



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM



## Gut Microbiome Therapeutics in Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis (PSC)

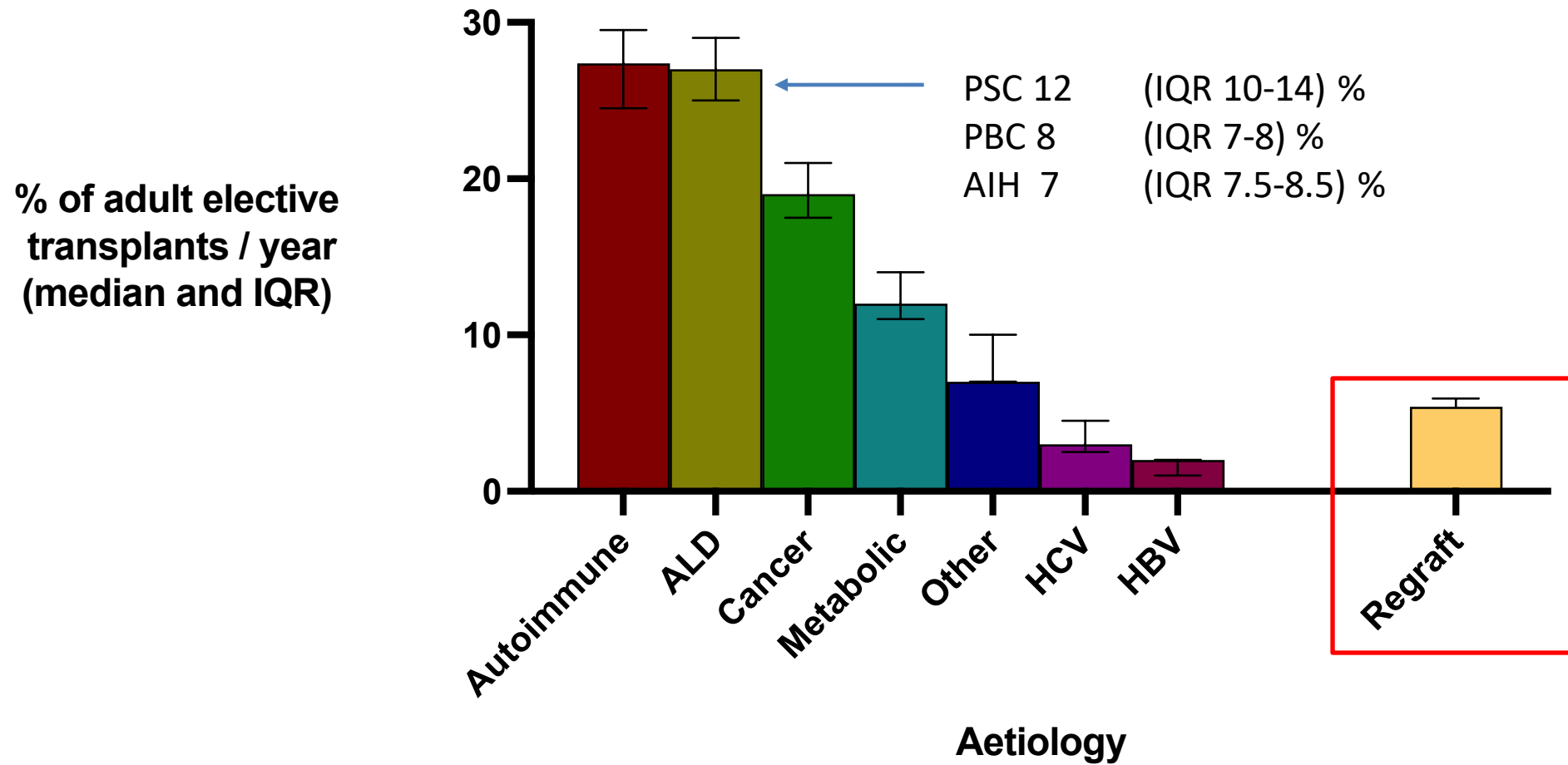


Palak J. Trivedi; [@CholestasisDoc](#)

NIHR Birmingham BRC,

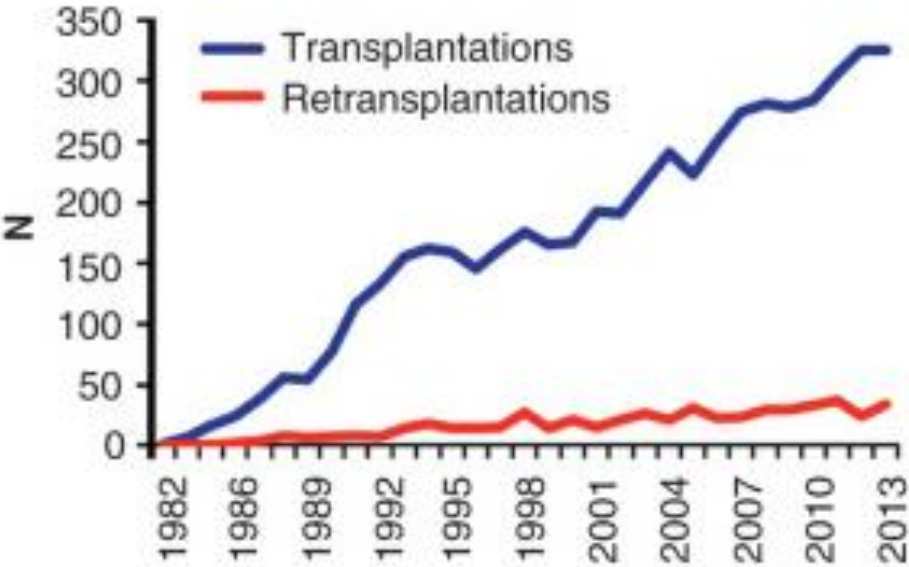
Centre for Liver and Gastrointestinal Research

# Autoimmune liver disease: the lead indication for adult liver transplantation in the UK

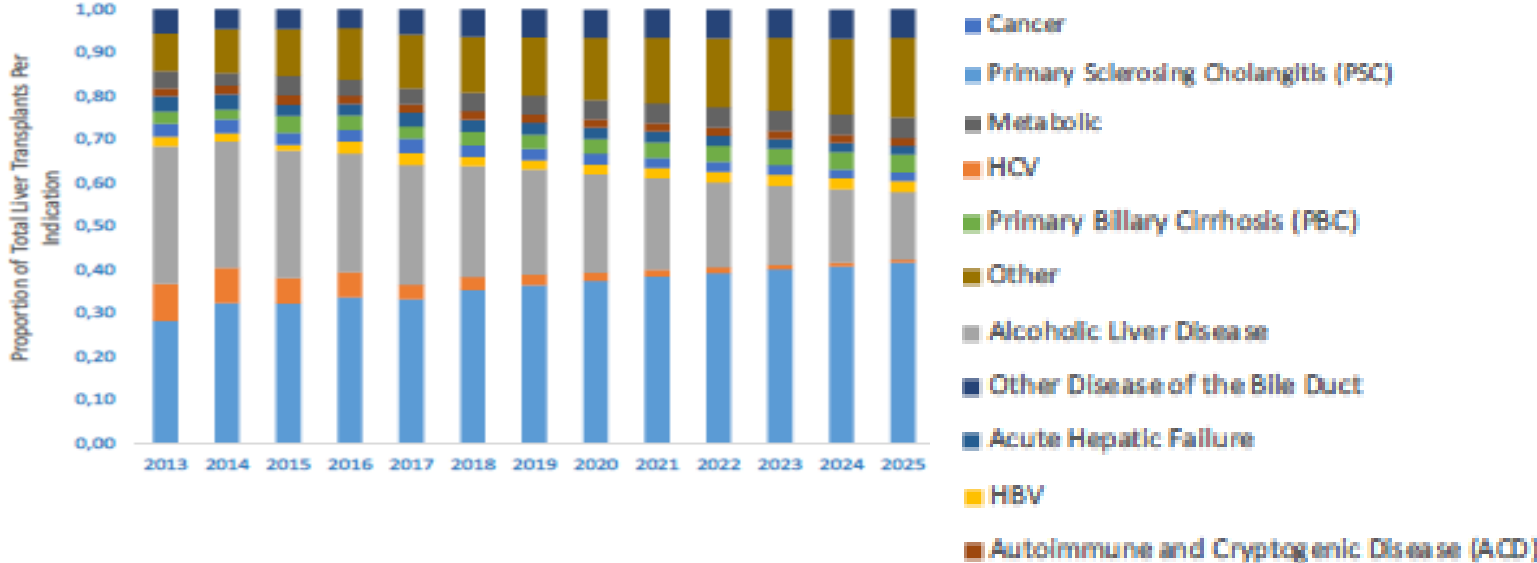


# PSC is one of the most common indications for liver transplantation

**Nordic liver transplant programme**  
 - 15.3% are performed for PSC



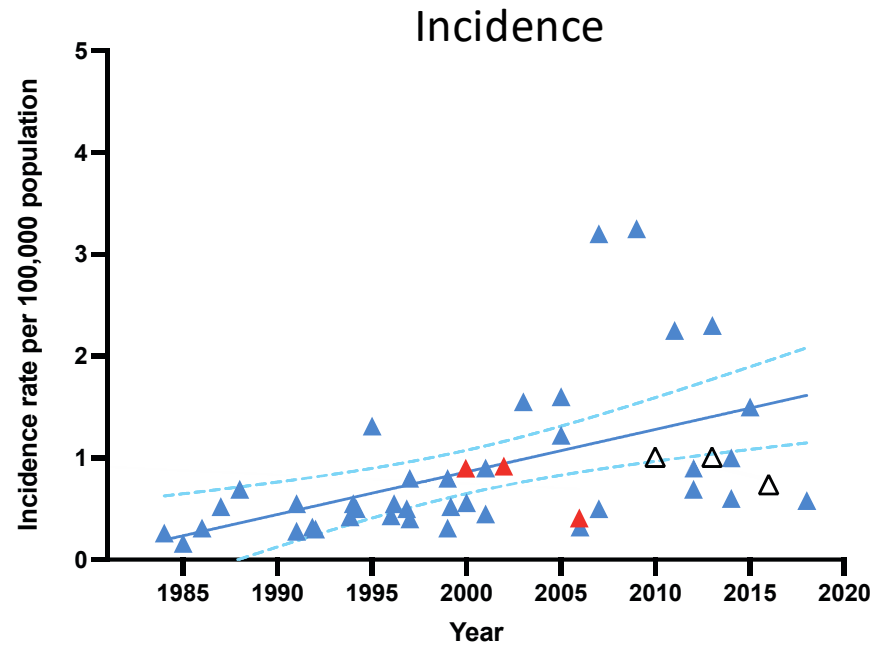
**French liver transplant programme**  
 - PSC will be the lead indication by 2025



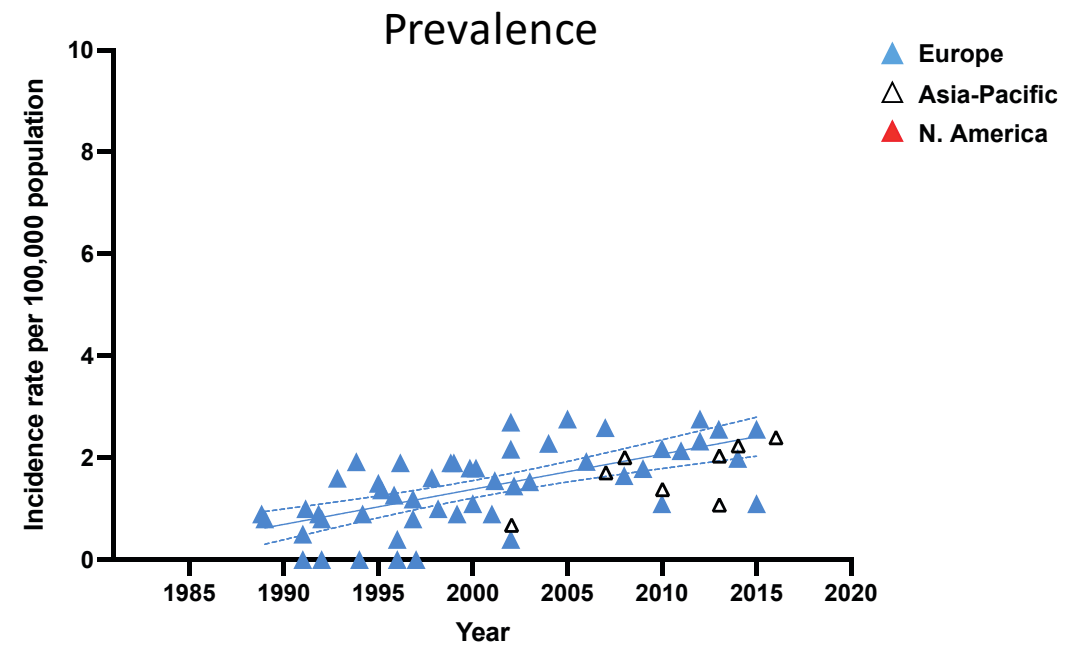
1) Fosby *et al. Scand. J. Gastro* 2015  
 2) Conolly *et al. J. Hepatol.* 2020A

# PSC is rare but the incidence and prevalence are rising

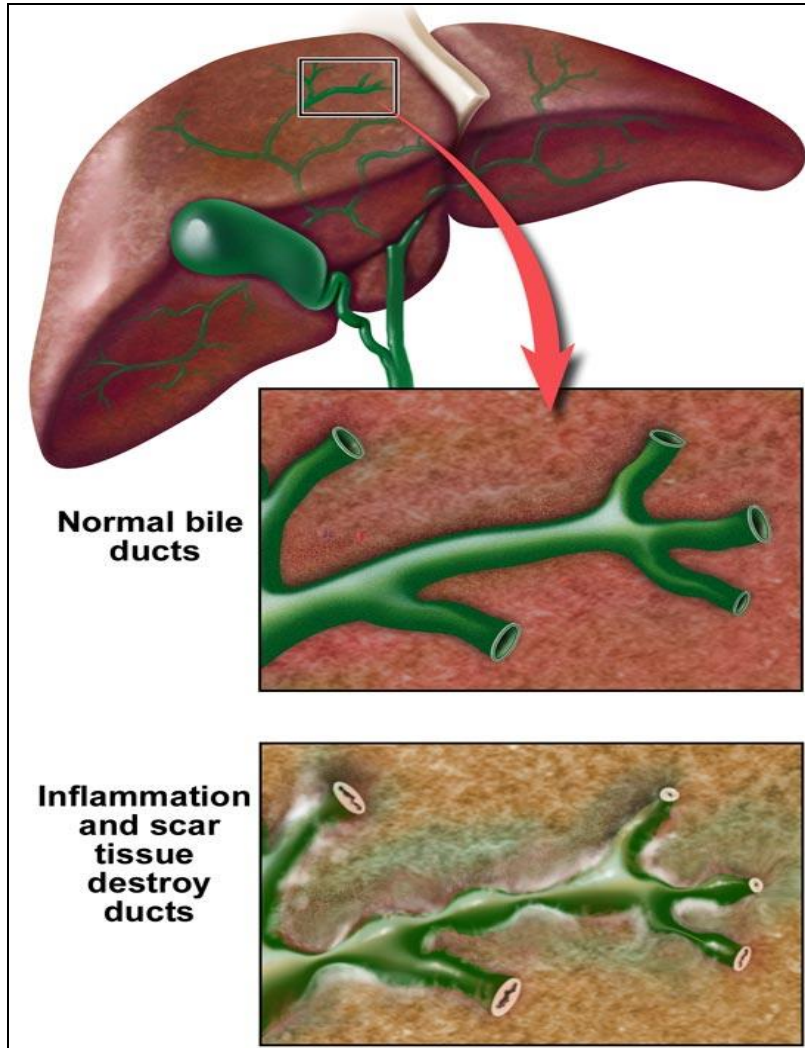
**A**



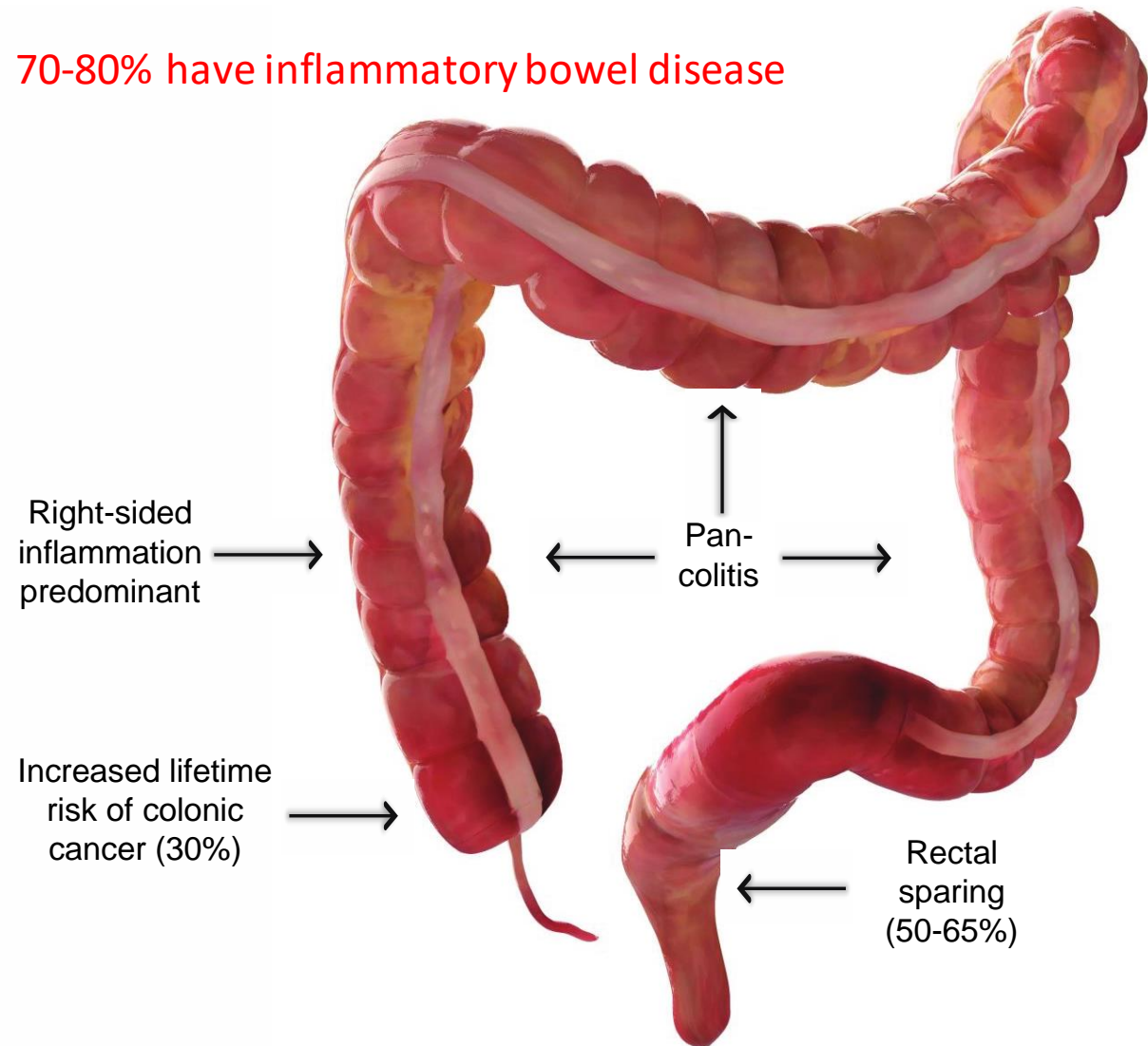
**B**



# PSC is not just a condition of the liver

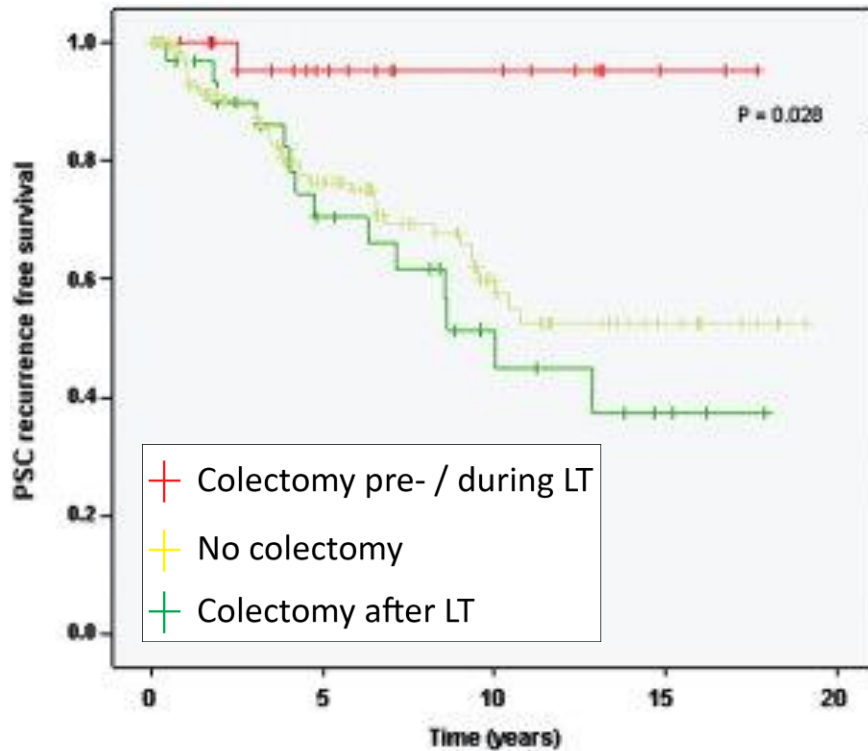


70-80% have inflammatory bowel disease



# The presence /activity of colitis and recurrent PSC post-transplant

- Birmingham (UK) <sup>1</sup>



## Hazard ratios (vs. pre-LT colectomy)

- Post-LT colectomy: 11.8
- No colectomy: 8.85

## Validation:

- UK (multiple centres)
  - Presence of UC post-LT  
H.R.: 2.4
- Germany (multicentre) <sup>3</sup>
  - Presence of UC post-LT  
H.R.: 2.07
  - Active colitis post-LT  
H.R.: 2.31
- Nordic transplant registry
  - Colectomy pre-LT  
H.R.: 0.49

