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Influence and reliance of *Chlamydia trachomatis* on host glucose metabolism

Maimouna Djamila Sadio N'Gadjaga

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Sorbonne Université

Ecole doctorale Complexité du Vivant

Unité de Biologie Cellulaire de l'Infection Microbienne

Influence and reliance of *Chlamydia trachomatis* on host glucose metabolism

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Thèse de doctorat de Microbiologie Cellulaire

Dirigée par Agathe SUBTIL

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Abbreviations

2-DG	2-Deoxy-D-Glucose
ADP	Adenosine Diphosphate
Aldo A	Aldolase A
ATP	Adenosine Triphosphate
CDC	Center For Disease Control
CEP170	Centrosomal Protein 170 Kda
COMC	Chlamydial Outer Membrane Complex
CPAF	Chlamydial Protease-Like Activity Factor
CydAB	Cytochrome Bd Oxidase
cyt c	Cytochrome C
Drp1	Dynamin Protein Related 1
DTT	Dithiothreitol
EB	Elementary Body
ECAR	Extracellular Acidification Rates
F2,6BP	Fructose-2,6-Bisphosphate
F6P	Fructose-6-Phosphate
F6P	Fructose-6-Phosphate
FADH+	Flavin Adenine Dinucleotide
FADH2	Reduced Flavin Adenine Dinucleotide
FASII	Type II Fatty Acid Synthesis
FCCP	Carbonyl Cyanide-4 (Trifluoromethoxy) Phenylhydrazone
G1P	Glucose-1-Phosphate
G3P	Glyceraldehyde-3-Phosphate
G6P	Glucose-6-Phosphate
G6PD	Glucose-6-Phosphate Dehydrogenase
GFPT	Glucosamine-Fructose-6-Phosphate Amidotransferase
GLUT1	Glucose Transporter 1
GLUT3	Glucose Transporter 3
GSH	Glutathione
GTP	Guanosine Triphosphate
HBP	Hexosamine Biosynthesis Pathway
HIF-1	Hypoxia Inducible Factor 1
HK	Hexokinase
IPAM	Inclusion Protein Acting On Microtubules
LDHA	Lactate Dehydrogenase A
LGV	Lymphogranuloma Venereum
mDAP	Meso-Diaminopimelate
MLC2	Myosin Light Chain II
MLCK	Myosin Light Chain Kinase

MTOC	Microtubule Organizing Center
MYPT1	Myosin Phosphatase Targeting Subunit 1
Na⁺-NQR	Sodium-Dependent NADH Dehydrogenase
NAD⁺	Nicotinamide Adenine Dinucleotide
NADH,H⁺	Reduced Nicotinamide Adenine Dinucleotide
NADPH	Nicotinamide Adenine Dinucleotide Phosphate
O₂	Oxygen
OCR	Oxygen Consumption Rates
OxPhos	Oxidative Phosphorylation
PDH	Pyruvate Dehydrogenase
PDK1	Pyruvate Dehydrogenase Kinase 1
PDPK1	3-Phosphoinositide-Dependent Protein Kinase-1
PEP	Phosphoenolpyruvate
PFK1	Phosphofructokinase-1
PFKFB	Phosphofructo-2-Kinase/Fructose-2,6-Bisphosphatases
PGM	Phosphoglucomutase
PI3K	Phosphoinositide-3-Kinase
PK	Pyruvate Kinase
PPAT	Phosphoribosyl Pyrophosphate Amidotransferase
PPP	Pentose Phosphate Pathway
PRA	5'-Phosphoribosylamine
PRPP	Phosphoribosyl Pyrophosphate
PRRs	Pathogen Recognition Receptors
R5P	Ribose-5-Phosphate
RB	Reticulate Body
ROS	Reactive Oxygen Species
SdhA-C	Succinate Dehydrogenase
SFKs	Src Family Kinases
SMVT	Sodium Multivitamin Transporter
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
T2S	Type 2 Secretion
T3S	Type 3 Secretion
TCA	Tricarboxylic Acid
TG2	Transglutaminase 2
TKT	Transketolase
UDP-GlcNAc	UDP-N-Acetylglucosamine
VDAC	Voltage Dependent Anion Channel
WASP	Wiskott-Aldrich Syndrome Protein
WHO	World Health Organisation

Abstract

Microorganisms with an intracellular development lifestyle exert a strong pressure on the metabolism of their host, since they obtain all their nutrients from its cytoplasm. The obligate intracellular bacteria *Chlamydia trachomatis* provides an extreme illustration of this: they rely on the host not only for the supply of glucose, their main carbon source, but probably also, at least partially, for the supply of the energy currency generated through glucose catabolism, adenosine triphosphate (ATP). These bacteria undergo a particular biphasic developmental cycle: the infectious bacteria, or elementary bodies (EBs), adhere to the membrane of a host cell, typically of the epithelium of the genital tract, and trigger their internalization. Once inside a membrane-bound compartment, called an inclusion, the bacteria express a new set of genes and convert to reticulate bodies (RBs). This only replicative form of the bacteria has a higher metabolism than EBs. Bacteria multiply in the inclusion several times until RBs convert back to EBs, which, once released, can initiate a new infectious cycle. The metabolic pressure exerted by the bacteria on their host thus evolves with time. However, whether infection modulates the metabolism of its host, and the degree of the reliance of individual steps of the bacterial development cycle on host metabolism, remain largely unknown. In this work, using primary epithelial cells and a cell line of non-tumoral origin, we showed that the two main ATP producing pathways of the host, glycolysis and oxidative phosphorylation, remained fairly stable during infection. These results suggest that, against our expectations, there is no significant shift of the host metabolism towards glycolysis during infection. Inhibition of either pathway strongly reduced the capacity of the bacteria to undergo a developmental cycle. While EBs showed some degree of energetic autonomy in the synthesis of the first proteins expressed at the onset of infection, a functional glycolysis was necessary for the establishment of early inclusions, while oxidative phosphorylation is less needed at this early stage of development. The relative importance of the two pathways to sustain the initial steps of infection correlates with their relative contribution in maintaining ATP levels in epithelial cells, glycolysis being the main contributor. Altogether, this work confirms the dependence of the bacteria on the ATP production capacity of the host. However, ATP consumption by the bacteria appears to be fairly balanced with the normal production capacity of the host, and the autonomous production capacity of the bacteria, so that no major shift in host metabolism is required to meet bacterial needs.

