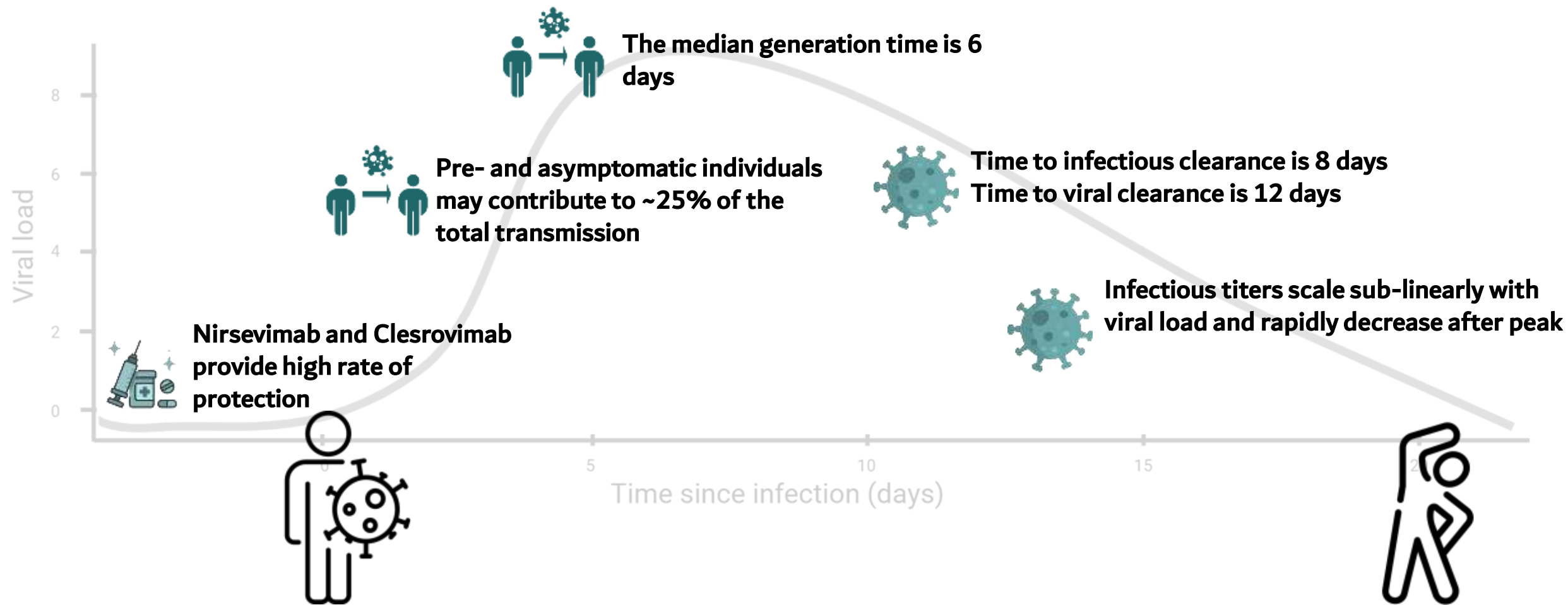
Conclusion



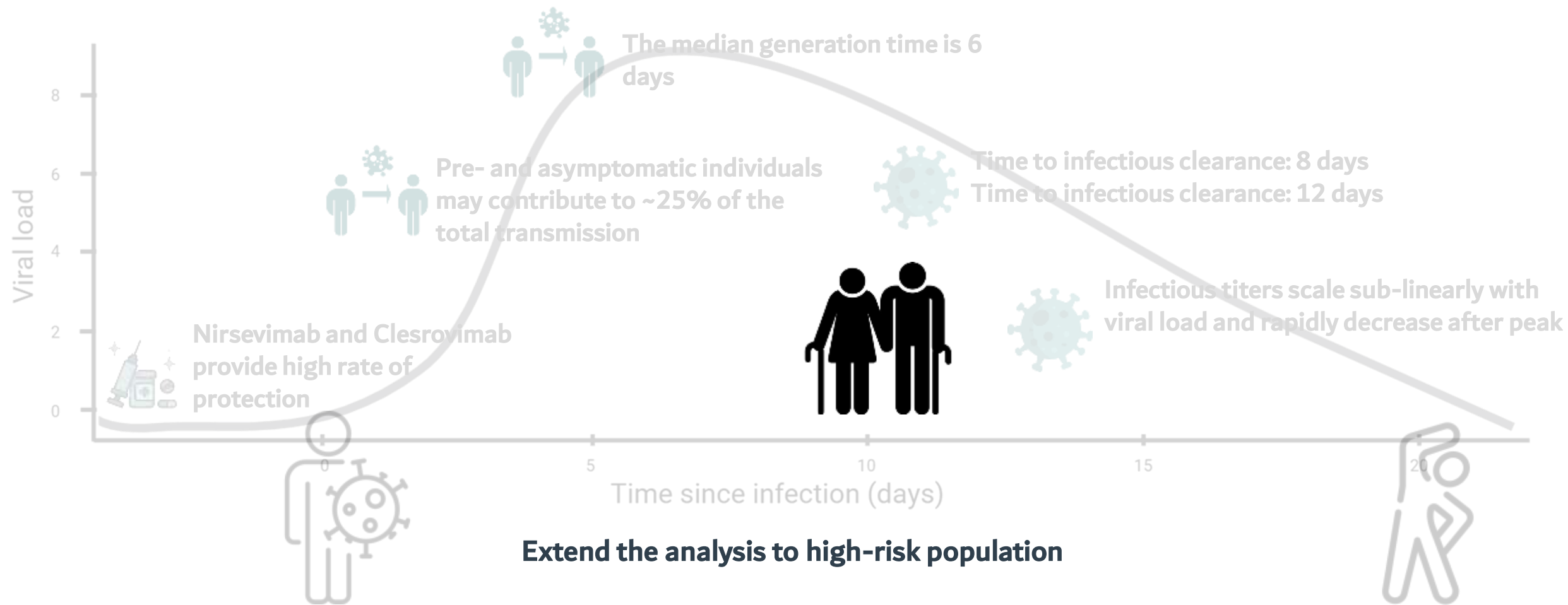
Conclusion



Conclusion



Perspectives



Acknowledgments



Thank you to:

Jérémie Guedj (*IAME*),
Alex J Mann (*hVivo*),
Andrew Captchpole (*hVivo*)
Slim Fourati (*IMRB*),
Frédéric Graw (*RG Modelling of Immune Processes*),
Pascal Lukas (*RG Modelling of Immune Processes*),
All volunteers from the experimental challenge
ANR to fund this PhD



C.Schumer



June 4, 2025