1. Alabraba E. *et al. Liver Transplantation* 2009

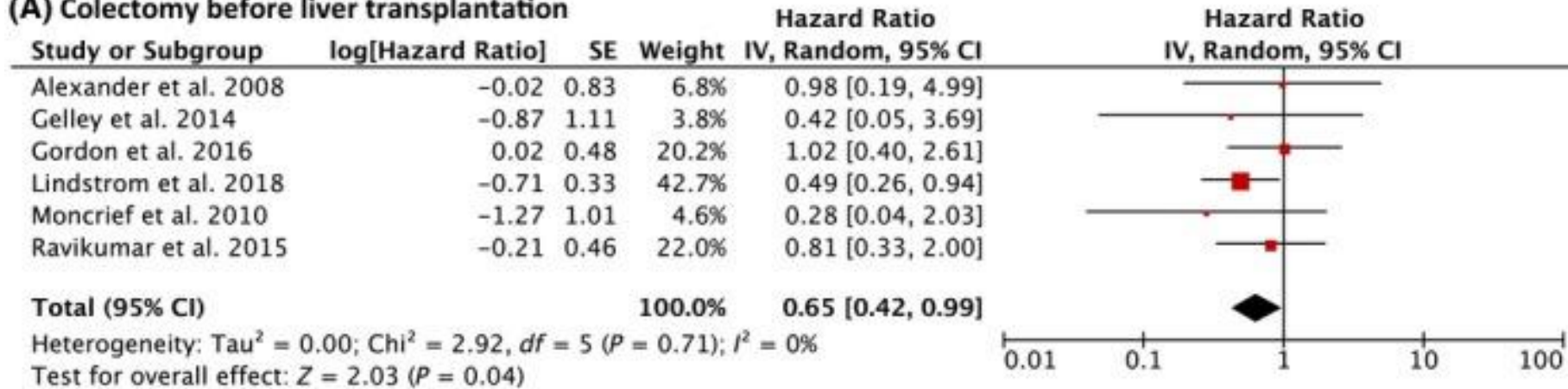
2. Ravikumar *et al. J. Hepatol.* 2015

3. Hildebrand *et al. Liver Transplantation* 2015

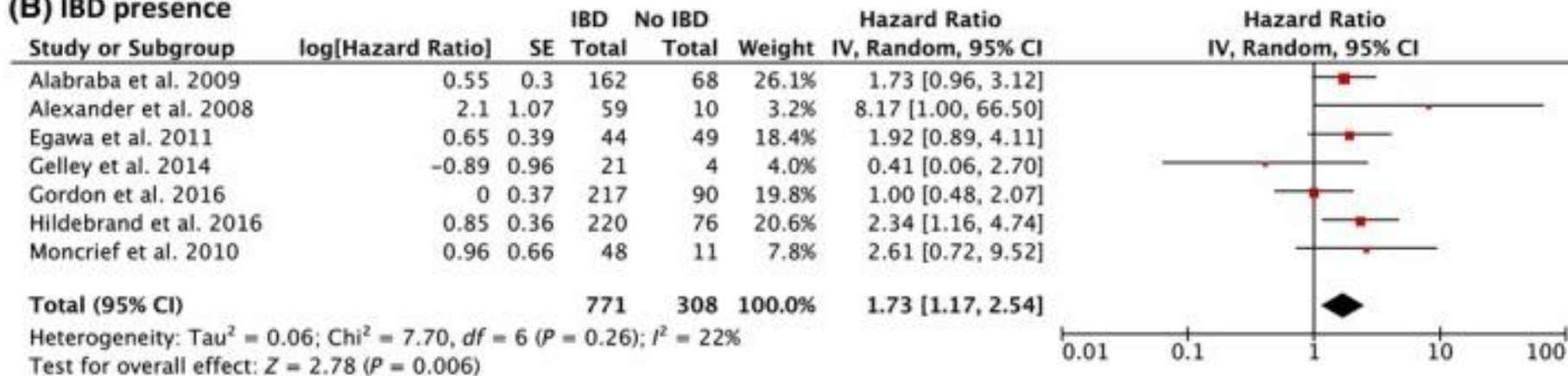
4. Lindstrøm *et al. Scand. J. Gastro.* 2018

# Colectomy prior to transplantation lowers the risk of recurrent PSC

## (A) Colectomy before liver transplantation

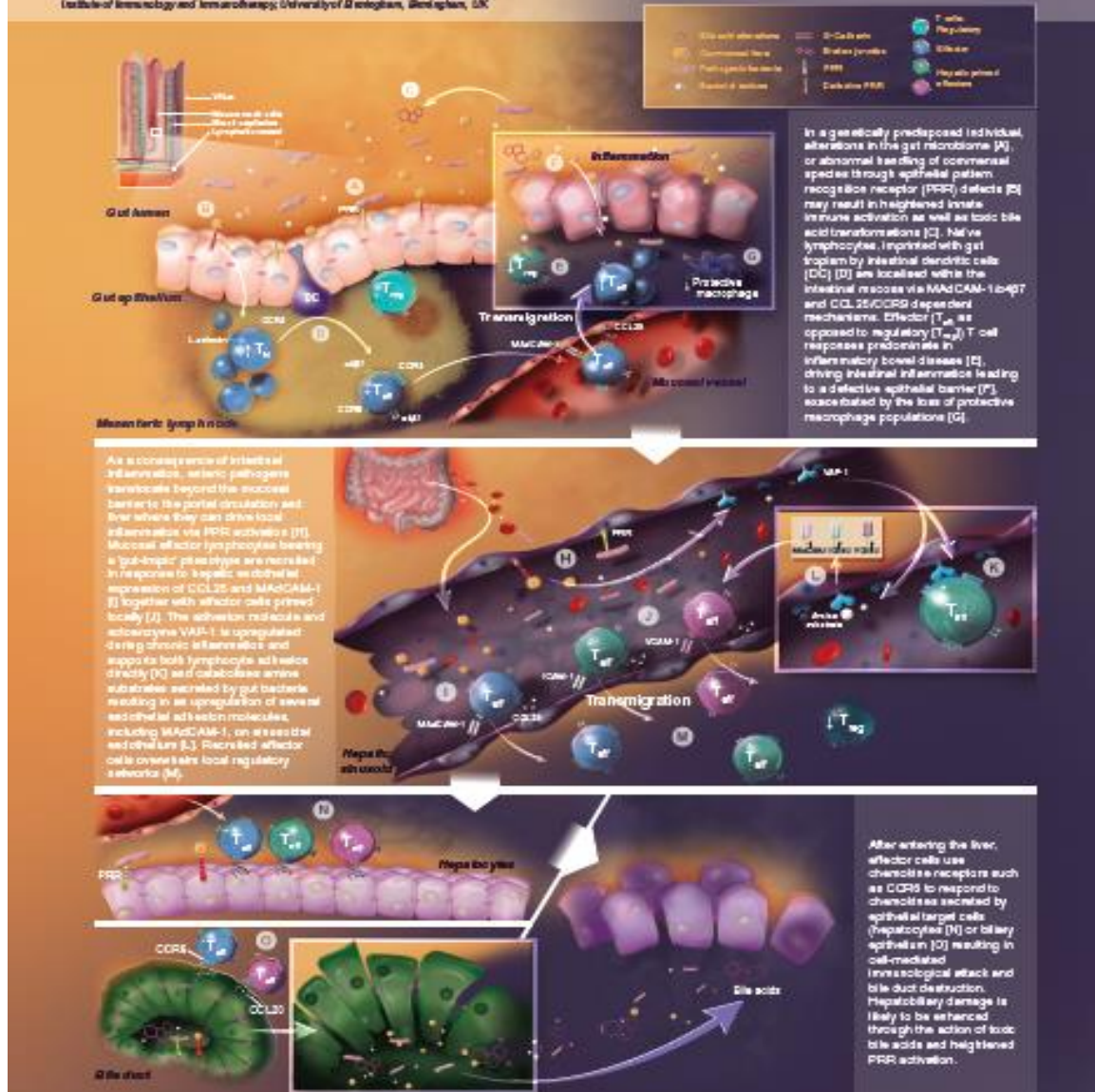


## (B) IBD presence



# Hepatology Snapshot: Gut-liver immunity

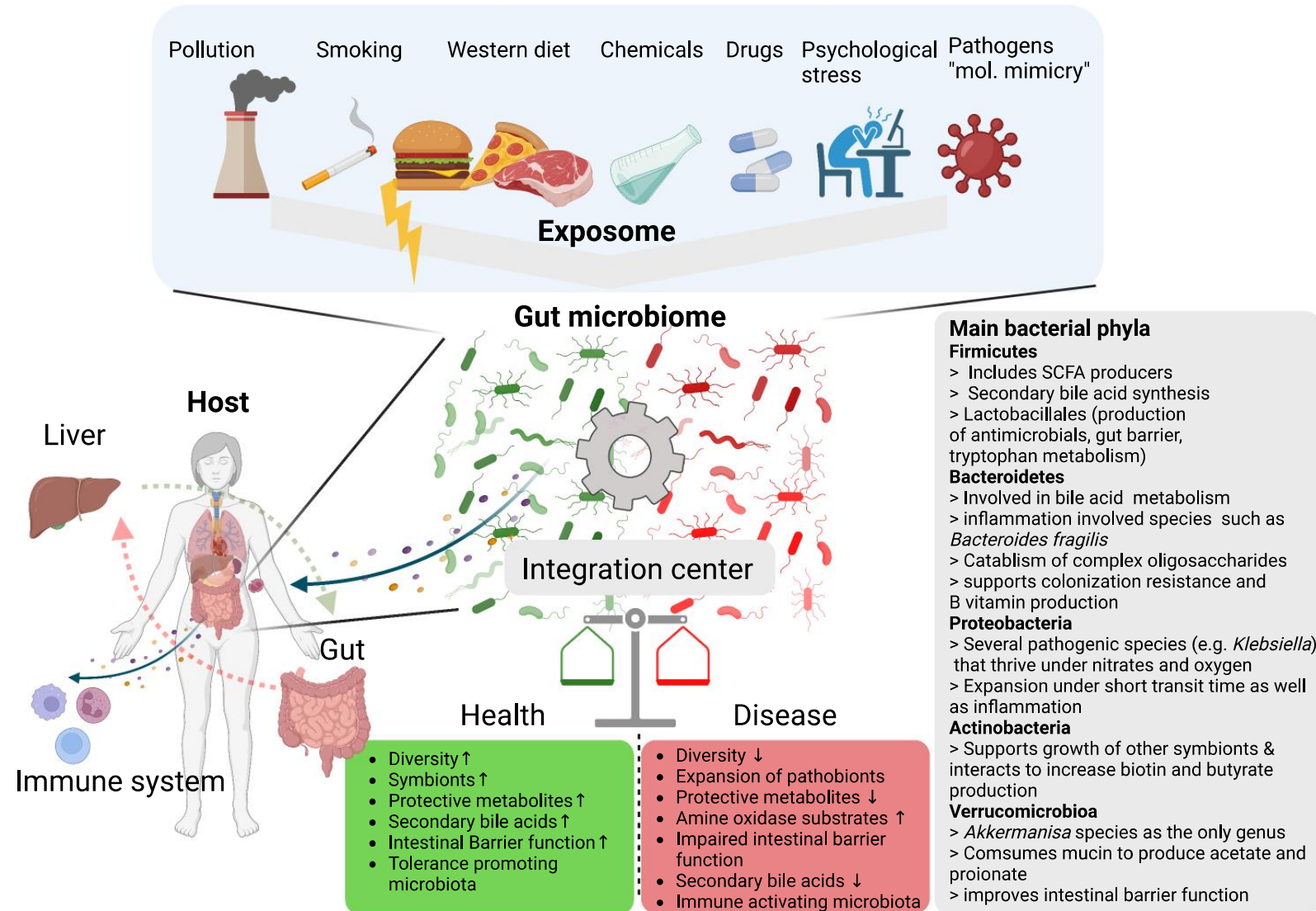
Palak J. Trivedi, David H. Adams  
National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) Birmingham Liver Biomedical Research Unit,  
Institute of Immunology and Immunotherapy, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK



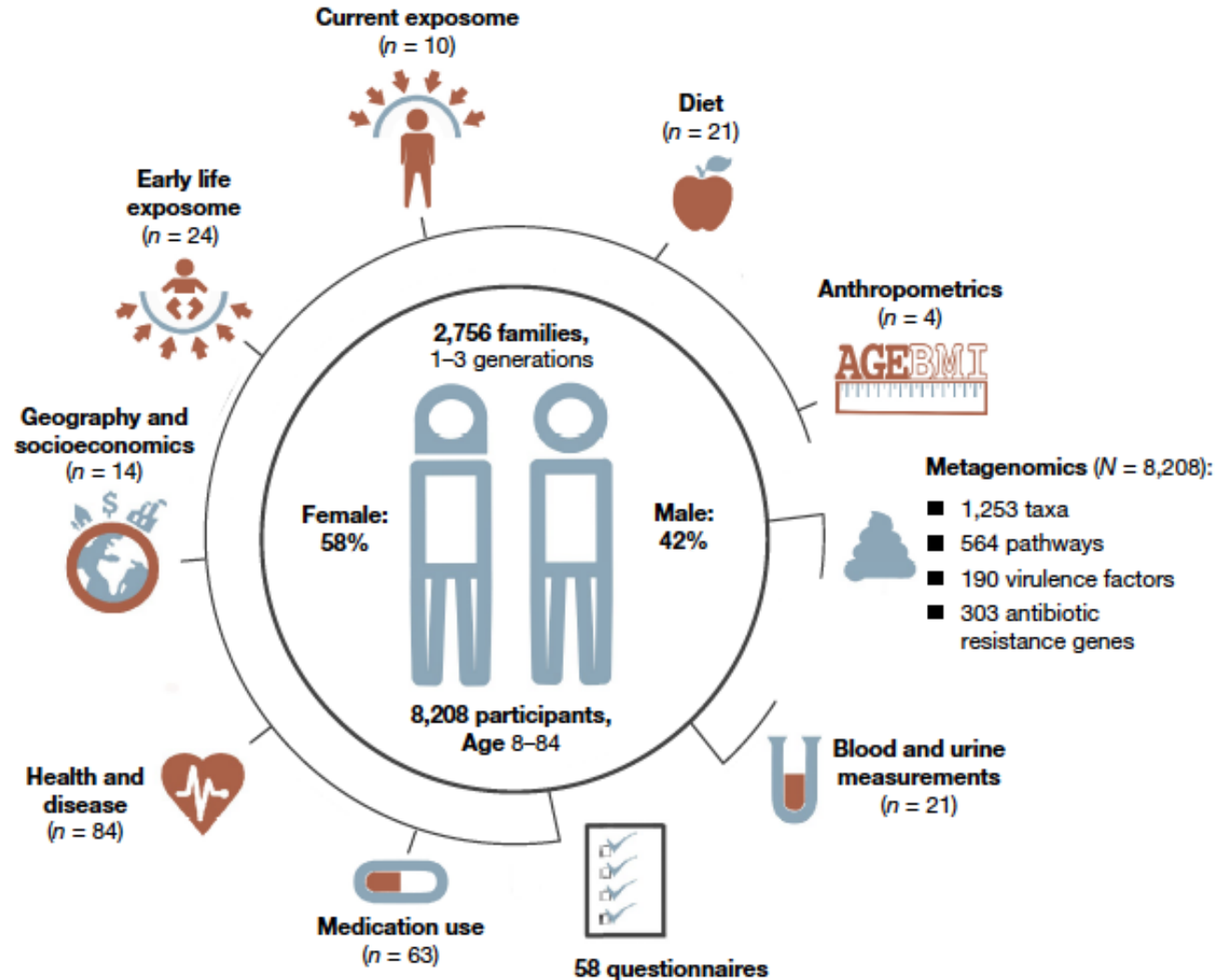
- Enteric microbiome changes
  - Reduced microbial diversity
  - Enrichment of amine-producing species
  - Increased carcinogenic potential
- Disrupted intestinal barrier
  - Lower expression of tight-junction proteins
  - Reduced short-chain fatty acids
- Dysregulated mucosal immunity
  - Heightened T<sub>H</sub>17 responses to pathogen stimulation
  - Perturbed regulatory T-cell function
  - Aberrant mucosal lymphocyte homing
- Pathological enterohepatic bile acid shifts
  - Reduced TGR5 expression
  - Increased gut FXR expression