Résumé

Les microorganismes à développement intracellulaire exercent une pression importante sur le métabolisme de leur hôte, car ils obtiennent tous leurs nutriments de son cytoplasme. Les bactéries intracellulaires obligatoires *Chlamydia trachomatis* en sont une illustration extrême : elles dépendent de leur hôte non seulement pour l'apport en glucose, leur source principale de carbone, mais probablement aussi, au moins partiellement, pour l'obtention de la monnaie énergétique issue du catabolisme du glucose, l'adénosine triphosphate (ATP). Ces bactéries effectuent un cycle de développement biphasique: les bactéries infectieuses, ou corps élémentaires (EBs), adhèrent à la membrane d'une cellule hôte, typiquement une cellule épithéliale du tractus génital, et provoquent leur internalisation. Une fois à l'intérieur d'un compartiment délimité par une membrane, appelé inclusion, les bactéries expriment un nouveau jeu de gènes et se transforment en corps réticulés (RBs). Le métabolisme des RBs, qui constitue la seule forme répliquative des bactéries, est plus élevé que celui des EBs. Les bactéries se multiplient plusieurs fois dans l'inclusion jusqu'à ce que les RBs se convertissent en EBs, qui, une fois relargués de la cellule-hôte, peuvent initier un nouveau cycle infectieux. La pression métabolique exercée par les bactéries sur leur hôte évolue donc tout au cours du temps. Savoir si l'infection module le métabolisme de son hôte, et dans quelle mesure les différentes étapes du cycle de développement dépendent de ce métabolisme, demeurent des questions ouvertes. Dans ce travail, en utilisant des cellules épithéliales primaires et une lignée cellulaire d'origine non tumorale, nous avons montré que les deux voies métaboliques principales pour la production d'ATP chez l'hôte, la glycolyse et la phosphorylation oxydative, restaient largement stables durant l'infection. Ces résultats indiquent que contrairement à nos attentes, il n'y a pas de basculement significatif du métabolisme de l'hôte vers la glycolyse durant l'infection. L'inhibition de l'une ou l'autre de ces deux voies diminue fortement la capacité des bactéries à effectuer leur cycle de développement. Bien que les EBs démontrent un certain degré d'autonomie énergétique pour la synthèse des protéines exprimées dans la phase initiale de l'infection, une glycolyse fonctionnelle est requise pour accompagner la formation des inclusions, tandis que la phosphorylation oxydative est moins nécessaire à ce stade précoce du développement. L'importance relative des deux voies pour soutenir les étapes initiales de l'infection corrèle avec leur contribution respective à maintenir le niveau d'ATP dans les cellules épithéliales, la glycolyse étant le contributeur principal. En conclusion, ce travail confirme la dépendance des bactéries vis à vis de la capacité de production d'ATP de l'hôte. Cependant, la consommation d'ATP par les bactéries semble en équilibre avec la production normale des cellules épithéliales et la production autonome par les bactéries, en sorte que le métabolisme de l'hôte ne nécessite pas de remodelage profond pour répondre aux besoins des bactéries.

Résumé Détaillé

Chlamydia trachomatis est une bactérie au développement intracellulaire obligatoire, qui se développe exclusivement chez l'Homme. Cette espèce est la première cause bactérienne d'infection sexuellement transmissible, avec plus de 100 millions de nouveaux cas par an. Souvent asymptomatique, ces infections des voies uro-génitales peuvent avoir des conséquences lourdes sur le long terme chez la femme (grossesse extra-utérine, inflammation pelvienne chronique, infertilité). Certains serovars distincts infectent eux la conjonctive de l'œil, pouvant conduire au trachome lorsque non traité à temps : c'est la première cause de cécité acquise au monde.

Chlamydia trachomatis appartient à la famille des *Chlamydiaceae*, qui regroupe, au sein du phylum des *Chlamydiae*, des espèces pathogènes d'animaux (mammifères, insectes, poissons, marsupiaux...) qui ont un impact en santé vétérinaire et humaine. Les autres familles sont moins bien connues, et sont trouvées dans toutes sortes de niches écologiques, avec une grande variété d'hôtes. Toutes les *Chlamydiae* sont des bactéries à Gram négatif partageant plusieurs caractéristiques originales : un mode de développement intracellulaire obligatoire, et un cycle de développement sous deux morphologies : le corps élémentaire (EB), métaboliquement peu actif et non répliatif, et le corps réticulé (RB), métaboliquement plus actif car répliatif. Seule la forme EB est infectieuse : après attachement à la surface d'une cellule-hôte, typiquement une cellule épithéliale du tractus génital ou de la conjonctive de l'œil selon les sérovats, la bactérie est internalisée au sein d'un compartiment d'endocytose, que l'on désigne sous le nom d'inclusion. Au cours des premières heures de l'infection, l'inclusion se déplace le long de microtubules, en utilisant des protéines motrices de l'hôte, pour rejoindre le centre organisateur des microtubules (MTOC). L'internalisation des bactéries déclenche aussi une modification de leur état, et rapidement un nouveau programme transcriptionnel est mis en place. Parmi les premiers gènes exprimés, plusieurs codent pour des protéines que les bactéries sécrètent grâce à un appareil de sécrétion de type 3. Ce mécanisme de sécrétion, retrouvé dans de nombreuses bactéries à Gram négatif pathogènes, permet aux chlamydiae de diriger certaines protéines soit dans le cytoplasme de l'hôte, soit dans la lumière ou dans la membrane de l'inclusion. Les protéines ainsi sécrétées sont appelées protéines effectrices, car elles jouent un rôle clé dans la prise de contrôle de l'hôte par le pathogène. La protéine Cap1 est l'une de ces protéines sécrétées précocement dans la membrane de l'inclusion. Le changement de

programme transcriptionnel s'accompagne d'un changement de morphologie des bactéries, avec une transformation graduelle vers la forme RB. Une première division des RBs a lieu environ 6 h après le début de l'infection (6 hpi), et les bactéries entament alors leur phase de division soutenue, avec un doublement du génome bactérien en environ 2-3 h. Dès 24 hpi certains RBs cessent de se diviser et se différencient en EBs. Cet événement a lieu de manière asynchrone, de sorte que les inclusions contiennent un mélange entre RBs et EBs. Comme les besoins énergétiques des RBs sont supérieurs à ceux des EBs, on estime que le pic de la consommation énergétique de l'inclusion est atteinte vers 30-32 hpi, lorsque le nombre de RBs commence à décroître car les conversions en EBs l'emportent sur les divisions. Quarante-huit hpi, l'inclusion contient très majoritairement des EBs, qui sont ensuite libérés soit par lyse de la cellule-hôte, soit par un processus d'extrusion où l'inclusion est relarguée dans le milieu extracellulaire entourée d'une membrane. Les EB libérés peuvent commencer un nouveau cycle infectieux sur les cellules adjacentes.