# Gut microbiome integrates environmental influences into host physiology

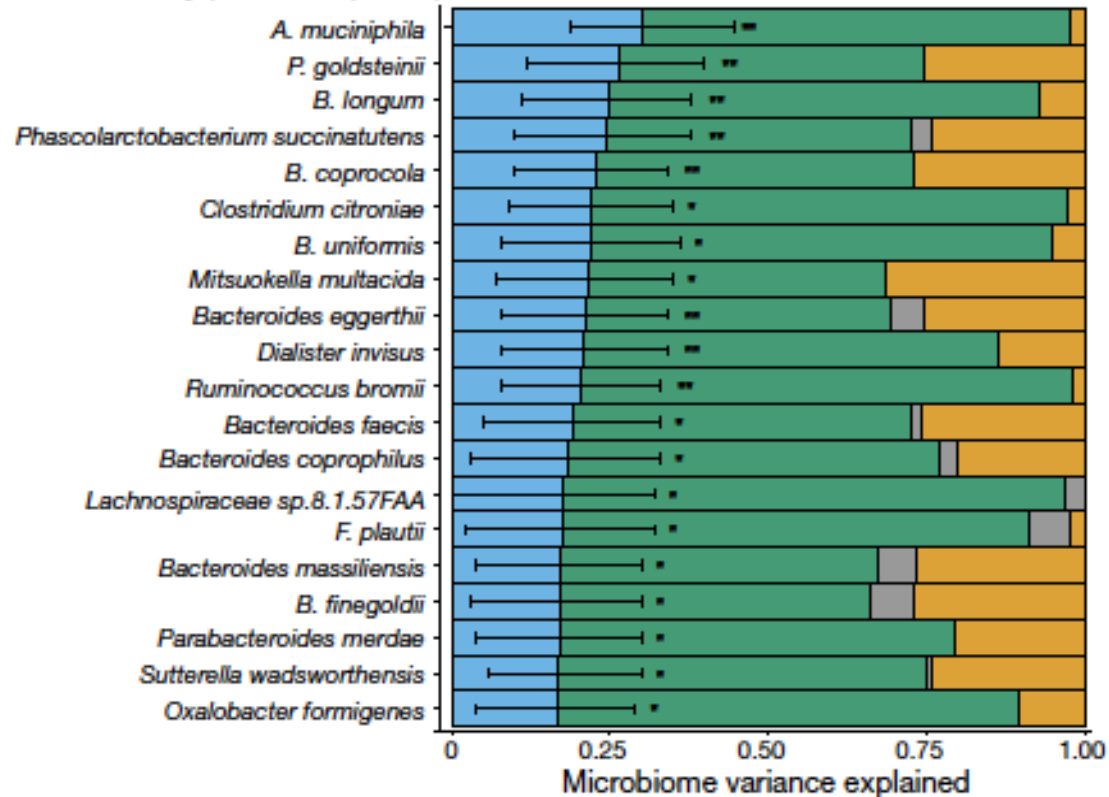


# Dutch microbiome project

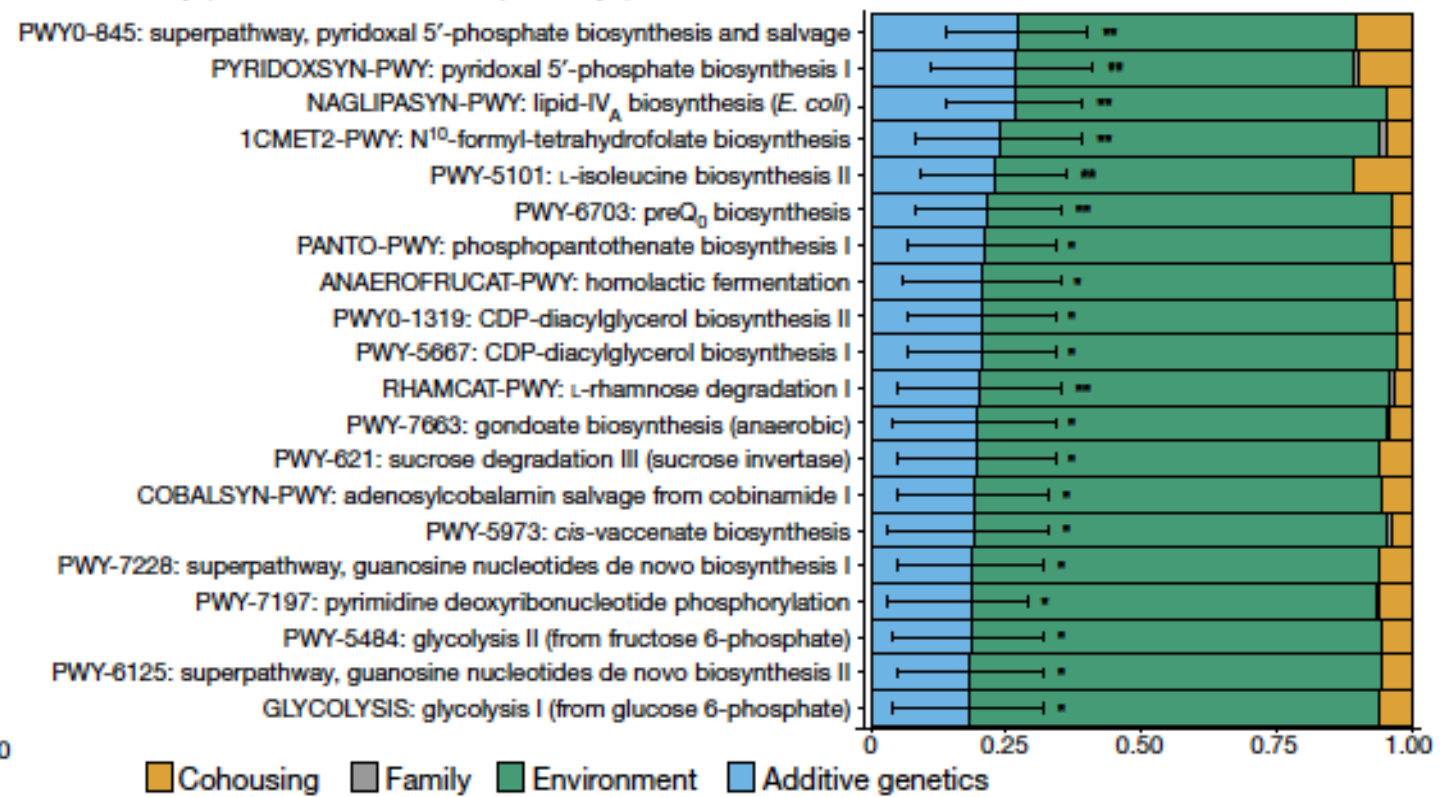


# Heritability and effect of cohabitation on the gut microbiome

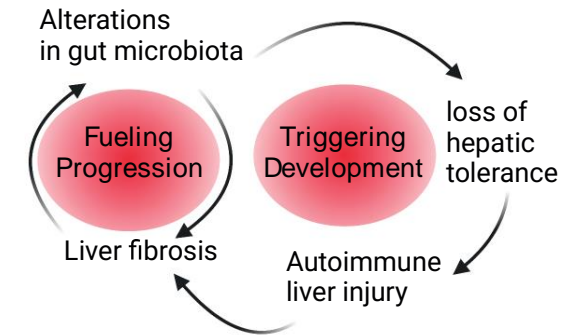
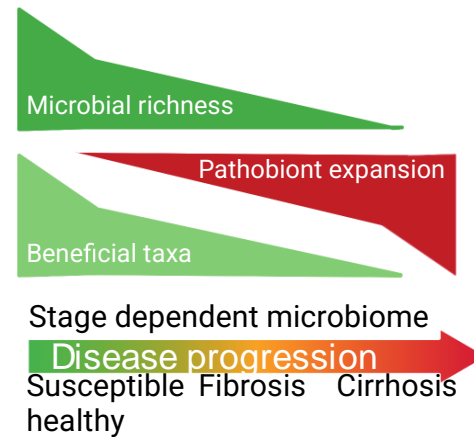
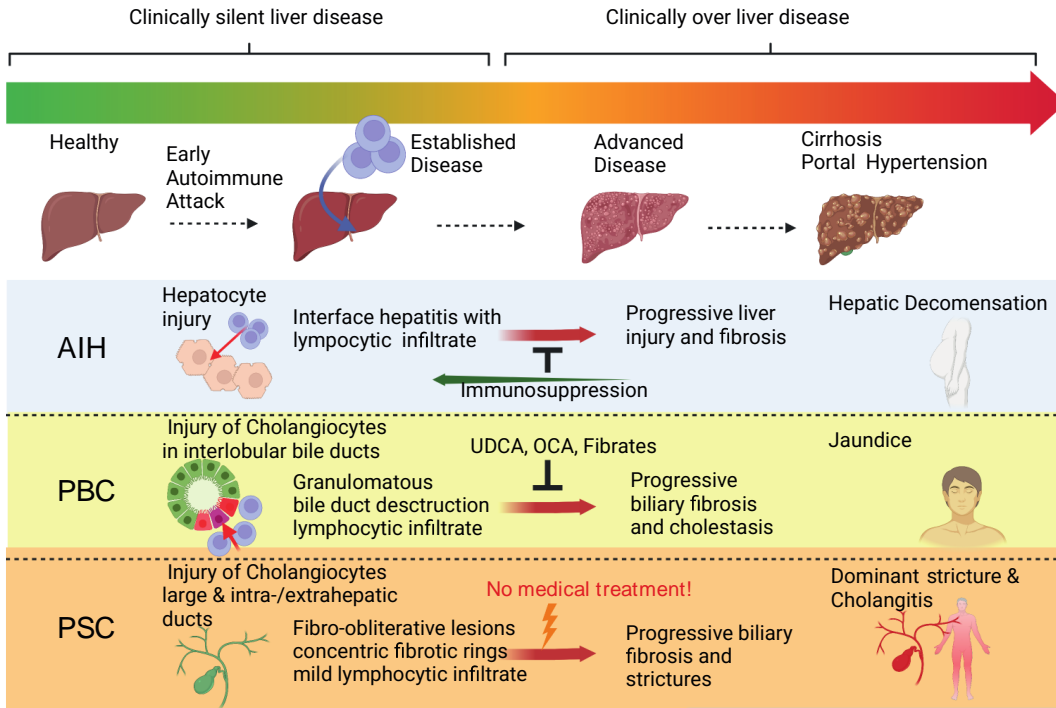
**a** Heritability (bacterial species)



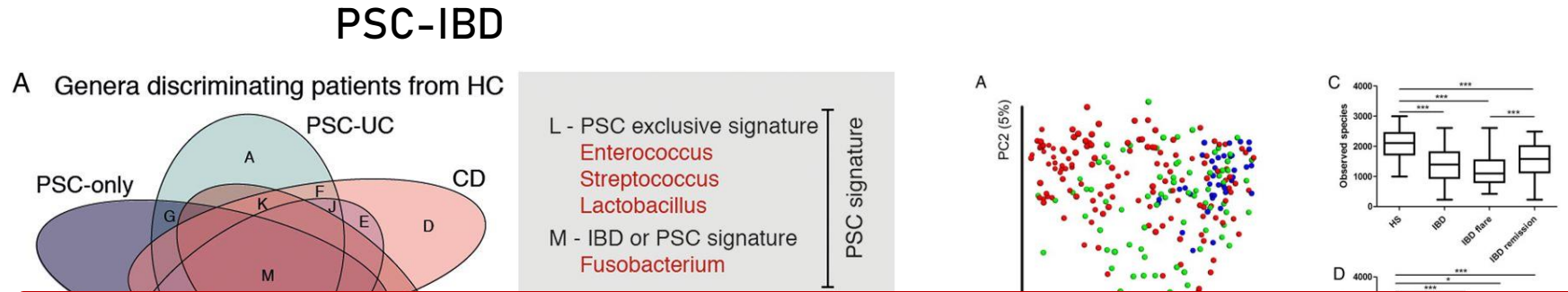
**b** Heritability (bacterial biochemical pathways)



# Microbiome changes in autoimmune liver disease: aetiology or severity?



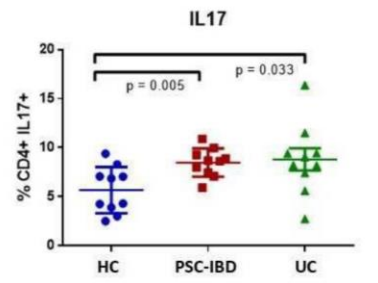
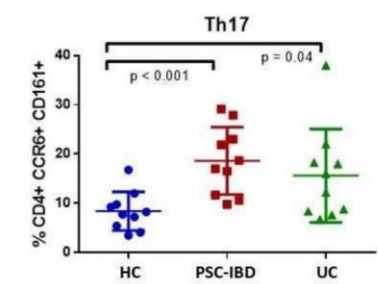
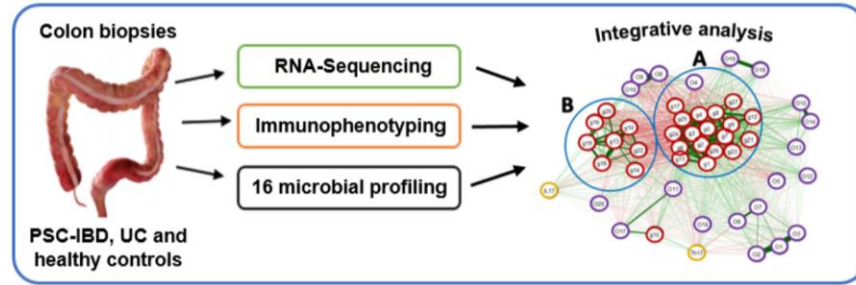
# Dysbiosis in PSC and PSC-IBD



**Does this mean something or is it just a correlation due to changes in outflow of bile acid from liver?**

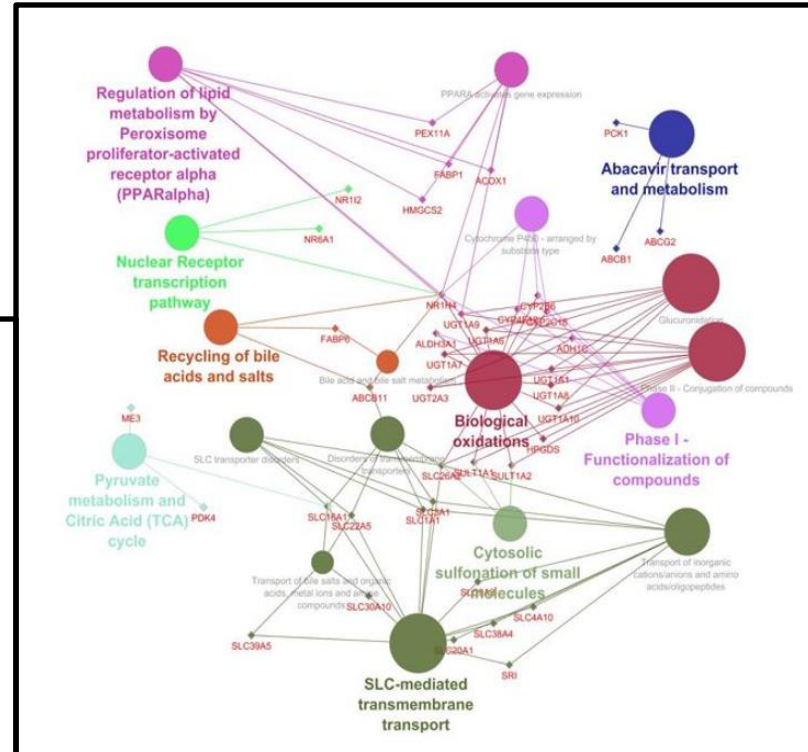
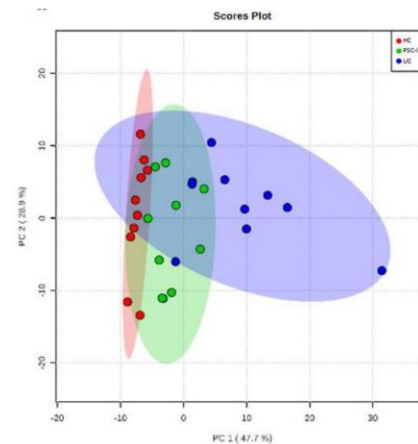


# PSC-IBD disease mechanisms appear to be different to IBD alone at a mucosal level



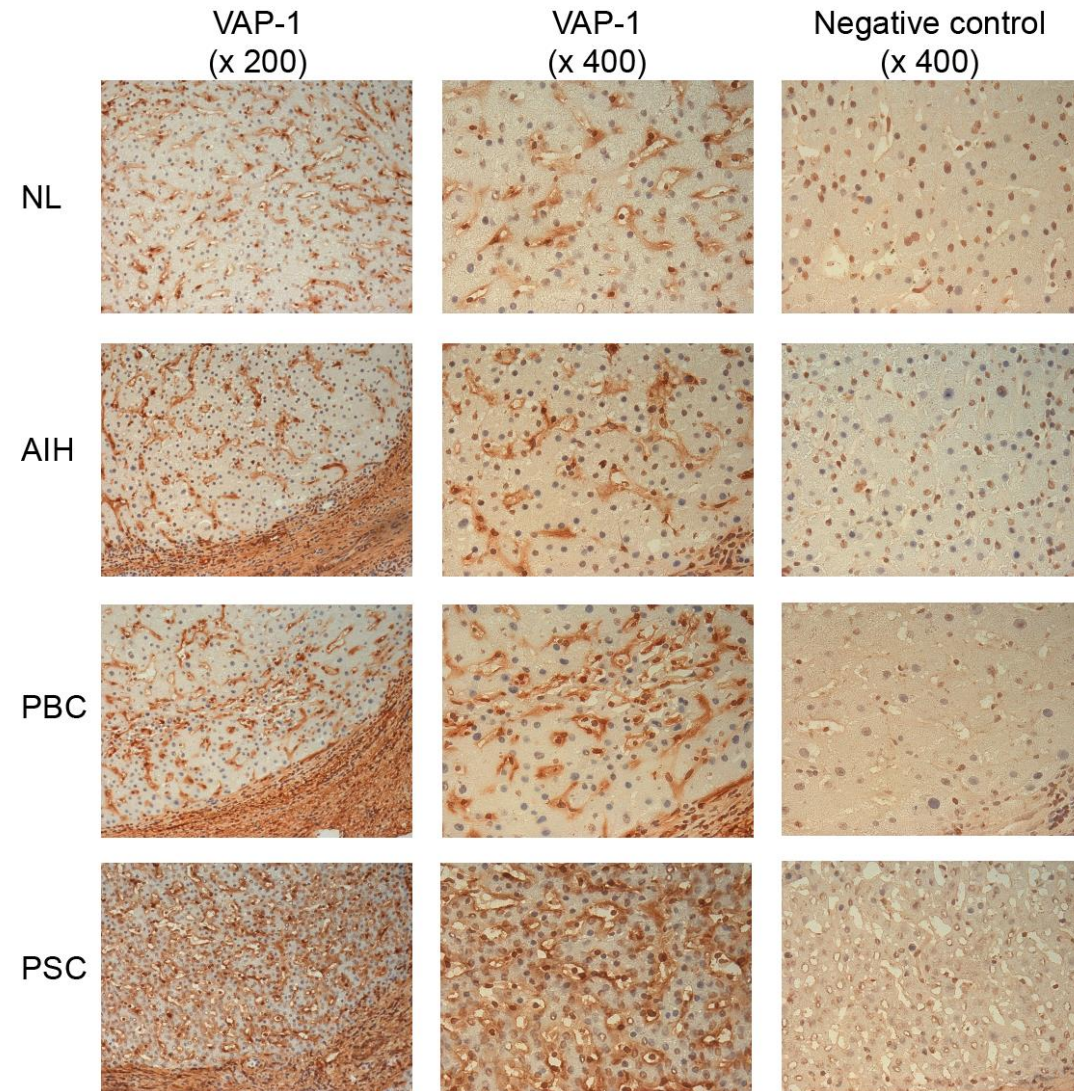
PSC-IBD and IBD have similar immune mediated pro-inflammatory signals

Different triggers for this immune response  
Large differences in colonic mucosal gene expression versus IBD

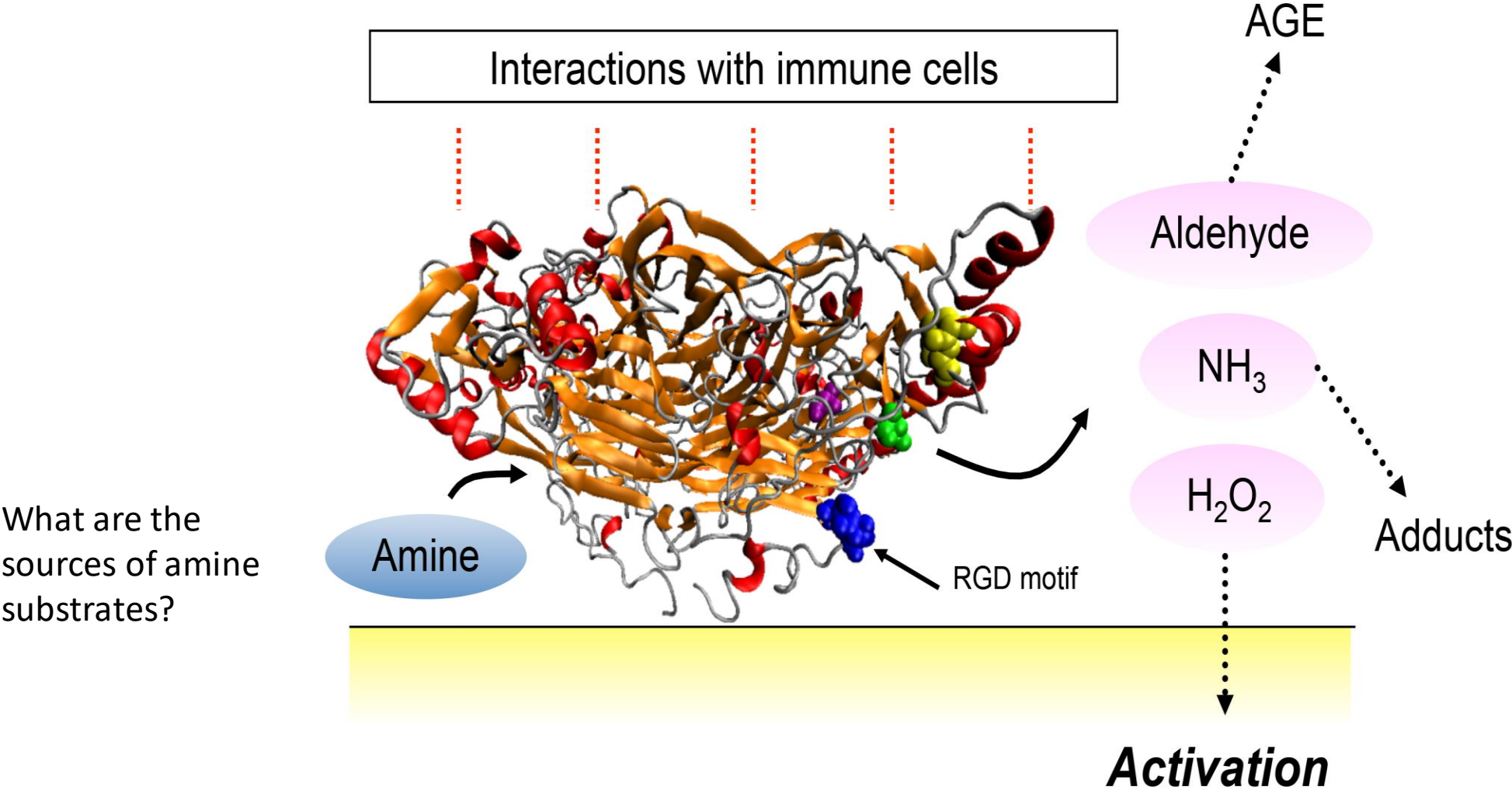


Bile acid homeostatic pathways significantly aberrant in PSC-IBD compared to UC  
**? Bile acid mediated inflammation**

# Hepatic vascular adhesion protein (VAP)-1 expression in autoimmune liver disease

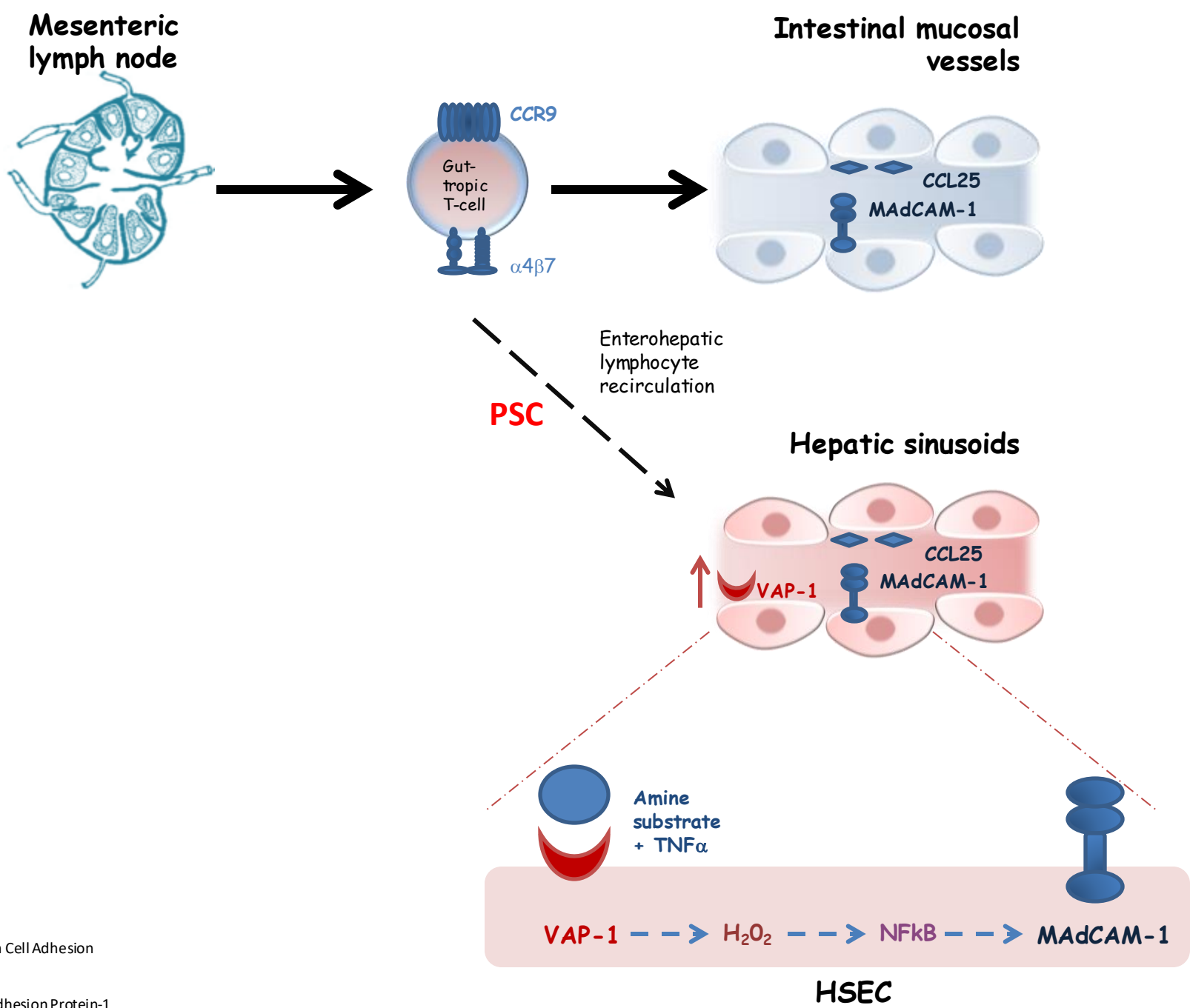


# Consequences of hepatic VAP-1 activation



What are the sources of amine substrates?



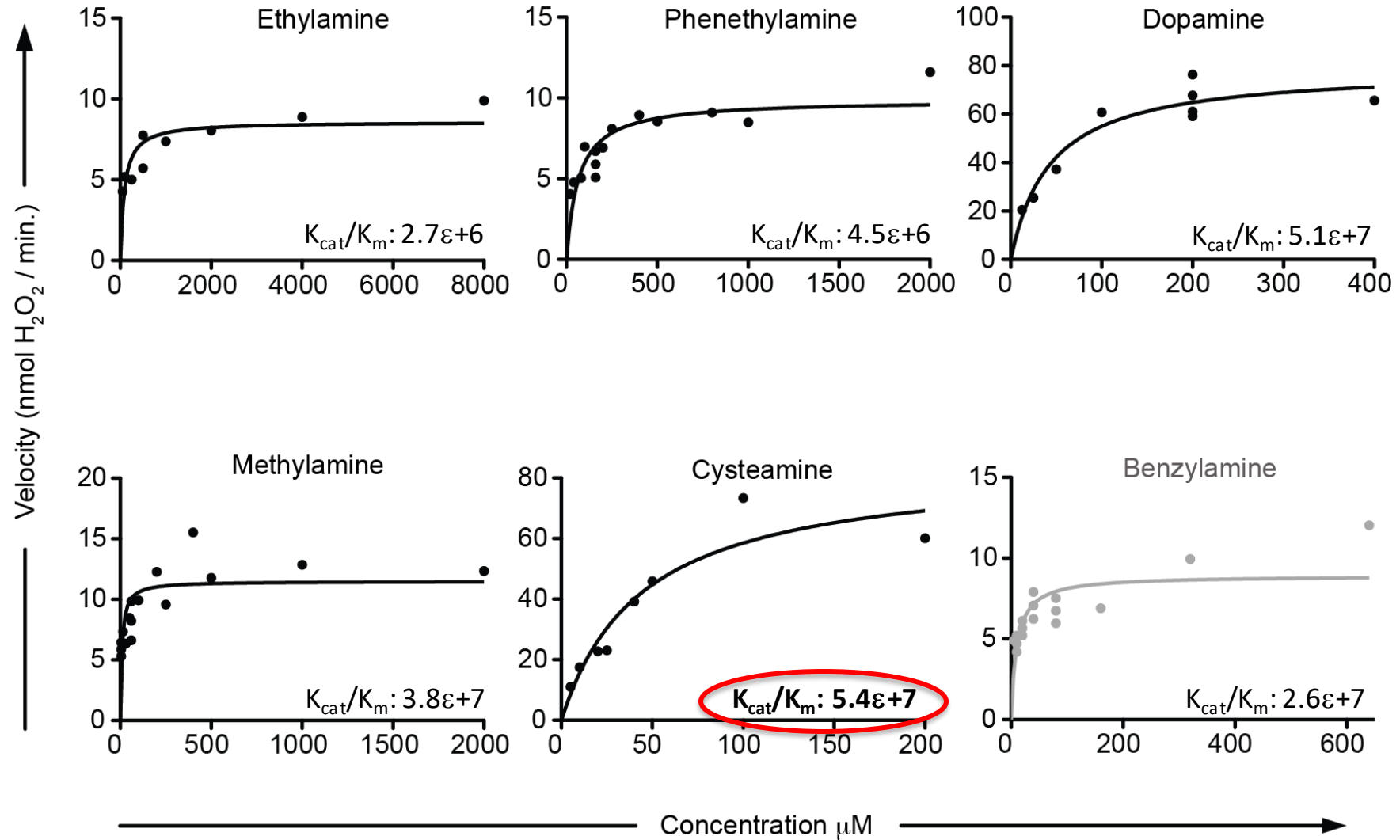


**KEY:**

**MAdCAM-1:**  
Mucosal Addressin Cell Adhesion  
Molecule-1

**VAP-1:** Vascular Adhesion Protein-1

# VAP-1 activity is substrate dependent



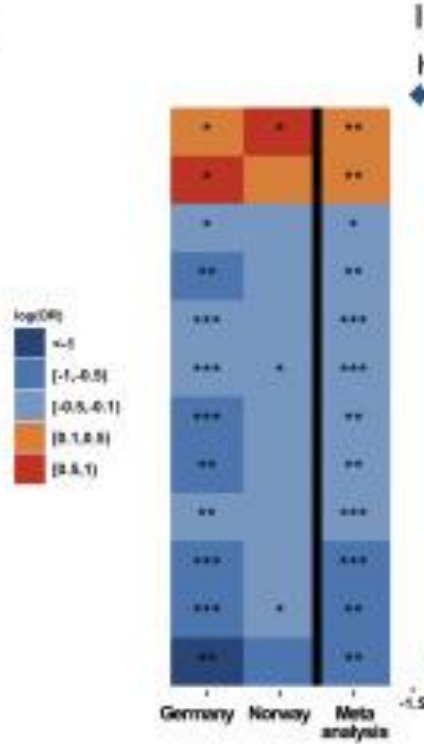
# Cysteamine exposure can lead to colitis in mice

- Cysteamine induces colitis in mice
  - Klicek et al. 2013; *J. Physiol Pharmacol.*
- Inflamed colonic epithelium and *Escherichia* and *Enterobacter* spp. – main provider of cysteamine
  - Overexposure to cysteamine, colitis and cancer
    - Martin et al. 2004 *J. Clin. Inv.*
    - Gensollen et al. 2013 *Inflamm. Bowel Dis*
  - Inhibit cysteamine generation: attenuates colitis / prevents colorectal cancer
    - Berruyer et al. 2006 *J. Exp. Med*

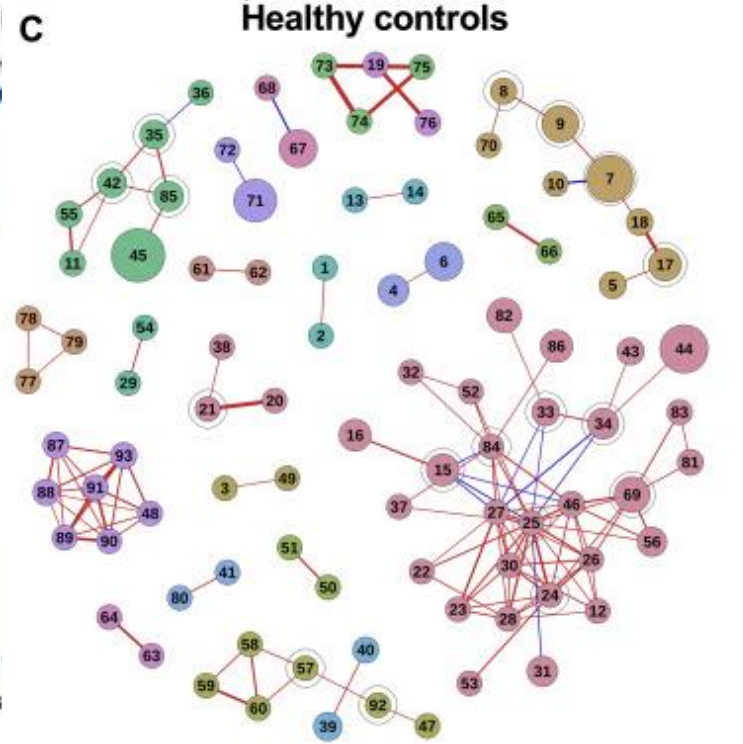
# Bacterial abundance co-correlation network

Red and blue lines in (C) and (D) indicate positive and negative correlations between species, respectively.

A

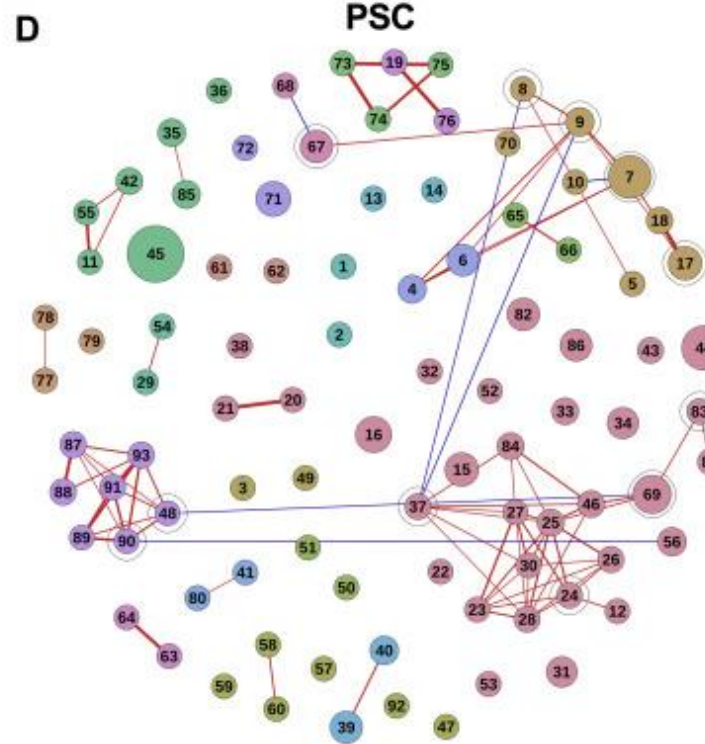


C



- 1) Acidaminococcus fermentans
- 2) Acidaminococcus intestini
- 3) Actinobacillus unclassified
- 4) Alistipes finegoldii
- 5) Alistipes indistinctus
- 6) Alistipes onderdonkii
- 7) Alistipes putredinis
- 8) Alistipes senegalensis
- 9) Alistipes shahi
- 10) Alistipes unclassified
- 11) Anaerostipes hadrum
- 12) Anaerotruncus colihominis
- 13) Bacteroides sp 3 1 23
- 14) Bacteroides sp 3 2 5
- 15) Bifidobacterium adolescentis
- 16) Bifidobacterium longum
- 17) Bifidobacterium unclassified
- 18) Bifidobacterium wadsworthia
- 19) Burkholderiales bacterium 1 1 47
- 20) Citrobacter freundii
- 21) Citrobacter unclassified
- 22) Clostridiaceae bacterium JC118
- 23) Clostridiales bacterium 1 7 47FAA
- 24) Clostridium asparagiforme
- 25) Clostridium bofeae
- 26) Clostridium citroniae
- 27) Clostridium clostridioforme
- 28) Clostridium hathewayi
- 29) Clostridium scindens
- 30) Clostridium symbiosum
- 31) Collinsella aerofaciens
- 32) Coprococcus unclassified
- 33) Coprococcus catus
- 34) Coprococcus comes
- 35) Dorea formicigenerans
- 36) Dorea unclassified
- 37) Eggerthella unclassified
- 38) Enterobacteriaceae
- 39) Escherichia coli
- 40) Escherichia unclassified
- 41) Eubacterium bifforme
- 42) Eubacterium hallii
- 43) Eubacterium ramulus
- 44) Eubacterium rectale
- 45) Faecalibacterium prausnitzii
- 46) Flavonifractor plautii
- 47) Fusobacterium mortiferum
- 48) Haemophilus parainfluenzae
- 49) Haemophilus sputorum
- 50) Klebsiella oxytoca
- 51) Klebsiella unclassified
- 52) Lachnospiraceae bacterium 1 4 56FAA
- 53) Lachnospiraceae bacterium 3 1 57FAA CT1
- 54) Lachnospiraceae bacterium 5 1 57FAA
- 55) Lachnospiraceae bacterium 5 1 63FAA
- 56) Lachnospiraceae bacterium 7 1 58FAA
- 57) Megamonas funiformis

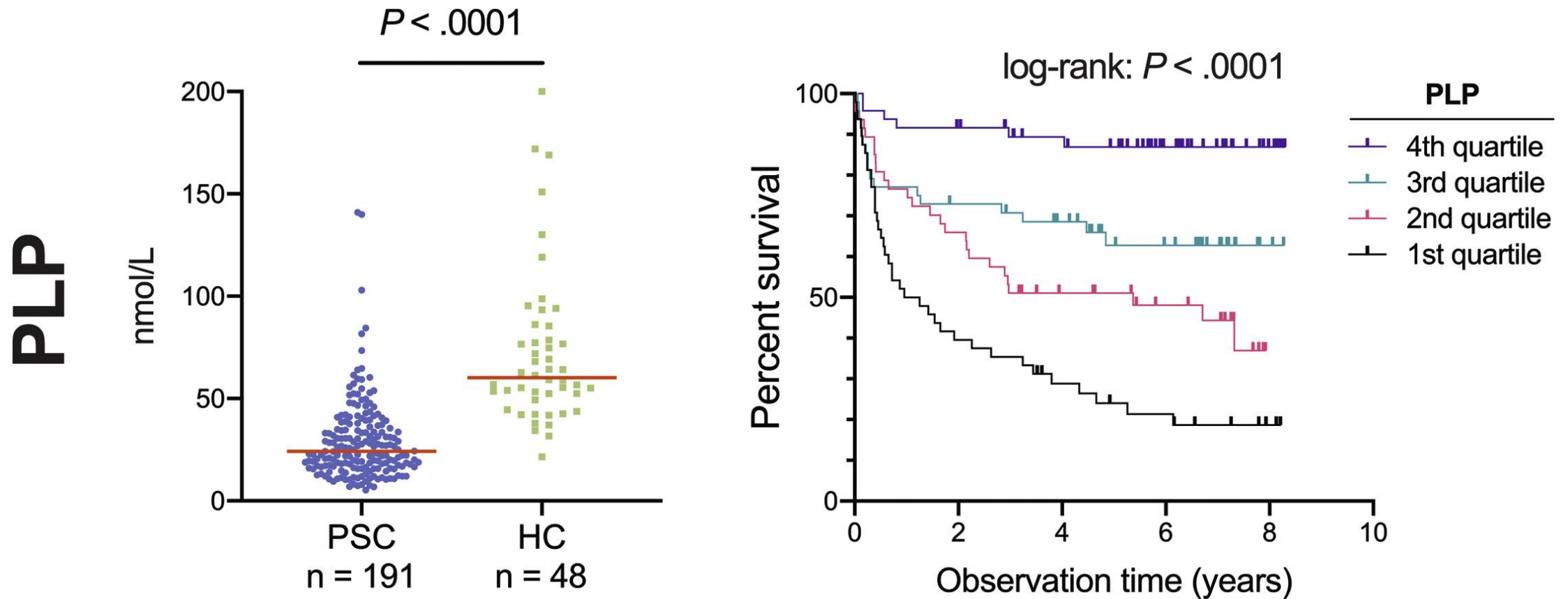
D



- 58) Megamonas hypermegale
- 59) Megamonas rupestris
- 60) Megamonas unclassified
- 61) Megasphaera elsdenii
- 62) Megasphaera unclassified
- 63) Methanobrevibacter smithii
- 64) Methanobrevibacter unclassified
- 65) Mitsuokella multacida
- 66) Mitsuokella unclassified
- 67) Odoribacter splanchnicus
- 68) Odoribacter unclassified
- 69) Oscillibacter unclassified
- 70) Oxalobacter formigenes
- 71) Parabacteroides merdae
- 72) Parabacteroides unclassified
- 73) Paraprevotella clara
- 74) Paraprevotella unclassified
- 75) Paraprevotella xyliniphila
- 76) Parasuterella excrementihominis
- 77) Porphyromonas asaccharolytica
- 78) Porphyromonas bennoni
- 79) Prevotella buccalis
- 80) Prevotella copri
- 81) Pseudoflavonifractor capillosus
- 82) Roseburia inulinivorans
- 83) Ruminococcaceae bacterium D16
- 84) Ruminococcus gnavus
- 85) Ruminococcus obeum
- 86) Ruminococcus torques
- 87) Streptococcus parasanguis
- 88) Streptococcus salivarius
- 89) Veillonella atypica
- 90) Veillonella dispar
- 91) Veillonella parvula
- 92) Veillonella ratti
- 93) Veillonella unclassified