Le caractère intracellulaire obligatoire des chlamydiae va de pair avec une perte importante de gènes codant pour des fonctions métaboliques essentielles, ces fonctions étant assurées par l'hôte. Ainsi, le génome de *C. trachomatis* ne contient qu'environ 900 gènes, et les bactéries dépendent de leur hôte, entre-autre, pour la synthèse de plusieurs acides aminés, de tous les nucléotides, et de nombreux co-facteurs de réactions enzymatiques. Longtemps *C. trachomatis* a également été considéré comme un parasite énergétique, se développant au dépend de l'adénosine tri-phosphate (ATP) fourni par l'hôte. Le séquençage de son génome a révélé ses capacités glycolytiques, et la présence d'un cycle de Krebs (TCA) incomplet. Les études en protéomique et les mesures de synthèse protéique en milieu axénique suggèrent que les EBs utilisent la glycolyse, qui pourrait être alimentée par leurs stocks de glycogène. La question de savoir si cette réserve énergétique est suffisante pour initier l'infection avant la conversion en RBs sera posée dans ce travail. Plusieurs arguments soutiennent que la phase de réplication des RBs est quant à elle au moins partiellement dépendante de l'import d'ATP fourni par l'hôte. En effet, les bactéries expriment deux transporteurs permettant l'import d'ATP, les enzymes de la glycolyse sont peu exprimées et le glucose semble surtout soutenir la synthèse de lipopolysaccharide, et enfin, en milieu axénique, la synthèse protéiques des RBs nécessite la présence d'ATP.

Des données disparates de la littérature suggéraient que l'infection par *C. trachomatis* puisse s'accompagner d'une augmentation de la glycolyse. Il était assez tentant de faire un

parallèle entre les cellules infectées, dont les besoins énergétiques sont accrus pour soutenir le métabolisme des bactéries, et des cellules tumorales. Dans de nombreuses tumeurs, la prolifération cellulaire s'accompagne d'un rééquilibrage des voies métaboliques, qualifié d'effet Warburg, en faveur de la glycolyse. Cependant, il est à noter que dans le cas de *Chlamydia*, les données avaient été obtenues pour l'essentiel dans des cellules HeLa, qui d'origine cancéreuse et ont été maintenues en culture sur de nombreuses générations, de sorte que leur métabolisme est anormal. De plus, certaines des données indiquant que les cellules infectées puissent privilégier la glycolyse avaient été obtenues avec d'autres espèces de *Chlamydiaceae* que *C. trachomatis*, or ces espèces ont pu mettre en place des adaptations très spécifiques aux tissus qu'elles infectent. La question des conséquences de l'infection par *C. trachomatis* sur le métabolisme de l'hôte demeurerait donc ouverte, et nous avons donc cherché à comprendre si les deux voies majeures de synthèse d'ATP dans l'hôte, la glycolyse et la respiration oxydative, se trouvaient modifiées au cours du temps par l'infection. Nous avons également cherché à comprendre si le développement des bactéries dépendait ou non du fonctionnement optimal de ces deux voies, et, si oui, à quelle étape du cycle bactérien.

Pour répondre à ces questions, nous nous sommes attachés à travailler dans des cellules épithéliales dites « primaires », c'est-à-dire maintenues en culture pendant moins de 5-6 passages depuis leur isolement sur des biopsies de patientes. La crise sanitaire liée à la pandémie de SARS-Cov2 a restreint notre accès aux cellules de patientes, nous avons parfois utilisé la lignée A2EN, qui sont des cellules épithéliales non tumorales de l'endocol, immortalisées (via les protéines E6 et E7 du virus de l'herpès). Pour tous les paramètres que nous avons pu analyser, les cellules A2EN présentent un métabolisme similaire aux cellules primaires, ce qui valide leur utilisation pour les questions posées ici.

Pour mener à bien cette étude nous avons choisi de créer une souche de *C. trachomatis* de serovar D (l'un des serovar prépondérant des infections génitales) exprimant de façon stable une protéine fluorescente, la mCherry. Nous avons montré que quoique cette souche diffèrait légèrement de la souche parentale, avec un gain d'infectivité *in vitro*, elle constituait un outil acceptable pour notre sujet de recherche. Pour aborder l'étude des modifications éventuelles du métabolisme de l'hôte nous avons commencé par mesurer la concentration d'ATP total dans les cellules infectées, et nous l'avons trouvée stable tout au long de l'infection, indiquant qu'un équilibre s'établit entre les deux partenaires. Nous avons ensuite comparé l'abondance de deux marqueurs de la glycolyse dans des cellules infectées et non-infectées : la production de lactate,

et l'acidification du milieu de culture. Le premier paramètre indique une stabilité de la glycolyse lors de l'infection, le second une augmentation de 30% lorsque le métabolisme des bactéries est à son maximum. Nous concluons que la glycolyse est stable, ou augmentée de façons modeste par l'infection par *C. trachomatis*. La phosphorylation oxydative (OxPhos) de l'hôte, mesurée par la consommation d'oxygène par les mitochondries, est quant à elle inchangée par l'infection. Ces résultats indiquent que l'infection par *C. trachomatis* n'entraîne pas une augmentation significative des capacités de production d'ATP de l'hôte, indiquant que la production énergétique normale suffit aux besoins des bactéries. Nous avons ensuite utilisé des molécules inhibitrices de voies métaboliques spécifiques pour déterminer les conséquences de leur inhibition, même partielle, sur le cycle de développement des bactéries. Le GNE-140 est un inhibiteur spécifique des isoformes A et B de la lactate deshydrogenase. Nous avons mesuré une diminution dose dépendante de la concentration d'ATP dans les cellules épithéliales traitées par cette molécule, dès 2 h après le début du traitement. Appliqué lors d'une infection, le GNE-140 affecte à la fois les phases précoce et proliférative du développement des bactéries, avec globalement une importante réduction des bactéries infectieuses formées. Les drogues ciblant OxPhos (oligomycine et phenformine) ont quant à elles un effet modeste sur la phase précoce, qui corrèle avec leur moindre impact sur la production d'ATP que le GNE-140 dans ce type cellulaire. En revanche, comme le GNE-140 elles inhibent la production de particules infectieuses. Enfin, nos résultats illustrent combien il est important d'utiliser les cellules primaires pour ce type d'étude. En effet, la dépendance des bactéries au bon fonctionnement de la glycolyse n'est pas retrouvée dans deux lignées tumorales testées.

En résumé, contrairement à nos attentes, nous avons montré que les cellules épithéliales infectées par *C. trachomatis* ne subissent pas d'« effet Warburg ». En dépit de la prépondérance de la glycolyse pour la production d'ATP dans ces cellules, les bactéries ne peuvent pas se passer d'une OxPhos optimale dans leur phase répllicative. La dépendance des bactéries à la fois vis-à-vis de la glycolyse et de la respiration oxydative, pour leur phase de répllication, renforce l'hypothèse que les bactéries ne sont pas autonomes en besoin énergétique dans cette phase de leur développement, et qu'elles détournent l'ATP de l'hôte, faisant feu de tout bois. On ne peut exclure que d'autres métabolites affectés par l'usage de ces inhibiteurs soient impliqués dans les effets observés, en particulier la perte de renouvellement de NAD lorsque OxPhos est inhibée, car les bactéries sont entièrement dépendantes de l'hôte pour ce métabolite essentiel.