- ridium clostridioforme
- ridiales bacterium 1 7 47FAA
- ridium bofeae
- ibacterium bifidum
- ridium symbiosum
- rhella lenta
- richia unclassified
- rhella unclassified
- ridium citroniae
- acter /axidifusae
- es senogalensis
- cterium ramulus
- cterium hallii
- ospiraceae bacterium 7 1 58FAA

# Down regulation of vit. B6 synthesis is associated with poorer clinical outcomes in PSC



PLP = pyridoxal 5'-phosphate  
Active form of vitamin B6

# Vancomycin for colitis in PSC-IBD

- 17 children with PSC-IBD
- All 15/15 normalised to <200
- Mean faecal calprotectin improved from 1055 to 51
- PSC-IBD (n=8, OLT=5)
- Vancomycin 125mg QDS 6 to 8 weeks
- Mean reduction of Mayo Score (UC) – 7 points

**Table 1** Comparison of indication, colonoscopy findings, mucosal biopsies, PUCAI scoring, FC and liver phenotype at baseline and during treatment with oral vancomycin (OV)

	Age OV	Indication		Colonoscopy	PUCAI	FC	Liver phenotype
1	15	Failed CMT: 5-ASA steroids TP UDCA	Pre-OV	Mayo 3 Pancolitis Rectal sparing	40	960	Cirrhosis negative PHT negative Fibrosis 3
			On OV	Mayo 0 Histology normal	0	26	
2	17	Failed CMT: Steroids TP MTX IFX	Pre-OV	Mayo 3 Worse right side	30	500	Cirrhosis negative PHT negative Fibrosis 1
			On OV	Mayo 0 Histology mild	0	150	
3	15	Failed CMT: EEN Steroids TP MTX IFX	Pre-OV	Mayo 2 Pancolitis	45	1531	Cirrhosis negative PHT negative
			On OV	Mayo 0 Histology normal	0	77	
4	4	Failed CMT:	Pre-OV	Mayo 3	40	330	Cirrhosis negative

Tan Li-Za et al. Gut. 2019

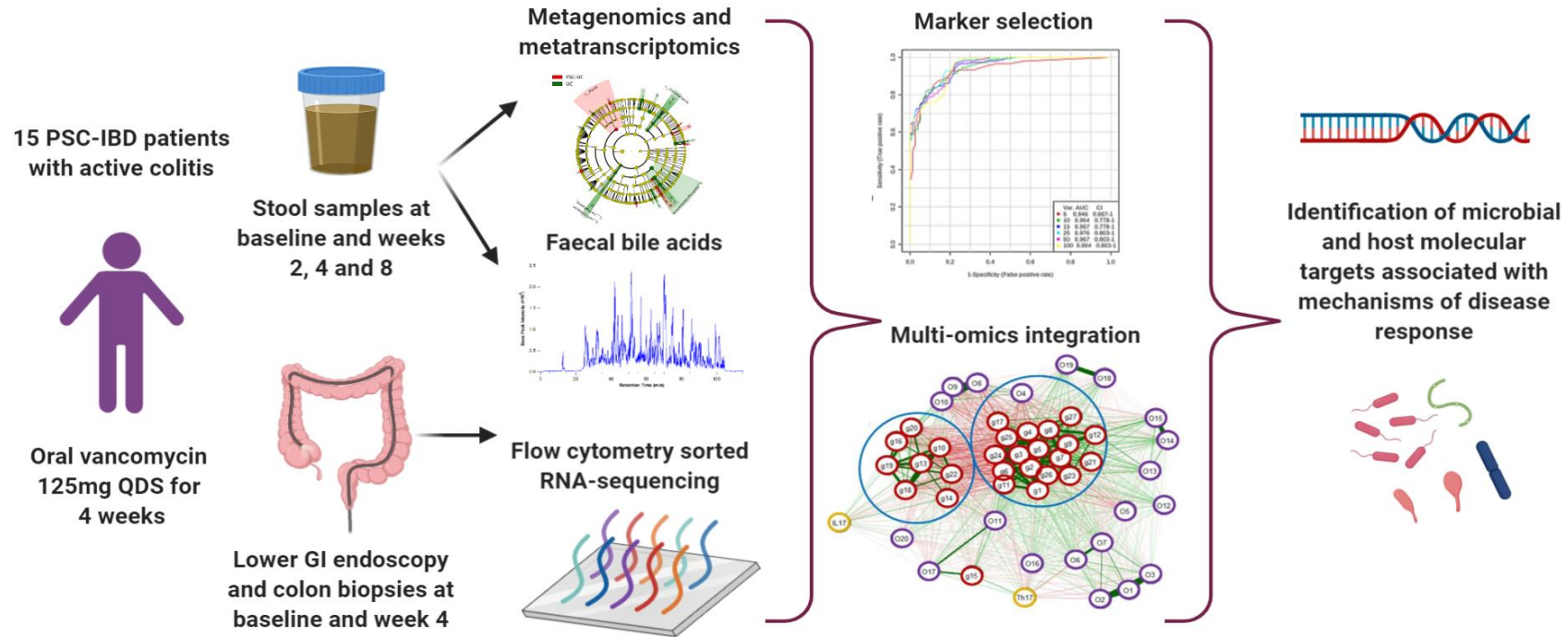
**TABLE 1.** Oral Vancomycin Effects on Clinical and Endoscopic UC Mayo Score

Patient	Liver Transplant for PSC	Prior Failed Treatment	Current OV, Total Dose/Day, mg	Additional Immunosuppression While on OV	UC Mayo Score Pre-OV Initiation (Clinical/Endoscopic/Physician Assessment)	UC Mayo Score Post-OV Initiation (Clinical/Endoscopic/Physician Assessment)	UC Mayo Score Reduction After OV Initiation	Longest Remission Time/Current Status
Female 19 y	Liver transplant	5-ASA 6-MP Methotrexate Budesonide Infliximab Adalimumab	250	Low-dose prednisone Tacrolimus Sirolimus	9 (5/2/2)	0 (0/0/0)	-9	30 mo Clinical Mayo 0 Endoscopic Mayo at 24 mo: 0
Female 31 y	PSC without cirrhosis	5-ASA	375	None	8 (5/2/1)	0 (0/0/0)	-8	24 mo Clinical Mayo 0 Endoscopic Mayo at 24 mo: 0
Female 52 y	Liver transplant	5-ASA 6-MP Vedolizumab	375	Tacrolimus Mycophenolate	11 (6/2/3)	0 (0/0/0)	-11	19 mo Clinical Mayo 0 However, underwent total colectomy for flat high-grade dysplasia
Female 44 y	Liver transplant x2	5-ASA 6-MP	375	Budesonide Tacrolimus	7 (3/2/2)	0 (0/0/0)	-7	36 mo Clinical Mayo 0 Endoscopic Mayo at 36 mo: 1
Male 39 y	Liver transplant	Infliximab Ustekinumab Vedolizumab	750	Low-dose prednisone	7 (3/2/2)	0 (0/0/0)	-7	14 mo Clinical Mayo 0
Female 33 y	Liver transplant	5-ASA 6-MP Infliximab Adalimumab Vedolizumab q8 wk	375	Vedolizumab	8 (4/2/2)	2(2/NA/0) fecal calprotectin normalized	-6	9 mo Clinical Mayo 0
Male 42 y	PSC without cirrhosis	5-ASA Infliximab Vedolizumab	375	Azathioprine	6 (2/2/2)	1 (0/1/0)	-5	12 mo Clinical Mayo 0 Endoscopy Mayo at 12 mo 1

Dao A et al. IBD. 2019

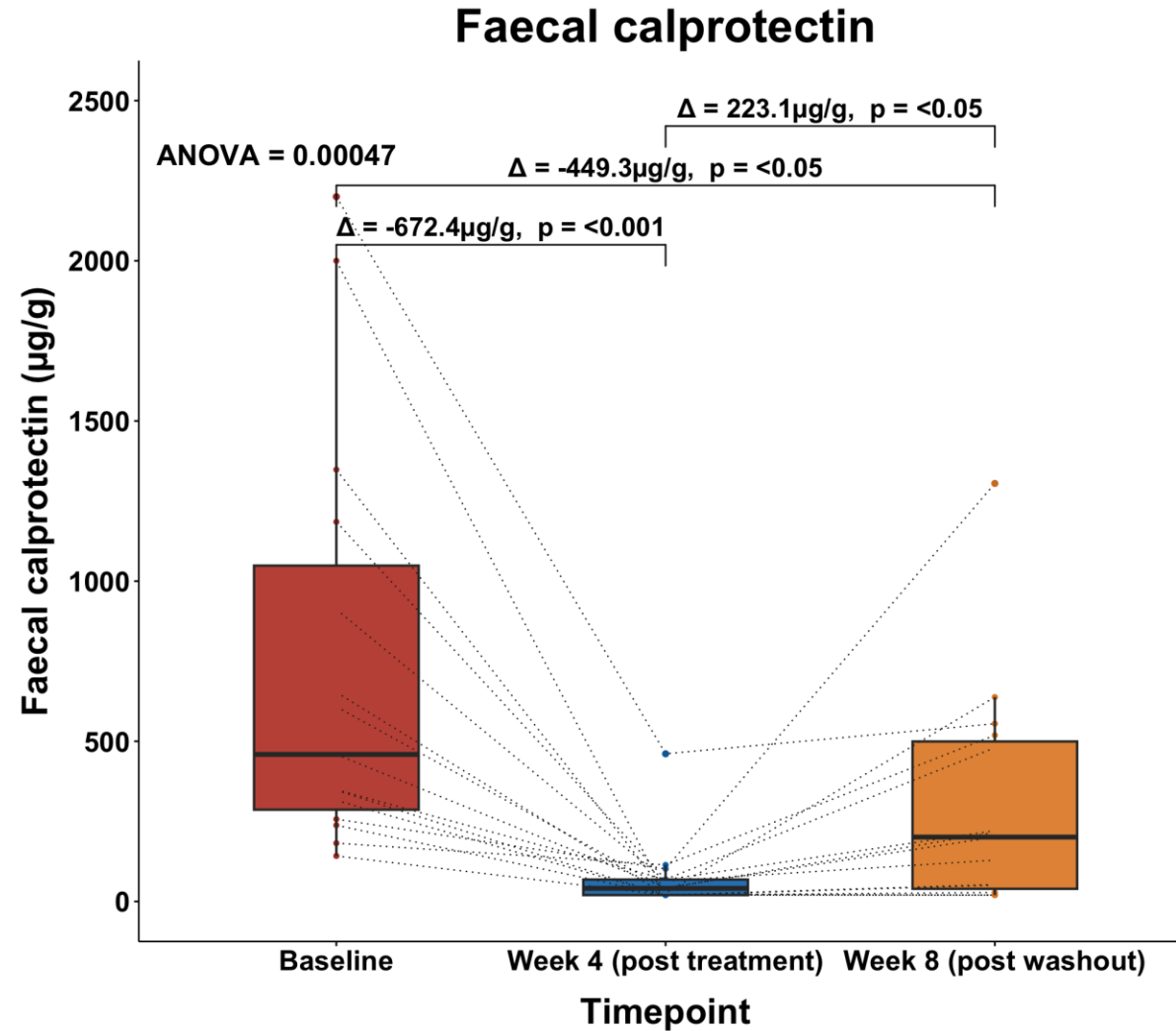
# PSC-Vancomycin study (NCT05376228)

## ECCO Grant 2021



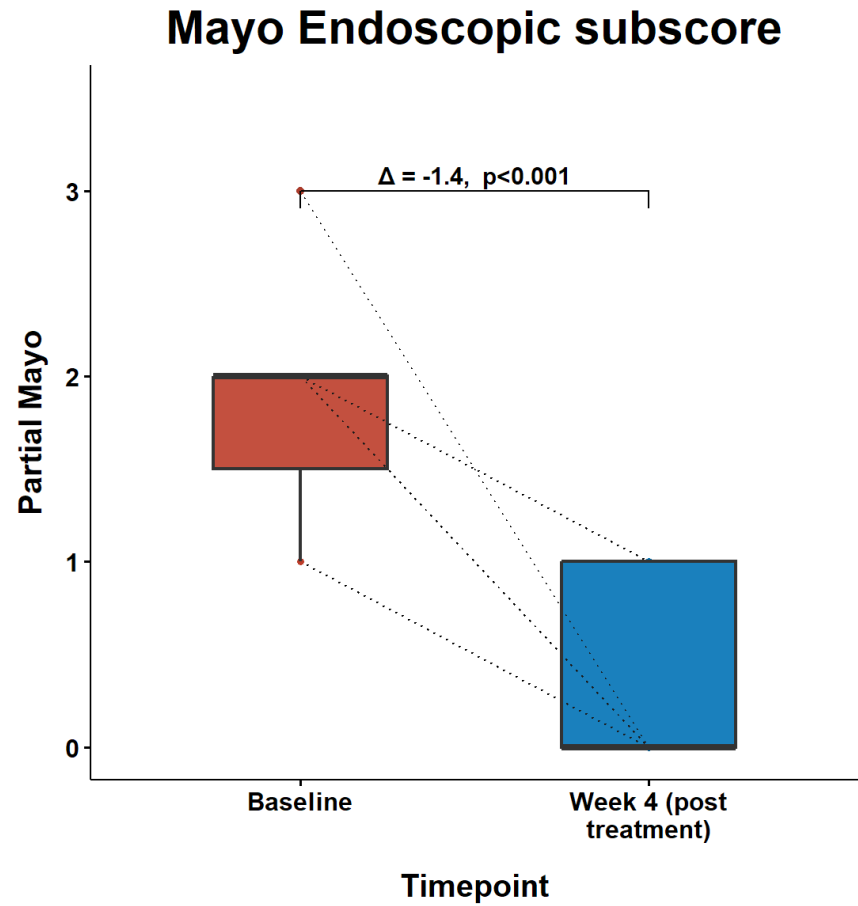
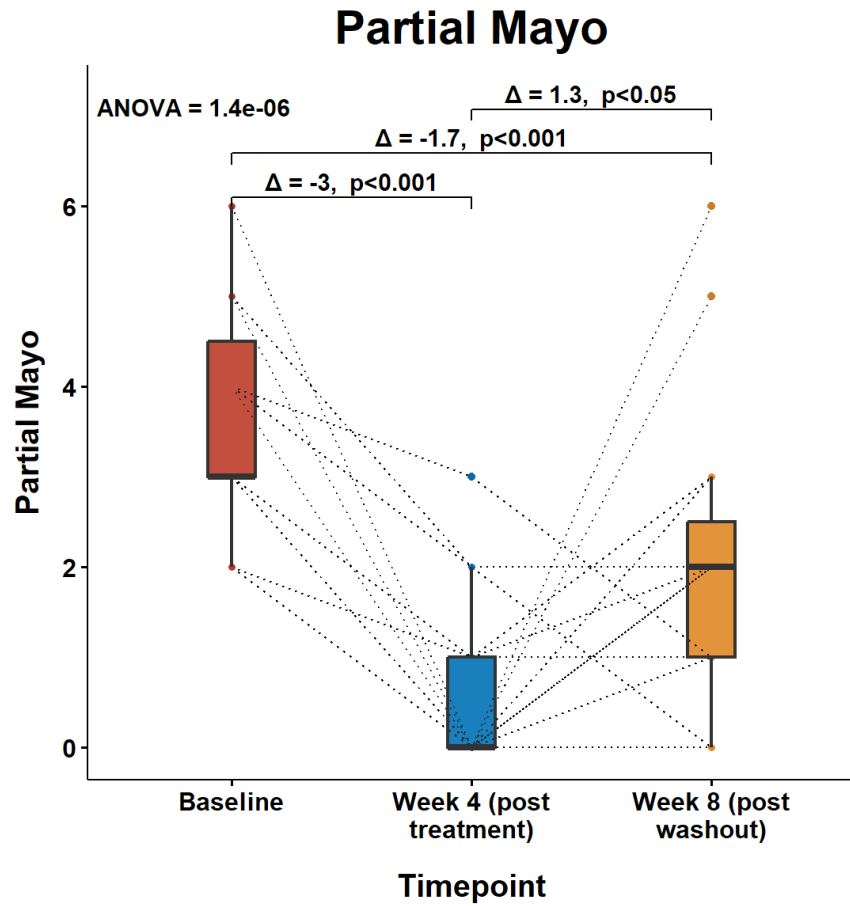
- Completed in Nov 2022
- Clinical and mucosal microbiota data so far
- Colonic RNA-seq, metagenomic, metatranscriptomics readouts by Jan 2024