Mon travail doctoral a aussi porté un éclairage sur les capacités énergétiques de EBs. En effet, j'ai montré qu'en absence de glucose dans le milieu de culture de cellules HeLa, et par conséquent avec une concentration de glucose réduite dans ces cellules, les bactéries étaient capables de synthétiser la protéine Cap1, démontrant ainsi une certaine autonomie énergétique. Cependant, elles étaient moins regroupées au MTOC et les tubules émanant de l'inclusion moins long. Ces phénomènes s'expliquent probablement par le fait que la migration des inclusions vers le MTOC et l'élongation de tubules sont des phénomènes qui nécessitent un apport énergétique sous forme d'ATP dans le cytoplasme, c'est-à-dire par l'hôte. Or la privation de glucose réduit de moitié la concentration en ATP dans ces cellules. Cette hypothèse que la baisse du niveau d'ATP explique les phénotypes précoces est soutenue par la corrélation que nous avons observée entre l'effet des différentes drogues testées sur le niveau d'ATP dans les cellules primaires, et la migration des bactéries vers le MTOC. Nous en avons conclu que les EBs possèdent une autonomie toute relative car certaines étapes clés du développement de *C. trachomatis* mettent en jeu des processus eukaryotes dépendants de l'ATP.

La comparaison de notre travail sur *C. trachomatis* avec des données de la littérature sur d'autres espèces de *Chlamydiaceae* sont difficiles car les autres travaux ne portent pas sur des cellules primaires. Il est à noter que contrairement à celles de *C. trachomatis*, les inclusions de certaines espèces sont décrites comme en étroite association avec les mitochondries, suggérant des stratégies distinctes. Cette possibilité est en accord avec les conclusions du travail post-doctoral de Sébastien Triboulet, à la révision duquel j'ai participé. Dans cette étude, ST a montré que l'accumulation de glycogène dans l'inclusion de seulement certaines espèces de *Chlamydiaceae* (*C. trachomatis*, *C. suis* et *C. muridarum*) corrèle avec l'acquisition d'un signal de sécrétion de type 3 dans la phosphoglucomutase des dites espèces. Sa sécrétion dans la lumière de l'inclusion explique comment les bactéries peuvent tirer profit de leur capacité à y accumuler du glycogène, puisque l'enzyme assure la conversion de glucose-1-phosphate en glucose-6-phosphate, seule source de glucose captée par les bactéries. L'absence de sécrétion de la phosphoglucomutase dans d'autres *Chlamydiaceae* testées (*C. caviae* et *C. pneumoniae*) renforce l'hypothèse que des stratégies métaboliques différentes ont été mises en place par ces différentes espèces, adaptées aux tissus qu'elles infectent. Les conclusions auxquelles nous sommes arrivées à l'issue de ce travail sont donc à considérer avec précaution si on s'intéresse à d'autres *Chlamydia* pathogènes pour l'Homme telle que *C. pneumoniae*. Enfin, la revue de la littérature concernant d'autres types de bactéries souligne le peu d'information disponible sur

les conséquences métaboliques des infections par des bactéries intracellulaires dans les cellules épithéliales primaires, et appelle à d'autres études de ce type.

Introduction

I. *Chlamydia trachomatis*, a human-adapted obligate intracellular pathogen

1. Once upon a time, the discovery of *Chlamydiae*...

The beginning of the 20th century marks the discovery of chlamydial inclusions in ocular infections. The responsible infectious agent was mistakenly taken for a protozoan, named “Chlamydozoa”, then for a virus due to its small size, filterable characteristics and non-reproductive ability on media. Similar inclusions were later observed in diverse infections namely zoonotic pulmonary, ocular and sexual infections (Horn, 2008; Nunes and Gomes, 2014). In 1966, with the advent of electron microscopy, Moulder work allowed to finally classify the *Chlamydiae* phylum members as bacteria (Moulder, 1966). By the 2nd half of the 20th century, methods were developed to culture *Chlamydiae* first in embryonated egg, then in egg yolk (Black, 2013; Chen et al., 2019; Horn, 2008; Nunes and Gomes, 2014).

2. *Chlamydia trachomatis* and its numerous relatives

The *Chlamydiae* phylum exclusively contains obligate intracellular bacteria. That lifestyle has made it difficult to obtain a clear picture of the phylum members diversity due to the requirement of host co-culture for their studies. Moreover, since many universal bacterial primers have mismatches to chlamydial 16S rRNA genes, identification of unknown lineages requires the use of specific primers (Lagkouvardos et al., 2014).

Growing numbers of studies are now using novel approaches such as culture-independent metagenomics (Taylor-Brown et al., 2016, 2017) or single cell genomics (Collingro et al., 2017) enabling the establishment of a phylogenetic tree revealing unknown relationships (Pillonel et al., 2018; Taylor-Brown et al., 2015). The discovery of additional chlamydial species from diverse environment and or hosts such as amoeba, reptiles, birds, fishes and arthropods has also helped in building an up-to-date *Chlamydiae* phylogenetic tree (Fehr et al., 2013; Pillonel et al., 2018; Taylor-Brown et al., 2015) (Figure 1). A recent study discovered that chlamydial lineages are not only found but might dominate the bacterial community in deep marine anoxic environments. Using genome-resolved metagenomics, the authors were able to reconstruct 24 chlamydial genomes expanding the diversity of the phylum which is now composed of seven clades (Dharamshi et al., 2020) (Figure 1).

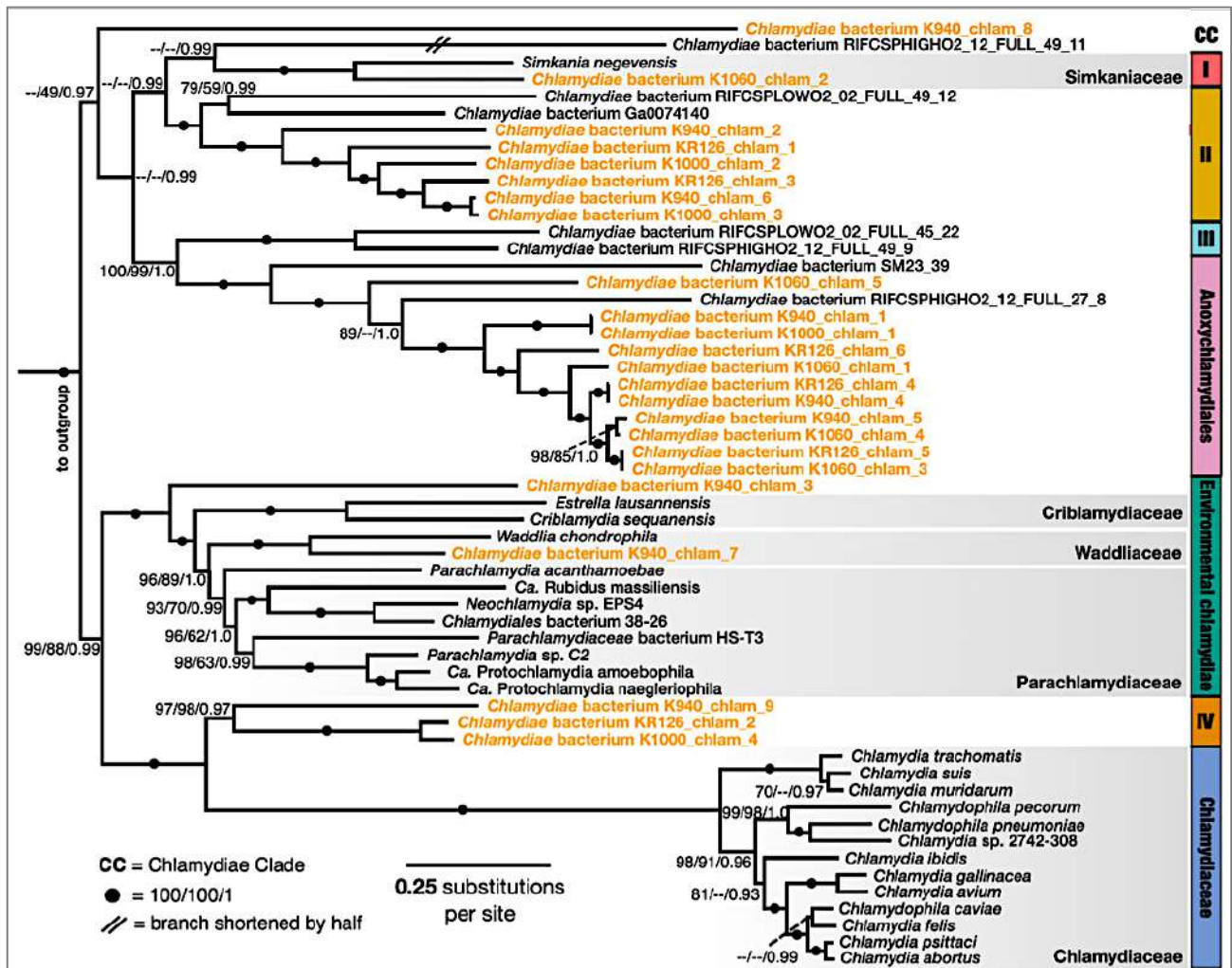


Figure 1. Updated *Chlamydiae* phylogenetic tree

Bayesian phylogenetic tree of 38 concatenated single-copy conserved marker proteins representing known chlamydial species (in black) and identified marine sediment *Chlamydiae* (in orange). *Chlamydiae* are organized into seven clades: chlamydial clade (CC) I (containing the *Simkaniaceae*) to IV; Environmental chlamydiae containing *Criblamydiaceae*, *Waddliaceae*, and *Parachlamydiaceae*; *Chlamydiaceae* and *Anoxychlamydiales*. Adapted from (Dharamshi et al., 2020)

Chlamydia trachomatis (*C. trachomatis*) is one of the 13 species members of *Chlamydiaceae*, a family of pathogens with a diverse range of eukaryotic hosts (Figure 2). *Chlamydiaceae* represents an entire clade on its own, and its members display the smallest genomes of the phylum (1-1,2 Mbp) (Dharamshi et al., 2020; Horn, 2008; Omsland et al., 2014). *C. trachomatis* along with *C. pneumoniae*, represent the two most important human pathogens. The former is strictly restricted to its human host while the latter can also infect horses, frogs and marsupials. Other species, such as *C. psittaci*, *C. abortus*, and to a lesser extent *C. felis*, can also infect humans through zoonotic transmission. Diseases caused by *Chlamydiaceae* are diverse and range from pneumonia or obstructive pulmonary disease caused

for instance by *C. pneumoniae*, *C. felis*, *C. pecorum*, *C. muridarum* or *C. suis*, to ovine enzootic abortion caused by *C. abortus* (Nunes and Gomes, 2014).

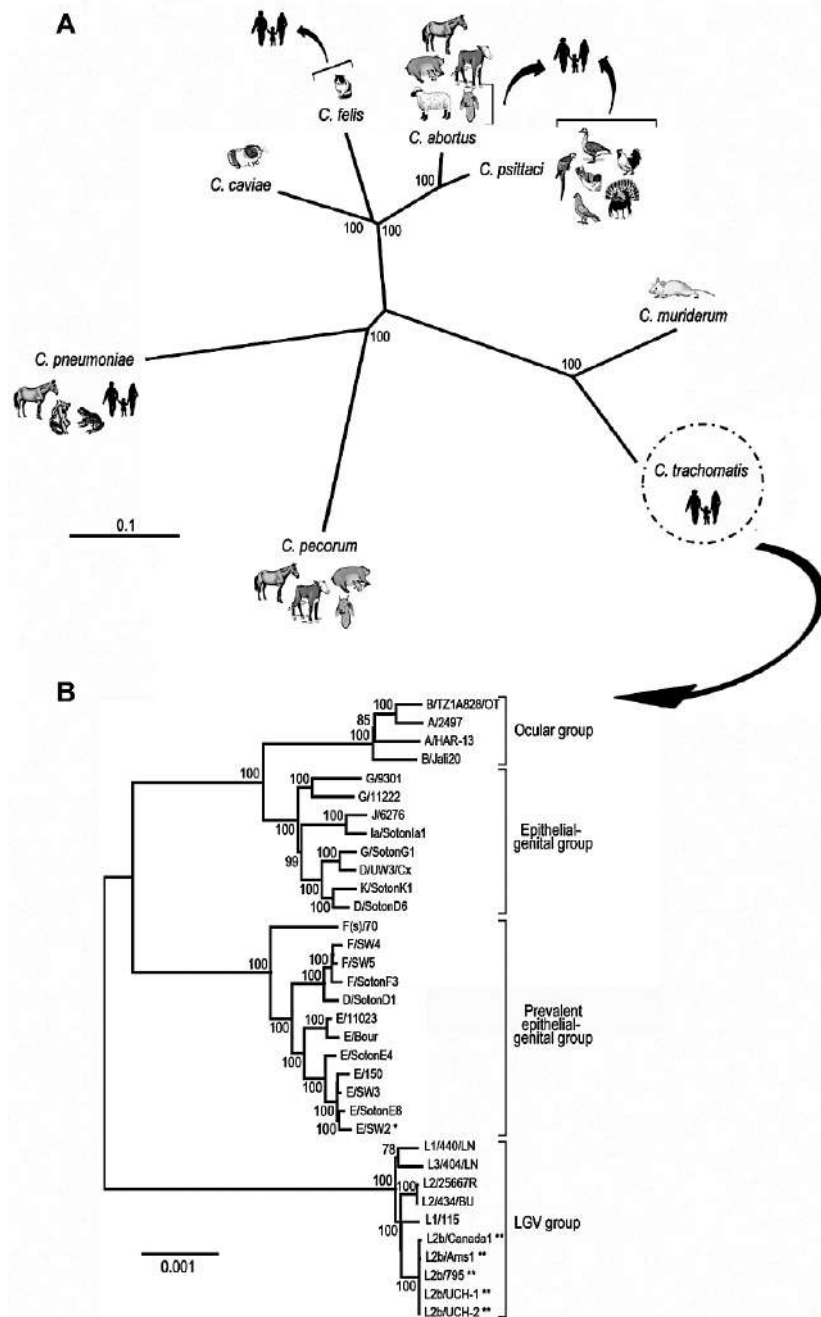


Figure 2. Phylogenetic reconstruction of *Chlamydia* genus

(A) *Chlamydia* species are represented with their respective hosts. *C. suis* is not represented in the tree due to missing genomic data. The tree was constructed using the Neighbour-Joining Tree method that is based here on 600 Orthologous genes. (B) Phylogenetic reconstruction of *C. trachomatis*. The tree was made by comparing 819 genes conserved from the sequenced genomes of different serovars of *C. trachomatis*, showing a genetic correlation between tissue tropism and infection symptoms, and serovar (Nunes and Gomes, 2014)