# IBD activity – faecal calprotectin



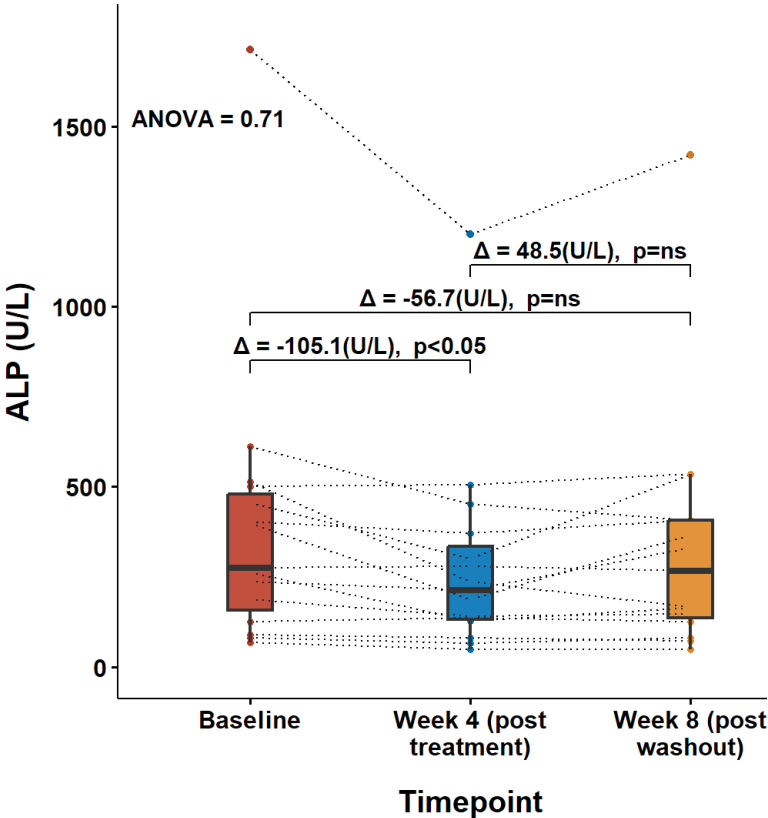


# Clinical outcomes – Mayo scores

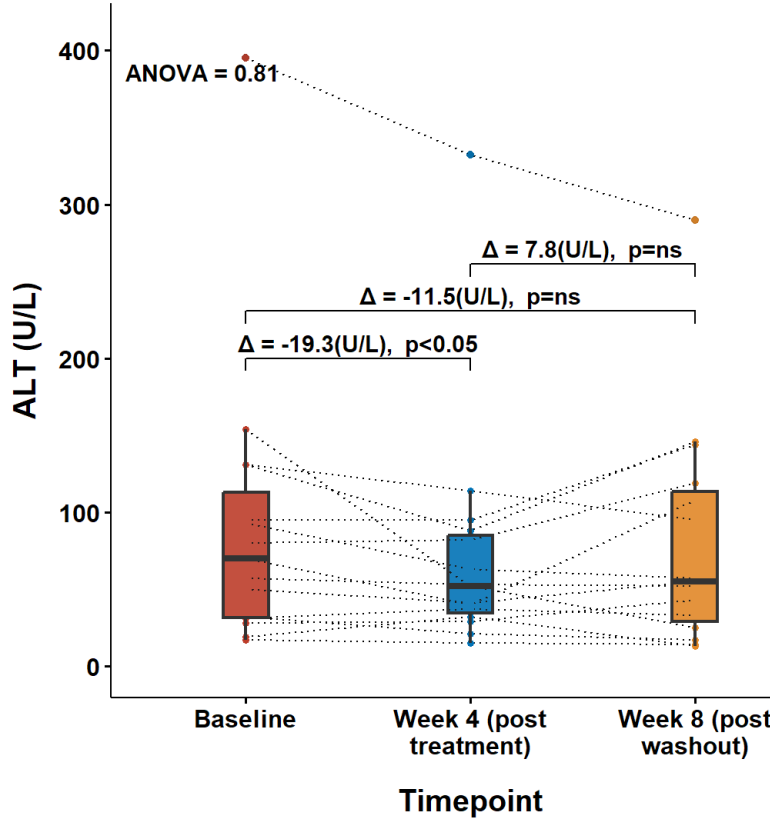


# Clinical outcomes – liver biochemistry

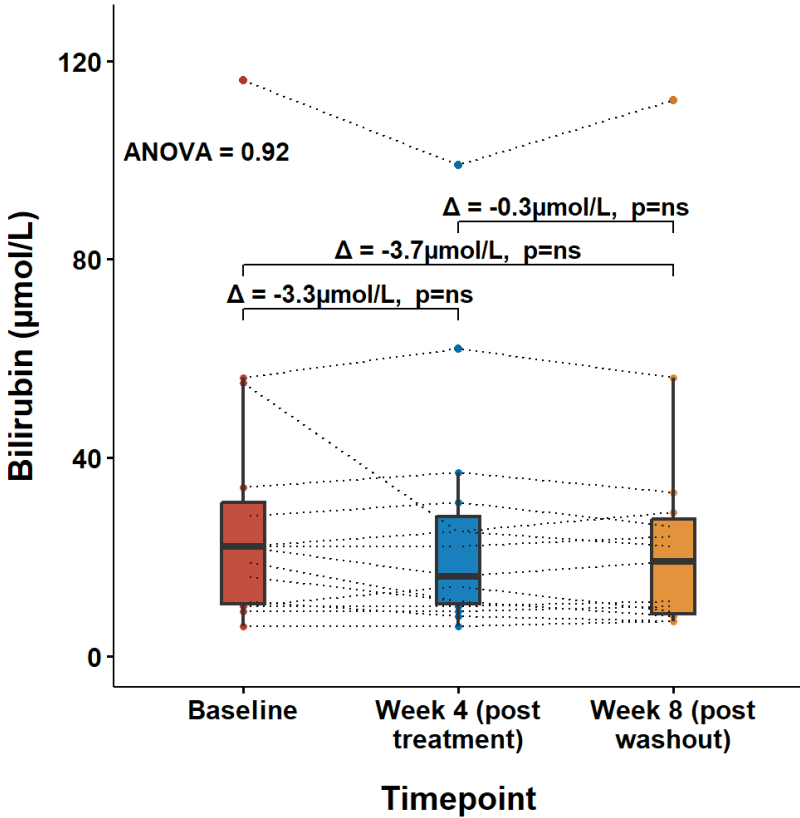
## Alkaline Phosphatase



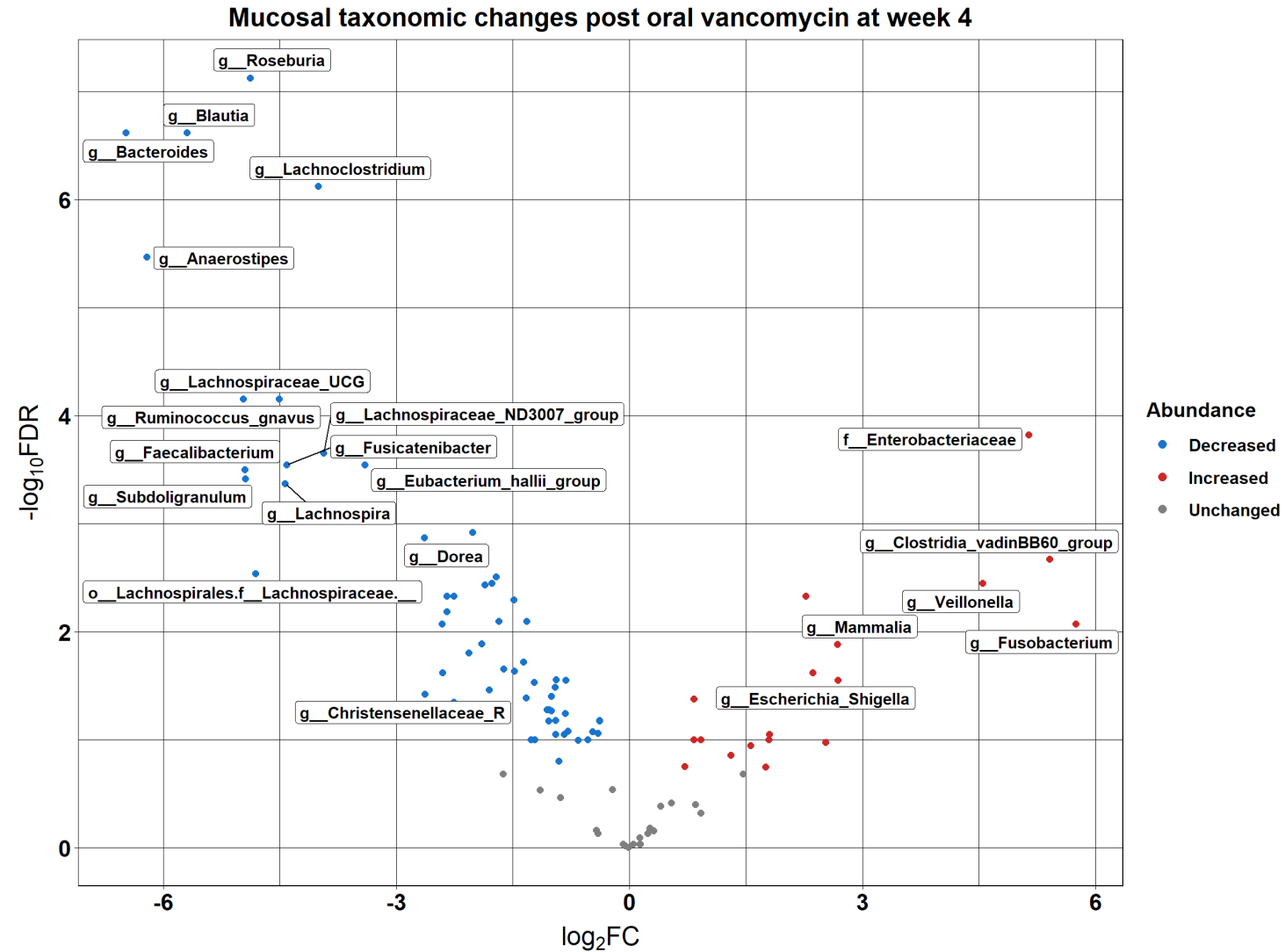
## Alanine Transaminase



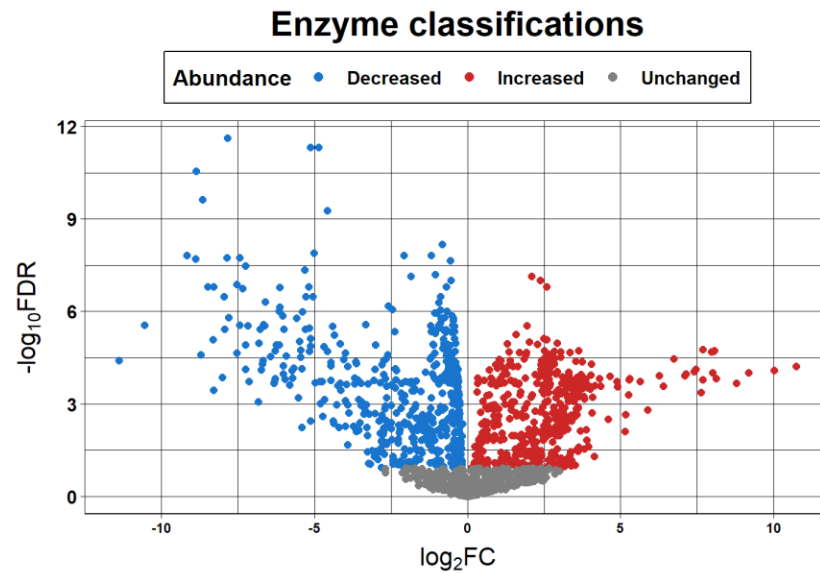
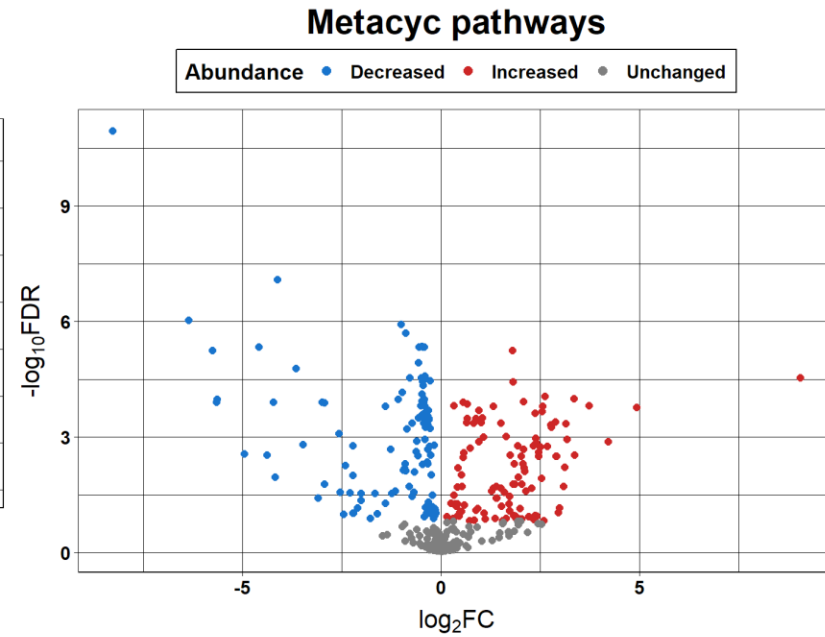
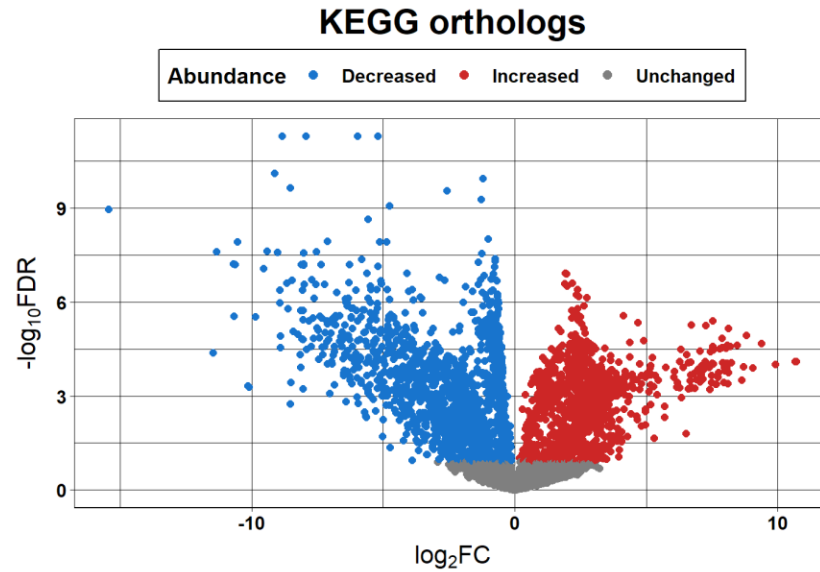
## Bilirubin



# Taxonomic changes post oral vancomycin



# Shifts in microbial metabolic pathways

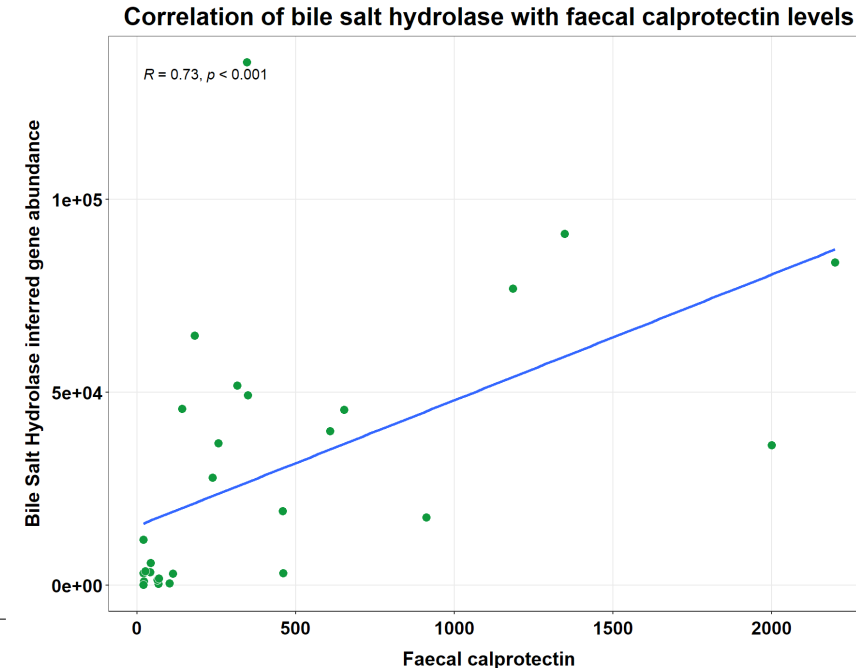
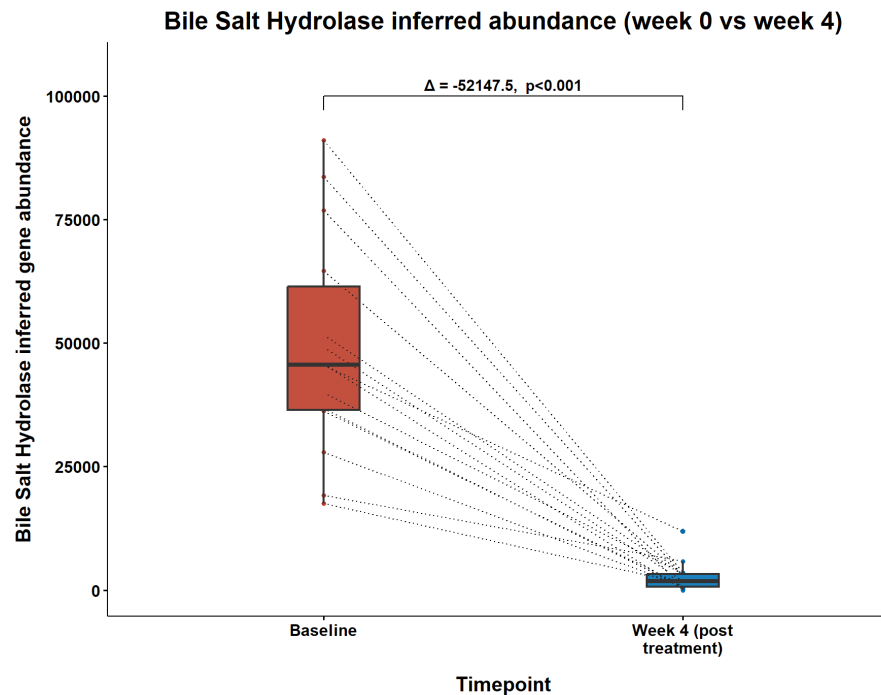


Summary of inferred functional changes\*

Functional classification	Upregulated	Downregulated	Unchanged
KEGG orthologs	2144	1677	1793
Enzyme classifications	590	585	609
MetaCyc pathways	124	122	102

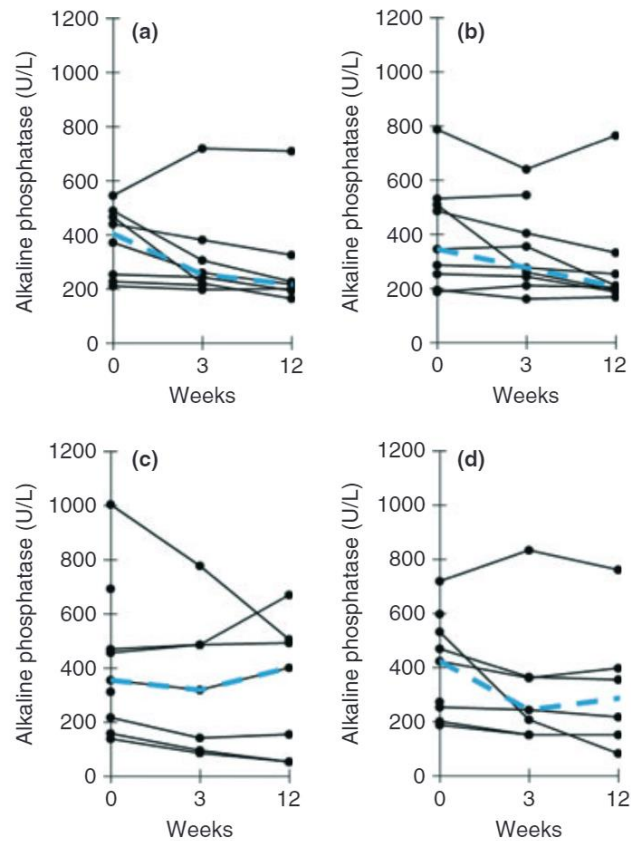
\*mucosal microbiota post oral vancomycin in patients with PSC-IBD

# The bile acid deconjugation pathway

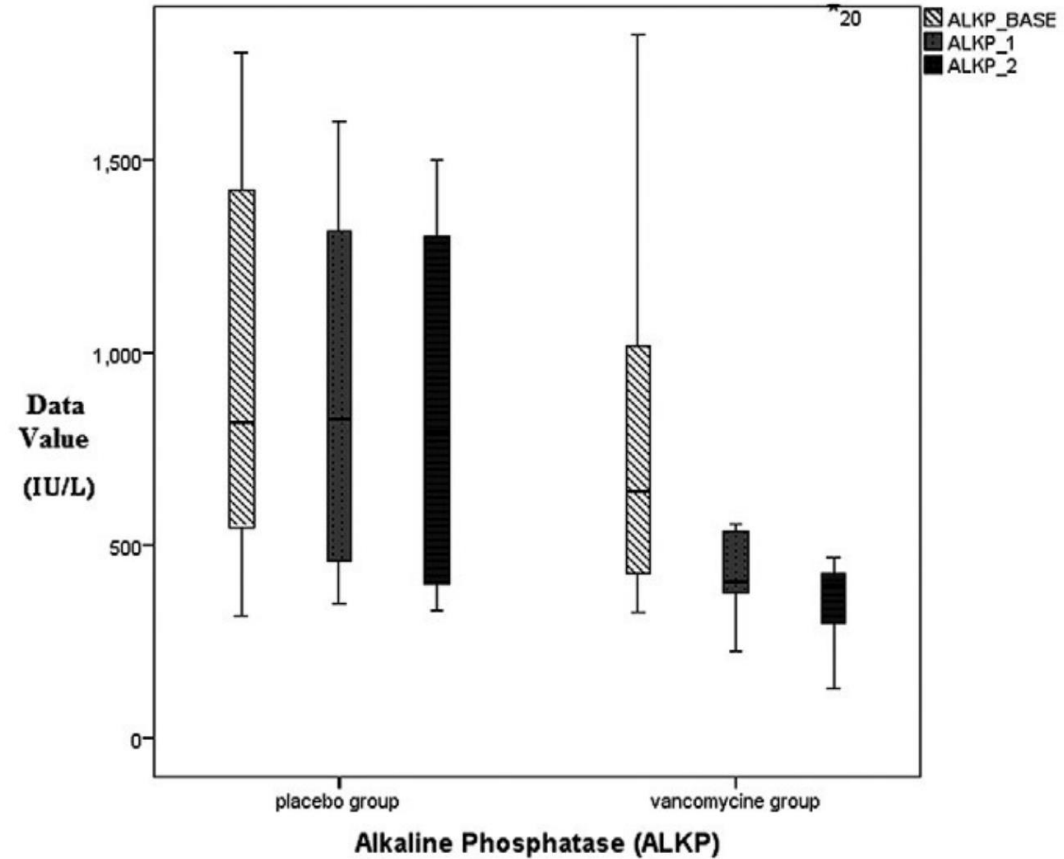


- Bile salt hydrolase (BSH) producing bacteria are knocked out
- BSH levels correlate strongly with faecal calprotectin
- BSH producers depletion cause of remission or just an effect of vancomycin?