3. *Chlamydia trachomatis* epidemiology

C. trachomatis, which is the pathogen of interest in this project, has been classified into about 15 serovars based on the major outer membrane protein (MOMP) antigenic variation. (Figure 2). Those serovars are grouped into three biovars that either infect ocular or genital tissues (Nunes and Gomes, 2014; O’Connell and Ferone, 2016). Post-genomic studies revealed the limits of using MOMP variation to categorize *C. trachomatis* strains, as gene recombination can occur (Harris et al., 2012). This is still however the commonly used classification system, because the correlation between tissue tropism, infection symptoms and serovars remains very strong.

a. Ocular infections

Ocular infections are caused by serovars A-C, which, when left untreated, can lead to trachoma, a chronic inflammatory disease. Transmission occurs through direct contact of infected people eye and nose discharges, or indirectly by the spread of those discharges by certain type of flies. Repeated infections often occur and lead first to eyelids’ severe scarring (trachomatous conjunctival scarring) which eventually induces it to turn inward (trachomatous trichiasis), causing constant pain due to the eyelashes rubbing against the eye. With no treatment, irreversible opacities form on the cornea causing visual impairment or blindness.

Trachoma is the leading cause of preventable infectious blindness and visual impairment worldwide with 1.9 million cases and representing 1.4% of all blindness cases worldwide. About 2,5 million people have trachomatous trichiasis worldwide (discussed later in this section), and about 142 million people are still at risk of trachoma blindness. Trachoma is endemic in 44 countries in Africa, Asia, Central and South America, Australia and the Middle East, with Africa being the most severely affected continent (Figure 3). In those endemic areas, active trachoma affects both adults, with women being more at risk, and children, having a prevalence as high as 90% in the latter group. The economic consequences of trachoma are significant. When considering eye impairment, trichiasis and blindness, the economic loss is estimated at 8 billion US\$. (Burton and Mabey, 2009; WHO | Trachoma, 2020).

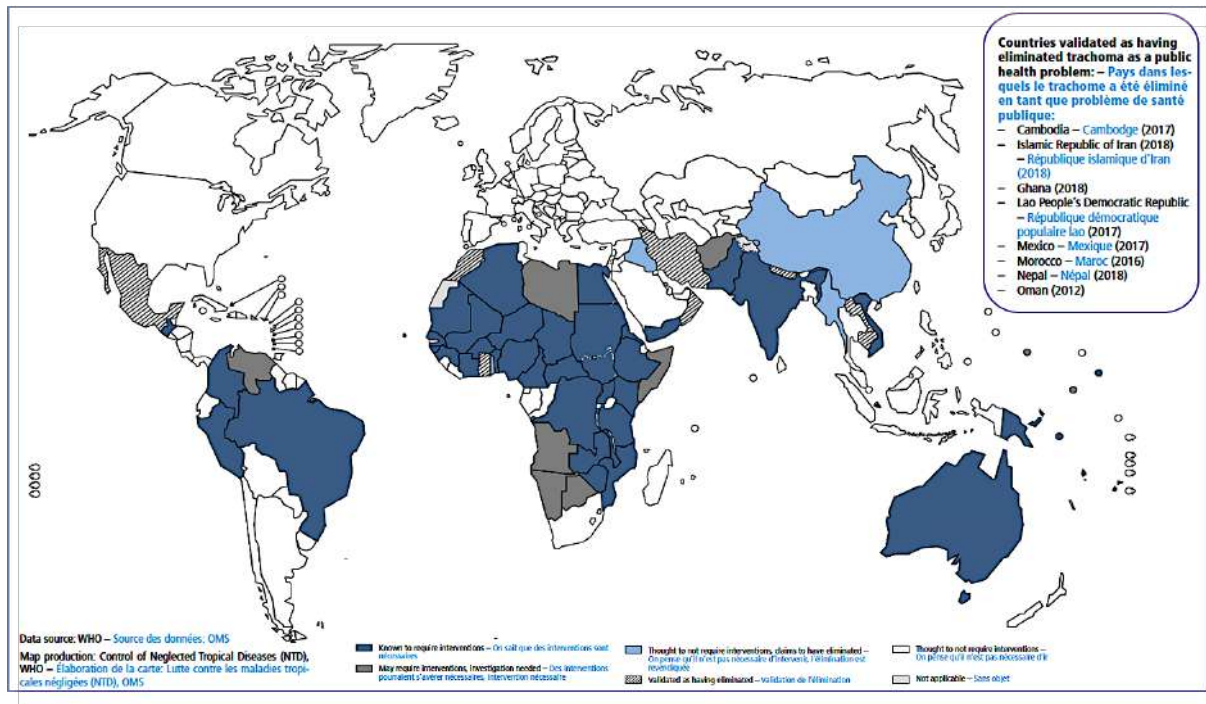


Figure 3. Elimination status of trachoma as a public health problem as of 2019

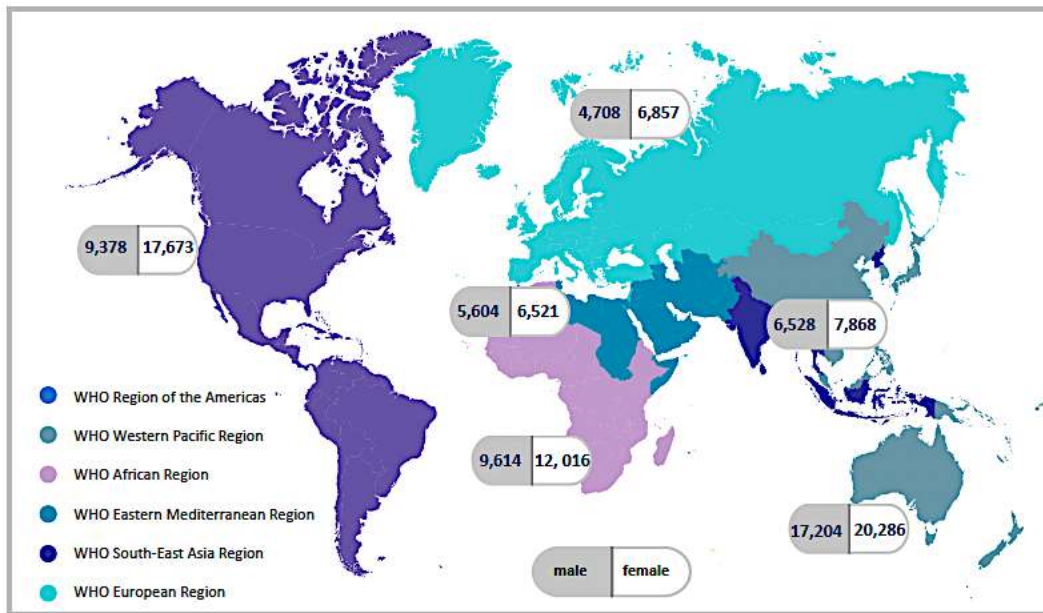
The SAFE program adopted to help eliminate trachoma as a public health problem by 2020 allowed its eradication in 8 countries (purple box). However, 44 countries are still endemic for trachoma as of 2021. Thus, a new target date has been set for 2030. Adapted from WHO epidemiological record 2019 (Rowley et al., 2019)

b. Genital infections

The two other *C. trachomatis* biovars infect the genital tract and represent the leading cause of sexually transmitted infections (STI) worldwide. According to the WHO, there were 127 million new cases of chlamydial genital infections in 2016, with women being more affected (WHO fact sheets on Chlamydia) (Figure 4, Figure 5). The global incidence (new cases per 100,000 persons at a particular time) of infection, for adults aged 15-49, increased by 4.1% between 2005 and 2008 (WHO 2019 Bulletin #97). In the USA alone, more than 1,8 million chlamydial infection were recorded in 2019, with adolescent and young adults being more affected. Indeed in 2019, almost two-third of all reported cases was among persons aged 15-24 years, with women more affected (CDC National overview of STDs 2019) (Figure 5).

Serovars D-K are responsible for non-invasive genital infections and mostly affect adolescents and young adults. They result in various symptoms such as cervicitis (inflammation of the cervix) in women and urethritis (inflammation of the urethra) in men. The disease being asymptomatic in most cases, it is left untreated and can worsen and lead to pelvic inflammatory diseases in women. This can cause drastic irreversible consequences such as infertility, spontaneous abortion, or ectopic pregnancies. The infection can also be transmitted to babies

during labor. Complications can also occur for men, leading to epididymitis and reactive arthritis (O’Connell and Ferone, 2016).



*Adults ages 15 to 49 years

Source: Rowley J, et al. WHO Bulletin, 2019

Figure 4. Estimation of prevalent cases of Chlamydial infections by WHO region in 2016

Prevalence (number of cases per 100000 persons) of chlamydial infection worldwide for the age group 15-49 years. Women are more affected than men. WHO Global Adult Estimates for 4 STIs.

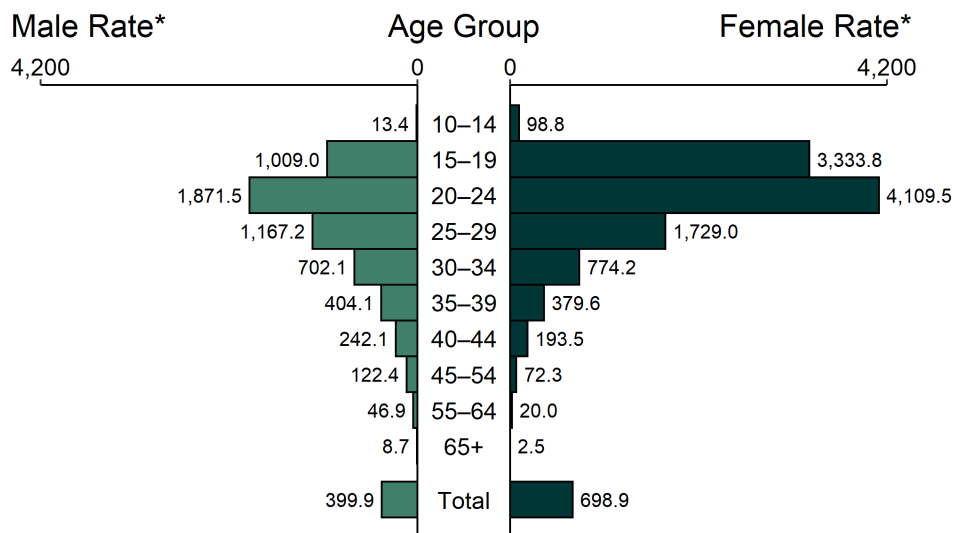


Figure 5. Chlamydia Rates of Reported Cases by Age Group and Sex, United States, 2019

In 2019, most reported chlamydial infection case was among the age group 15-24. CDC National overview of STDs 2019. * Per 100,000; Total includes all ages

The last group, serovars L1, L2 and L3, is responsible for more invasive sexually transmitted diseases. They can spread through the dissemination of infected macrophages and reach local, draining lymph nodes causing lymphogranuloma venereum or LGV. These infections are often symptomatic contrary to other chlamydial infections. They can lead to rectal stenosis and fibrosis, that are sometimes associated with HIV primarily in men engaging in receptive anal intercourse with men (Nunes and Gomes, 2014; O'Connell and Ferone, 2016).

4. Treatment

In 1998, the WHO established the WHO Alliance for the Global Elimination of Trachoma which aimed to eliminate trachoma as a public health disease by 2020 (GET2020). As of today, the new target date is 2030. Trachoma elimination strategy is based on the **SAFE** guidelines involving the following: **S**urgery for patients with trichiasis; **A**ntibiotic treatment with azithromycin to treat the infection; **F**acial cleanness; **E**nvironmental improvement. This program has resulted in a significant reduction of trachoma prevalence. Indeed, the number of people at risk of trachoma decreased by 91% between 2002 and 2019. Moreover, since 2011, 8 countries have been validated by the WHO to have eliminated trachoma as a public health issue (Figure 3). Results are thus encouraging, but with 44 countries still being endemic for trachoma, efforts to fight trachoma have to be pursued and even amplified (Burton and Mabey, 2009) (WHO | Trachoma, 2021).

Genital infections are also treated with azithromycin as a single dose, or with doxycycline for a weeklong treatment. Even though drug resistance has not been reported, antibiotic treatment might not be always effective at eliminating the bacteria, especially for chronic infections (Nunes and Gomes, 2014; O'Connell and Ferone, 2016). As of today, there is still no vaccine against *C. trachomatis* infections, however they are under development and the first phase I trial was recently successfully achieved (Abraham et al., 2019; de la Maza et al., 2021).