# Oral vancomycin for PSC in adults

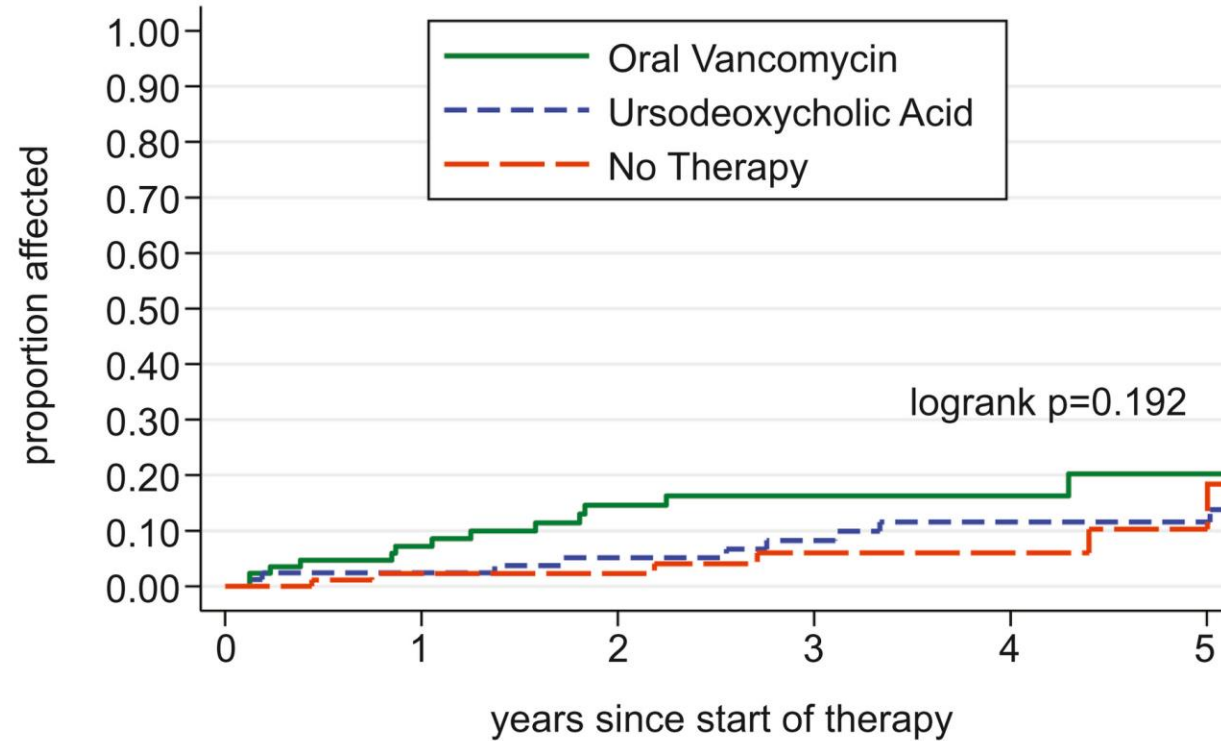


**Figure 1** | Change in alkaline phosphatase in low- and high-dose vancomycin and metronidazole groups: (a) low-dose vancomycin, (b) high-dose vancomycin, (c) low-dose metronidazole, (d) high-dose metronidazole. Decrease in alkaline phosphatase was significant in the low- and high-dose vancomycin groups ( $P = 0.03$  and  $P = 0.02$  respectively). Note: Bold, dashed lines represent the group medians. Outlier present (top curve) in low-dose vancomycin group.



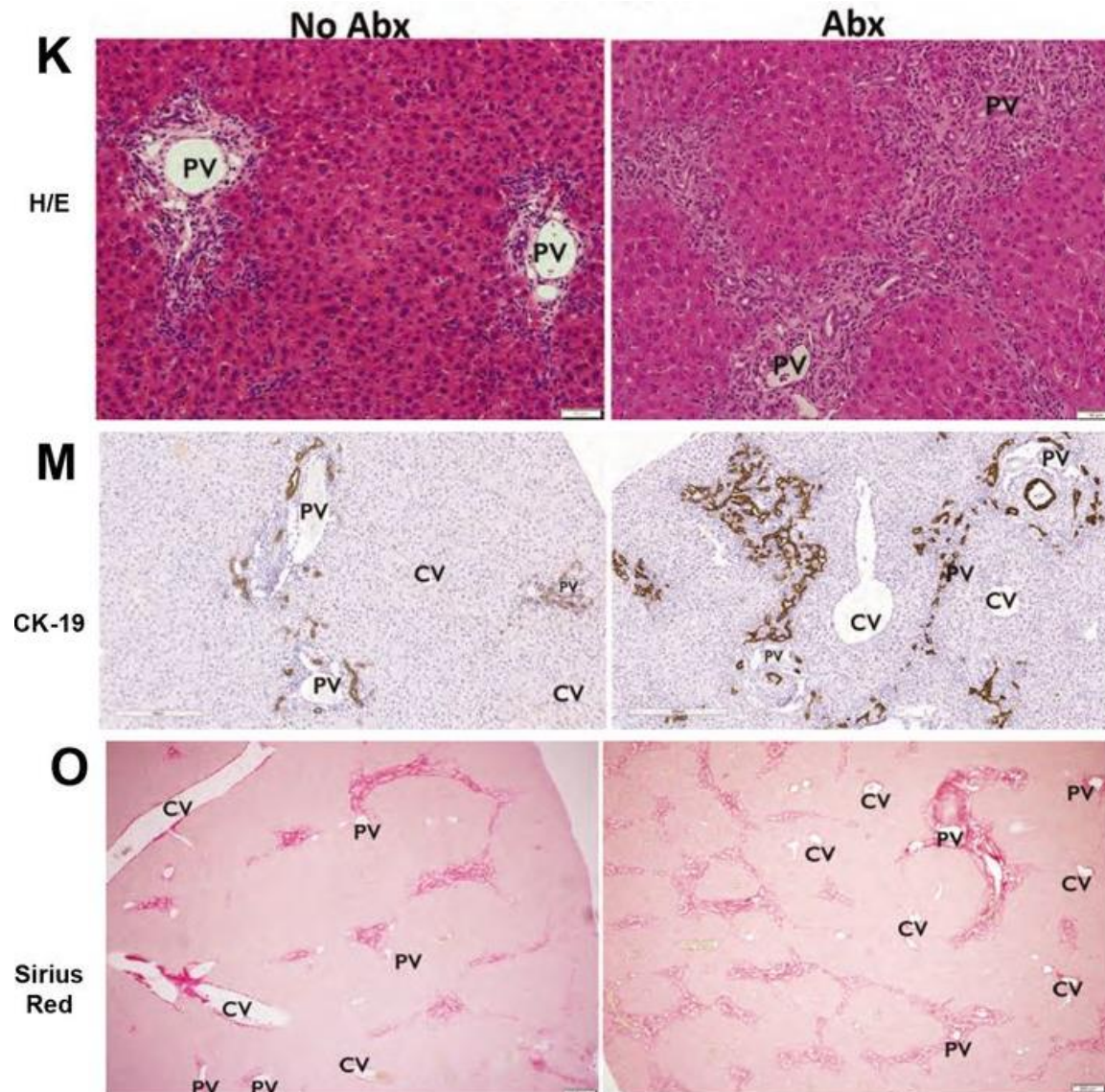
**Fig. 4.** Serum alkaline phosphatase (ALP) level box plot for the vancomycin and placebo groups during 3 moments of the study (baseline, first month, and third month)

# Is oral vancomycin beneficial for liver disease in PSC?



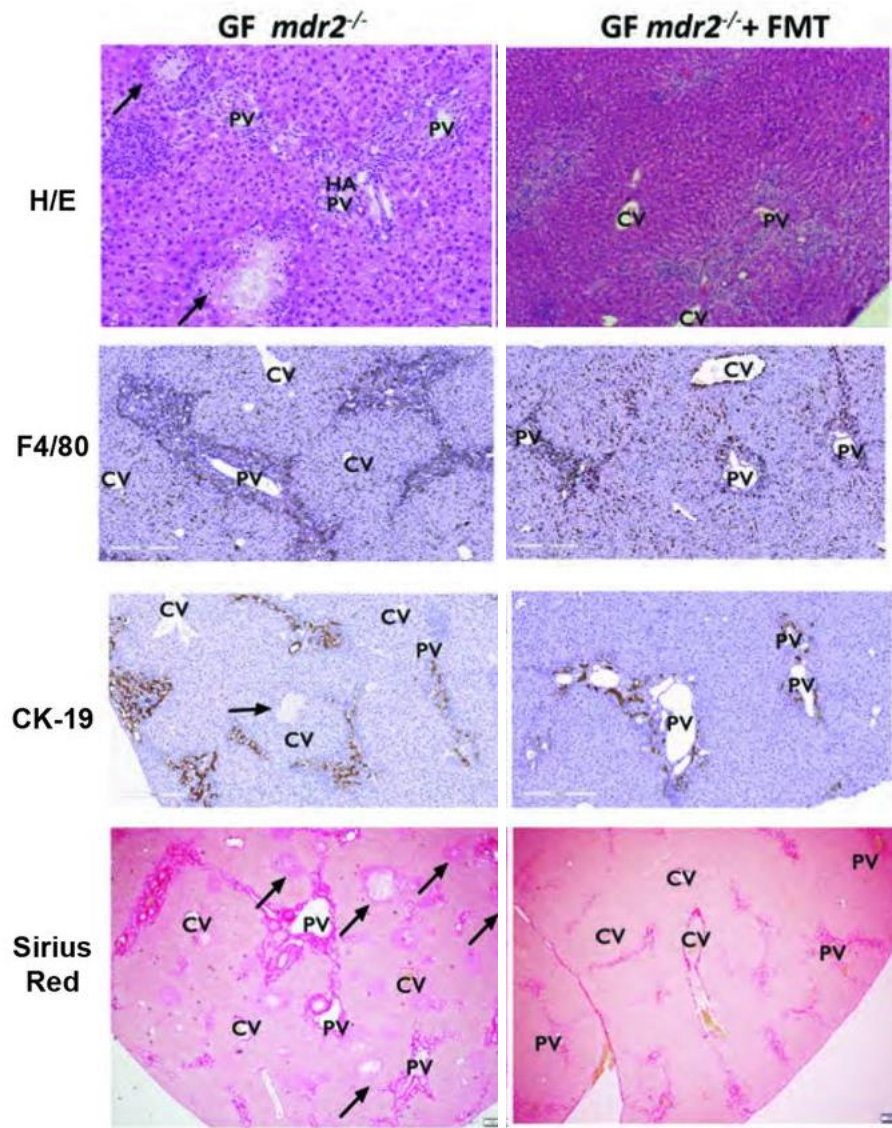
Number at risk						
Oral Vancomycin	88	70	51	32	22	14
Ursodeoxycholic Acid	88	77	66	56	50	37
No Therapy	88	85	60	44	27	21

# Oral vancomycin exacerbates biliary fibrosis in mice

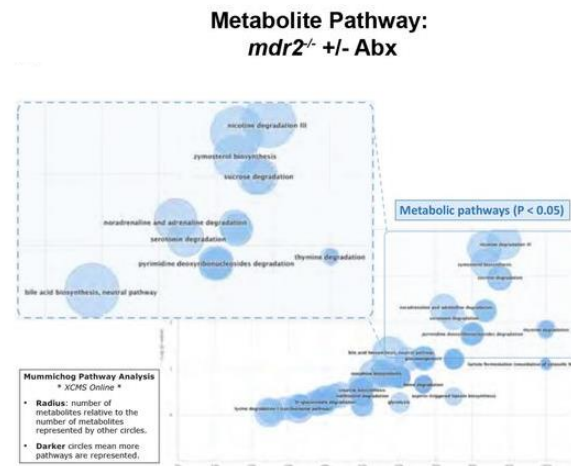
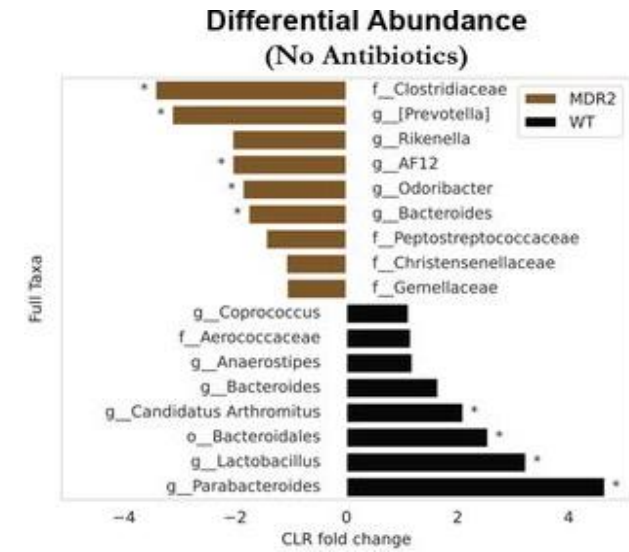
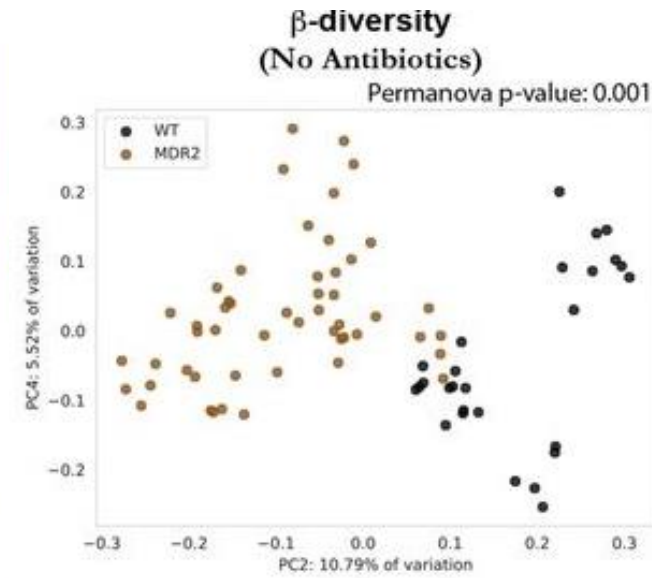




# Faecal microbiota transplantation attenuates biliary injury in an experimental model of sclerosing cholangitis



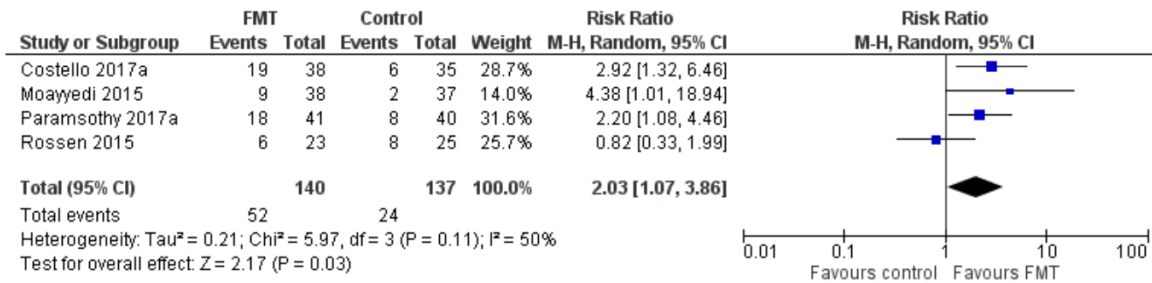
"Lachnospiraceae-enriched"



# Faecal microbiota transplantation (FMT) in u. colitis

- Meta-analysis: Remission in 28% patients in the donor FMT groups compared with 9% patients in the placebo groups

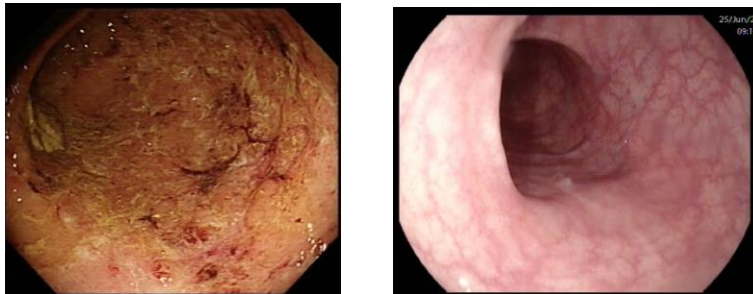
Figure 3. Forest plot of comparison: I Fecal microbiota transplantation versus control for participants with ulcerative colitis, outcome: I.I Clinical remission at 8 weeks.



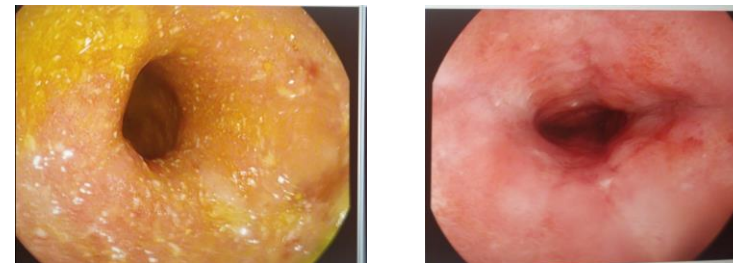
Imdad A et al. Cochrane Review. 2018

## STOP-Colitis pilot (FMT for UC – Birmingham, St Marks, Glasgow)

Patient A – < 1 year, on azathioprine

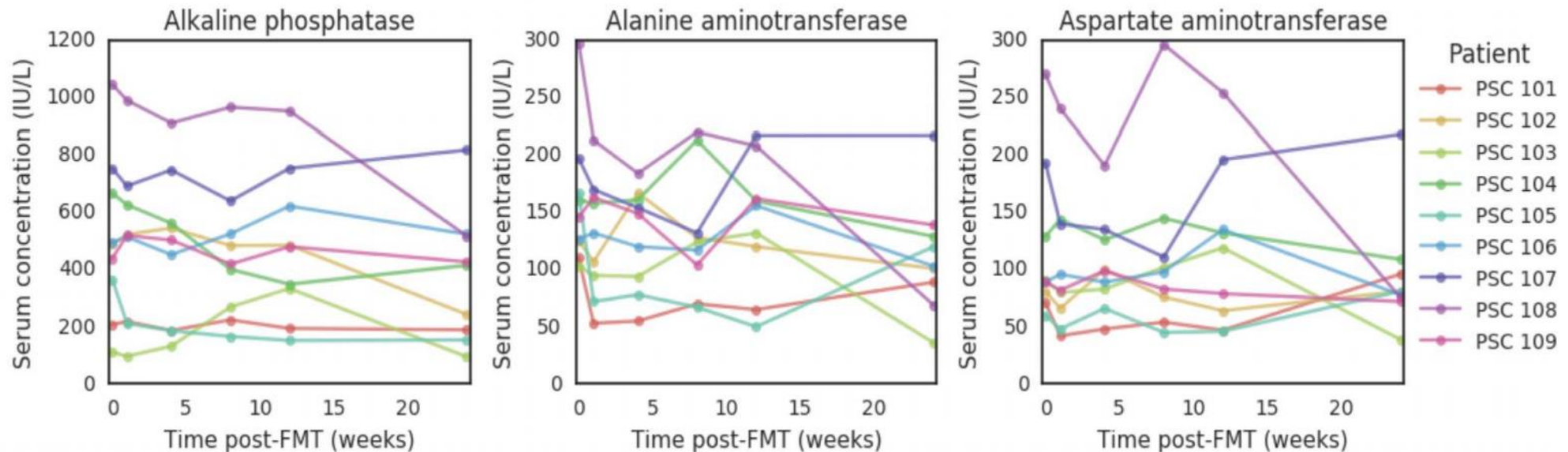


Patient B – > 5 years, failed 3 biologics



# FMT for PSC - Pilot

- 10 patients with PSC; primary outcome was safety
- 9 with IBD and 9 with large duct PSC
- Single dose of colonoscopically administered FMT

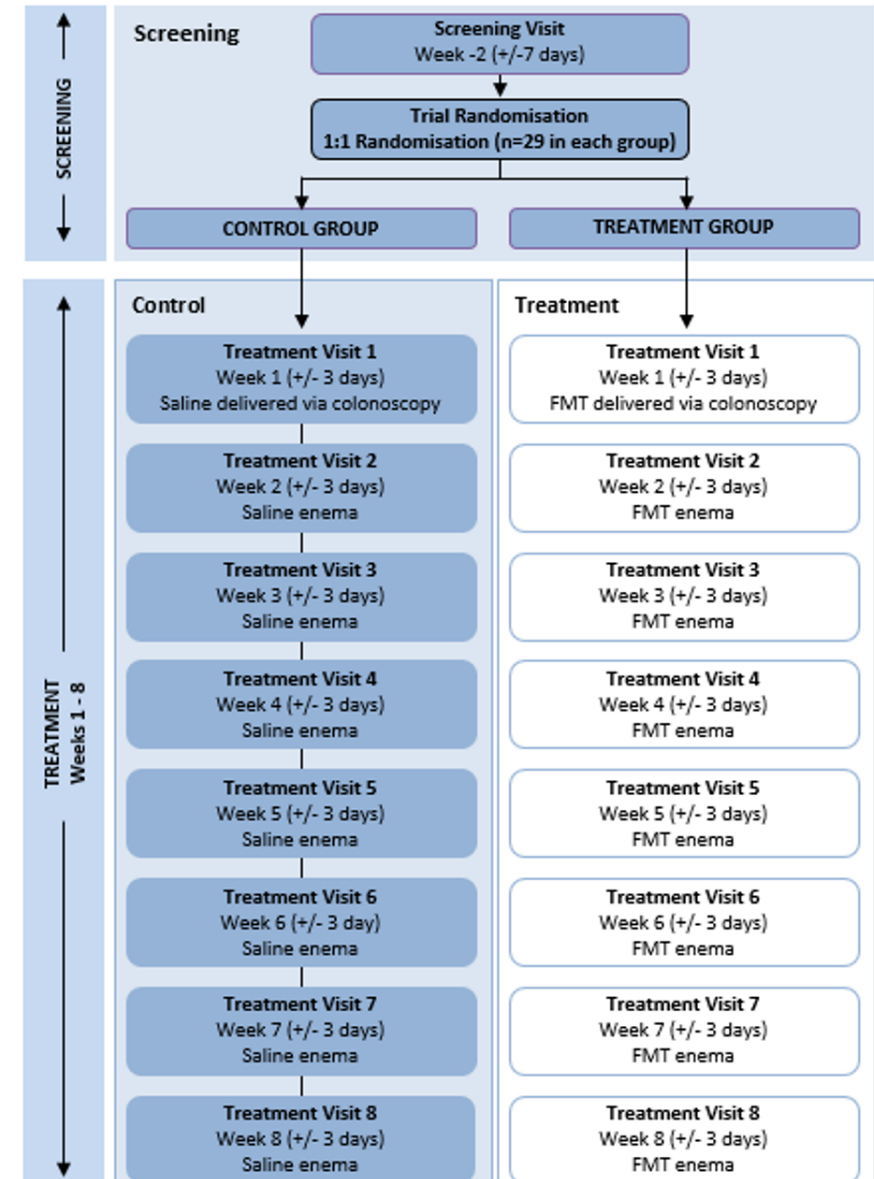


# FMT in PSC – FARGO RCT

**FARGO:** A randomised, phase IIa, multi-centre, (double blind) placebo-controlled trial of **FA**ecal microbiota transplantation in primary sclerosin**G** chol**an**gitis

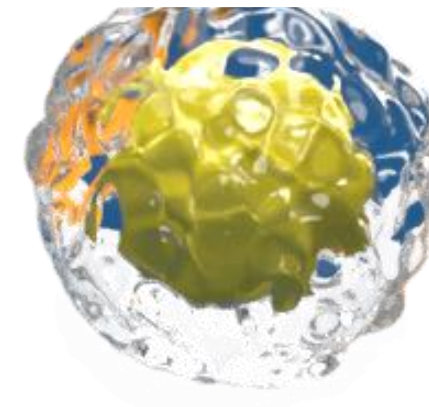
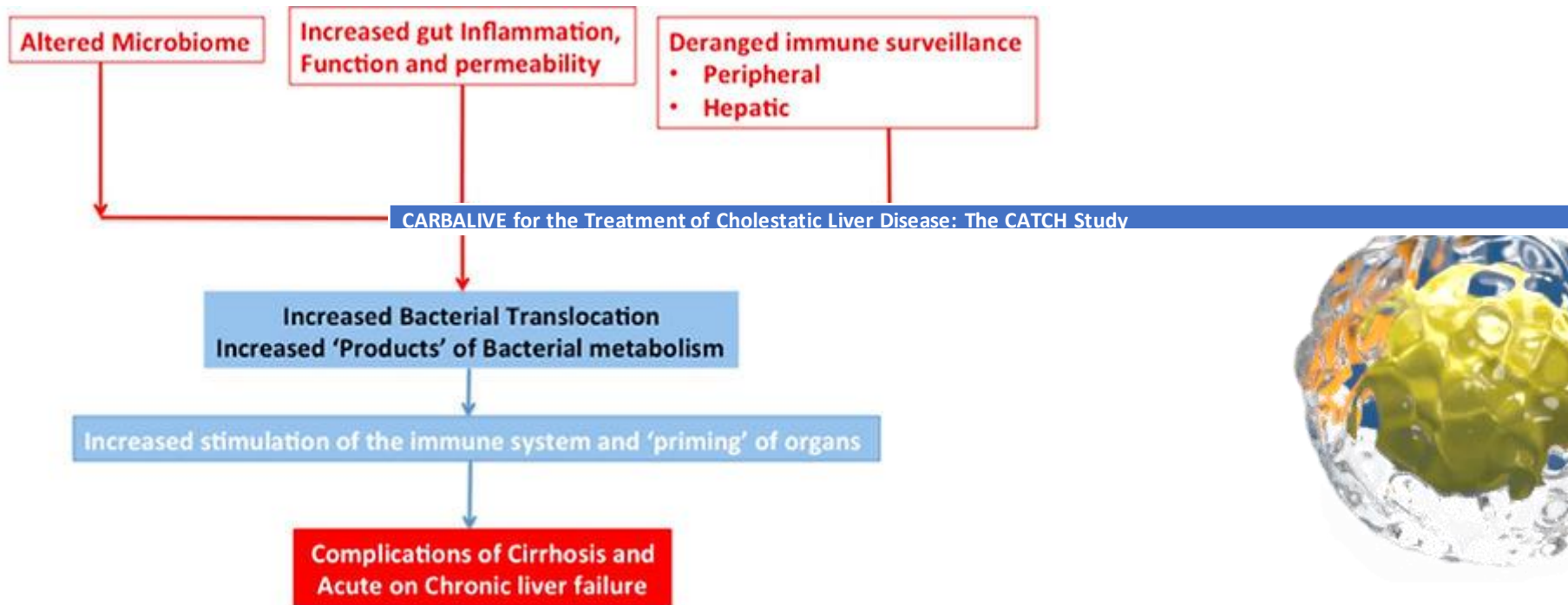
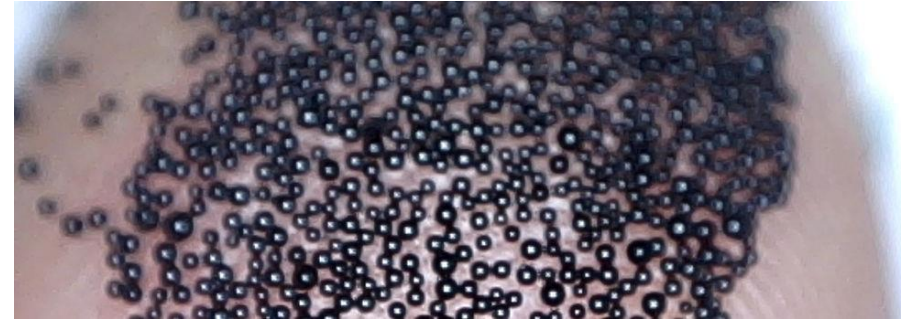
Grant awarded 2022  
Due to open in Q4 2023

*Multicentre, nationwide RCT*



# CARBALIVE for the Treatment of Advanced Cholestatic Disease: The CATCH Study

Funded March 2023



# UK PSC microbial therapeutics' programme

## Gut microbial 'depletion'

**Vancomycin; n=15**  
([NCT05376228](#))

Phase 2A; open-label  
125 mg QID for 4w, with 4w washout

**1° outcome:** IBD remission at 4w  
**2° outcomes:** IBD remission at 8w;  
liver biochemistry at 4w, safety (AMR)

**Translational outcomes:**  
colonic microbial, transcriptomic and  
metabolic profiles

PSC with active colitis

## Gut microbial 'replacement'

**Faecal microbiota  
transplantation; n=58**

Phase 2A; RCT (blinded)  
Colonic delivery, once weekly for 8w

**1° outcome:** ALP reduction at 48w  
**2° outcomes:** liver biochemistry, ELF  
PROs, ProC3/C5, C4M, elastography

**Translational outcomes:**  
colonic microbial, transcriptomic,  
mucosal immune cell phenotyping,  
metabolic profiles

PSC-IBD without  
advanced fibrosis

## Reduced gut 'toxin adsorption'

**CARBALIVE; n=12**

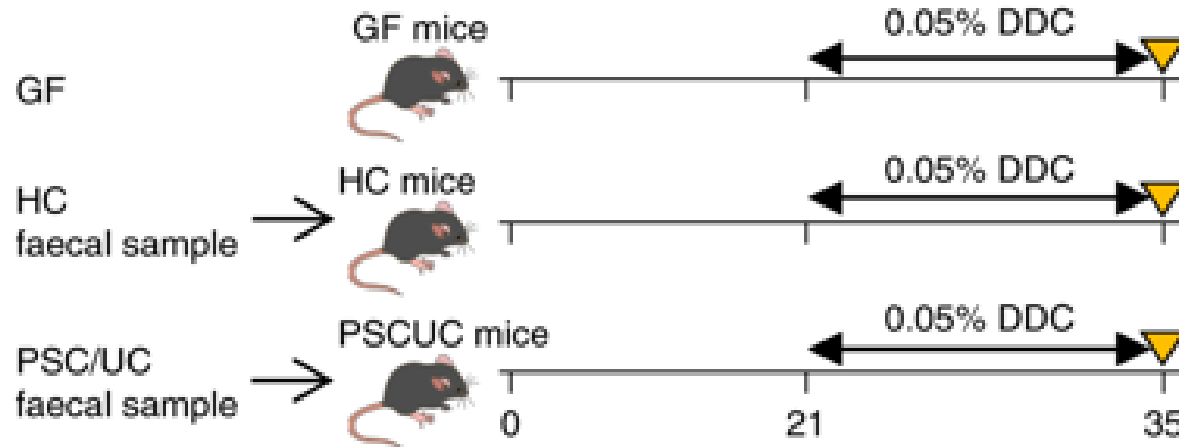
Phase 2A; open-label  
Seq. dose finding: 8g and 12g OD

**1° outcome:** safety; 12w  
**2° outcomes:** liver biochemistry, ELF  
PROs, ProC3/C5, C4M

**Translational outcomes:**  
colonic microbial, transcriptomic,  
metabolic profiles

PSC-IBD with mod-  
advanced fibrosis

# Faecal matter transfer from patients induces colitis and biliary fibrosis in mice



Specific bacterial species associated with PSC/UC:

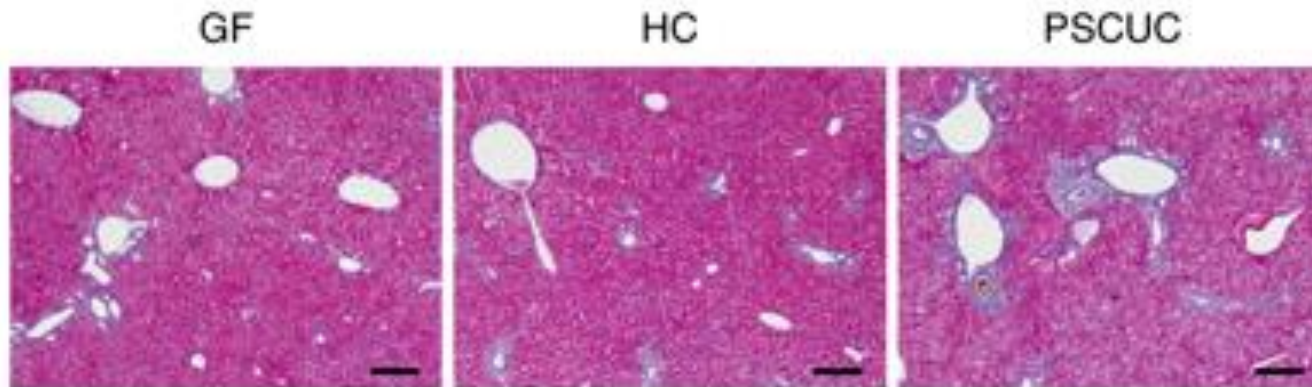
- *K. pneumoniae*
- *P. mirabilis*
- *E. gallinarum*

RESEARCH

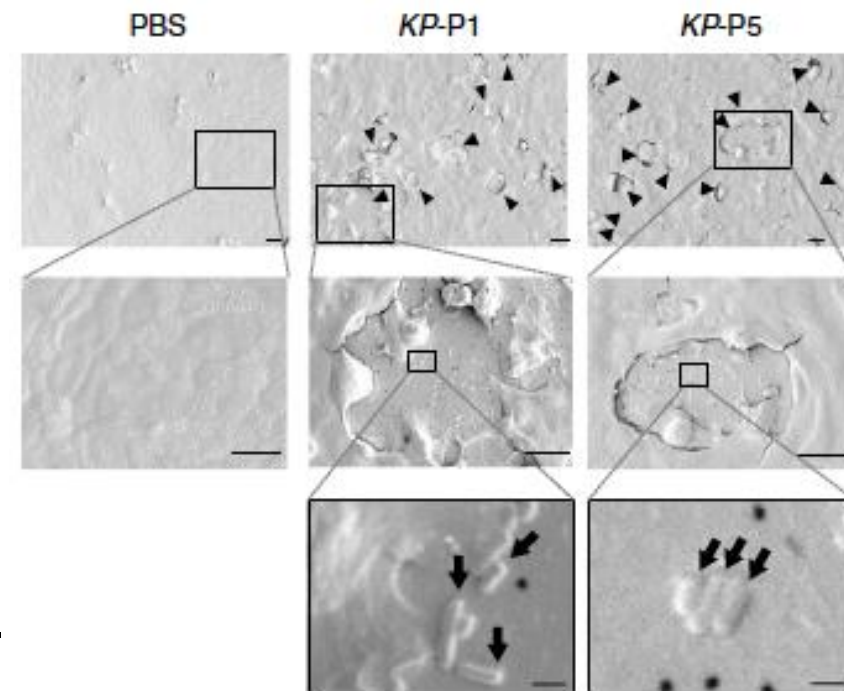
MICROBIOTA

## Translocation of a gut pathobiont drives autoimmunity in mice and humans

S. Manfredo Vieira,<sup>1</sup> M. Hiltensperger,<sup>1</sup> V. Kumar,<sup>2</sup> D. Zegarra-Ruiz,<sup>1</sup> C. Dehner,<sup>1</sup> N. Khan,<sup>1</sup> F. R. C. Costa,<sup>1\*</sup> E. Tiniakou,<sup>1†</sup> T. Greiling,<sup>1‡</sup> W. Ruff,<sup>1</sup> A. Barbieri,<sup>3</sup> C. Kriegel,<sup>1</sup> S. S. Mehta,<sup>4</sup> J. R. Knight,<sup>4</sup> D. Jain,<sup>3</sup> A. L. Goodman,<sup>5</sup> M. A. Krieger<sup>1,2§</sup>

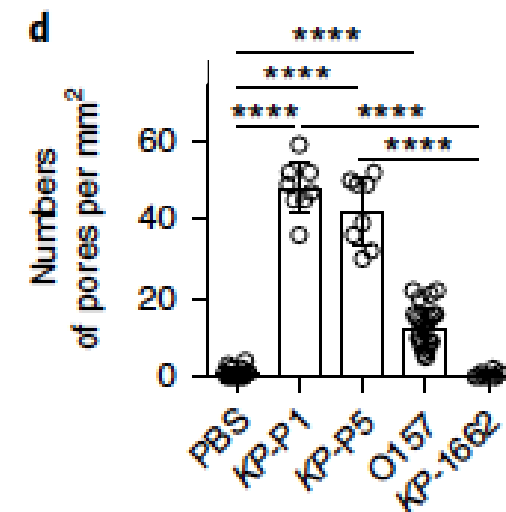


- *Klebsiella pneumoniae* (*Kp*) in stool of patients with PSC-IBD
- Transplanted *Kp* to germ-free mice
- *Kp* directly ruptured the intestinal epithelia with translocation, endotoxemia, and liver damage
- *Kp* was associated with susceptibility to Th17-mediated hepatobiliary injury
- Antibiotic therapy ameliorated *Kp* induced immune responses.



**Is *Kp* relevant to human PSC?  
Therapeutic approach?**

**Assis DN et al. Yale**





# Primary sclerosing cholangitis industry drug development pipeline

Vedolizumab <b>Takeda Evotec</b> <i>a4b7 integrin agonist</i>			Volixibat potassium <b>Mirum Pharmaceuticals</b> <i>IBAT inhibitor</i>	
			Berberine ursodeoxycholate <b>HighTide Therapeutics</b> <i>Unspecified</i>	
GRI-0124 <b>GRI Bio</b> <i>NKT cell stimulant</i>	HM-15211 <b>Hanmi Pharmaceutical</b> <i>GLP-1/GIP/GCG agonist</i>	SCO-240 <b>Scohia Pharma</b> <i>SSTR5 antagonist</i>	CM-101 <b>Chemomab/Abzena</b> <i>CCL24 antagonist</i>	
H-01 <b>Halo Biosciences</b> <i>Hyaluronan synthase inhibitor</i>	Metabolic and infectious disease therapy <b>CD3 Centre for Drug Design</b> <i>IBAT inhibitor</i>	A-3907 <b>Albireo Pharma</b> <i>IBAT inhibitor</i>	HK-660S <b>Curome Biosciences</b> <i>NAD+ modulator</i>	
Rock2 Inhibitor <b>Angion Biomedica</b> <i>ROCK2 inhibitor</i>	odevixibat <b>Albireo Pharma/Jadeite Medicines</b> <i>IBAT inhibitor</i>	CS-0159 <b>Cascade Pharmaceuticals</b> <i>FXR agonist</i>	Orbcell-C <b>Orbsen Therapeutics</b> <i>IV MSC therapy</i>	
ST-003 <b>SteroTherapeutics</b> <i>GAL antagonist</i>	PSC therapy <b>Engitix Therapeutics</b> <i>Unspecified</i>	HPG-1860 <b>Hepagene Therapeutics</b> <i>FXR agonist</i>	PLN-74809 <b>Pilant Therapeutics</b> <i>a1b6 integrin antagonist</i>	
BX-002 <b>BiomX</b> <i>Microbiome modulator</i>	PV-201 <b>Parvus Therapeutics</b> <i>Unspecified</i>	INVA-8001 <b>Invea Therapeutics</b> <i>Immunosuppressant</i>	Seladelpar <b>CymaBay Therapeutics</b> <i>PPAR-d agonists</i>	Norursodeoxycholic acid <b>Dr. Falk Pharma/Eisai</b> <i>Cholesterol inhibitor</i>
Elafibranor <b>Genfit Ipsen</b> <i>PPAR-<math>\alpha</math>/PPAR-d agonist</i>	setanaxib <b>Calliditas Therapeutics</b> <i>NADPH oxidase 1/4 inhibitor</i>	STP-707 <b>Sirnaomics</b> <i>TGF-<math>\beta</math>1/Cox-2 gene inhibition</i>	Vidofludimus calcium <b>Immunic 4SC</b> <i>DHODH inhibitor</i>	Cilofexor <b>Gilead/Phenex</b> <i>FXR agonist</i>
Preclinical		Phase I	Phase II	Phase III