II. Prominent features of *C. trachomatis* developmental cycle

1. A closer look at the developmental cycle of *Chlamydia trachomatis*

A characteristic of *Chlamydiae* is their unique cycle divided in two parts, each relying on a morphologically and functionally different form of the bacteria. This developmental cycle concept was first introduced by Bedson and Bland after observing different forms of the pathogen at successive stages of infection (Bedson and Bland, 1932). The infectious particle, called elementary body (EB), is small (~300 nm), non-replicative, with compact DNA and was thought to be metabolically inactive, being described as a dormant spore-like structure for years (Stephens, 1998; Iliffe-Lee and McClarty, 1999; Omsland et al., 2014). Recent studies have shown that EBs are somewhat metabolically active (Haider et al., 2010; Omsland et al., 2012; Vandahl et al., 2004). Their highly disulfide cross-linked outer membrane allows them to resist potential harsh extracellular conditions including osmotic and physical stress. The replicative bacterial form, called reticulate body (RB), is larger (>1 μm) and in contrast to EBs, the proteins of their outer membrane are reduced, making it more fluid (Bavoil et al., 1984; Hackstadt et al., 1985; Hatch et al., 1986). Their replicative activity makes RBs more metabolically active than EBs, and we will give more details later on the metabolic requirements of each form.

EBs initiate *C. trachomatis* infection through binding epithelial cells. Internalization in endocytic vesicles quickly follows, which is in part triggered by the secretion of bacterial proteins as described later (Figure 6). Once internalized, bacteria remain in a membrane-bound compartment, known as “inclusion”, throughout their entire cycle. Soon after entry, EBs differentiate into RBs, which replicate several times causing inclusions to grow significantly in size. Starting about 24 h post infection (hpi), RBs asynchronously differentiate back into EBs. Around 48 hpi, newly formed EBs are released by either cell lysis or inclusion extrusion, from which point a new infection can begin (AbdelRahman and Belland, 2005; Elwell et al., 2016; Gitsels et al., 2019; Nunes and Gomes, 2014).

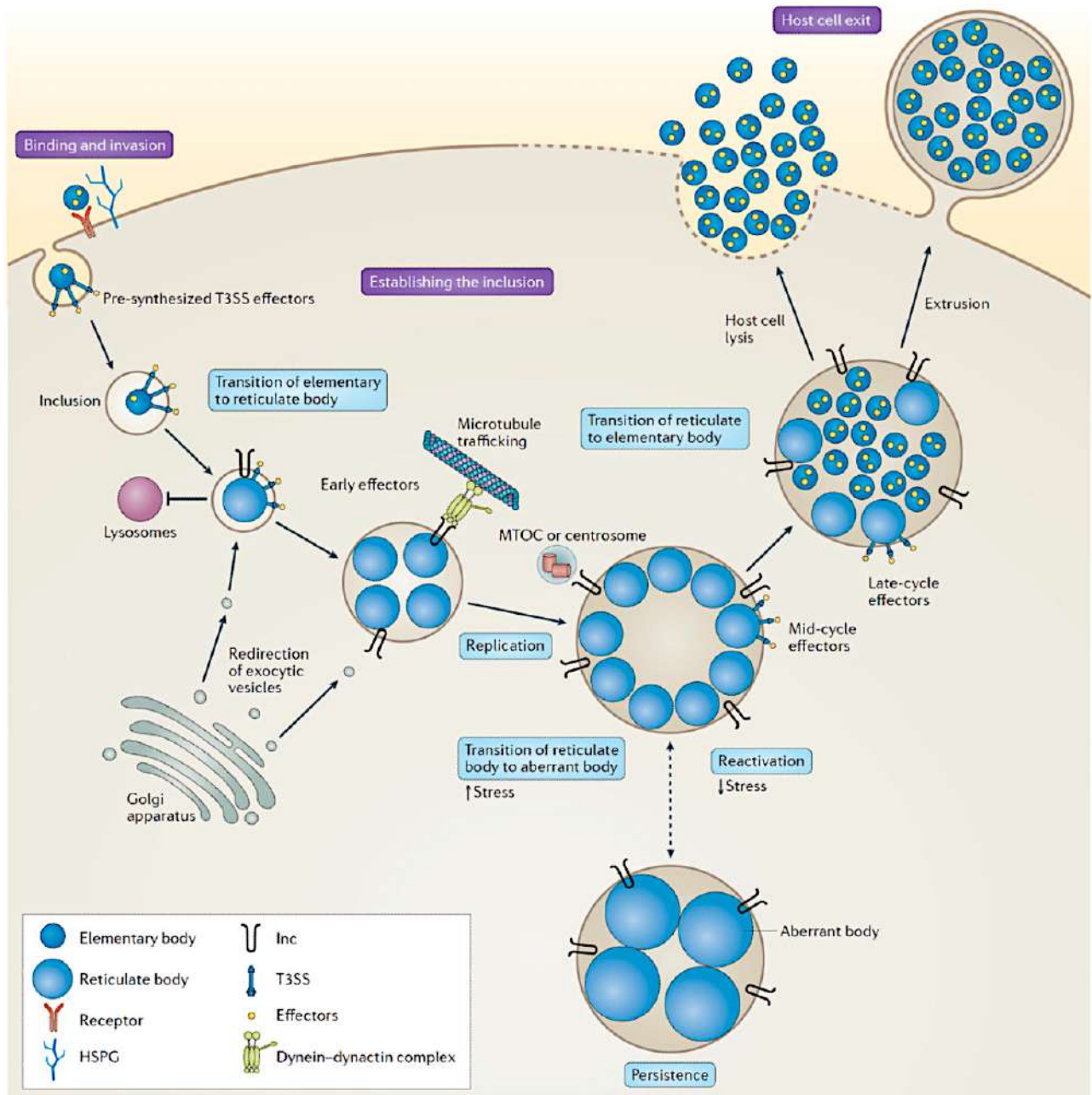


Figure 6. Development cycle of *C. trachomatis*

Elementary Bodies (EBs) attach to host cells then are quickly internalized in a parasitophorous vacuole called inclusion. EBs either convert into Reticulate Bodies (RB), which replicate inside inclusions, or into persistent form in stressful conditions. RBs differentiate back into EBs, which are released from host cells in order to initiate another round of infection (Elwell et al, 2016)

2. EBs and RBs successive roles during infection

a. EBs initiate infection

i. The adhesion

Even though *C. trachomatis*' target is typically a human epithelial cell, it can undergo a normal developmental cycle in a various range of cell types, from different mammalian species *in vitro*. This means that the tropism of *C. trachomatis* towards human is not due to specific binding to a human receptor, and in fact the bacteria likely use multiple attachment and entry routes, as detailed below. Still, part of the difference in tropism between serovars might be due to the use of different host receptors as was illustrated by Fadel and Eley for serovars E versus LGV (AbdelRahman and Belland, 2005; Fadel and Eley, 2008; Elwell et al., 2016; Gitsels et al., 2019).

C. trachomatis adhesion to host cells is a two-step process. The first one involves a low-affinity, reversible bacterial attachment through electrostatic interactions to heparan sulfate (HS) containing glycosaminoglycans (GAGs). In fact, treatment of cells with HS lysate inhibits adhesion (Su et al., 1996; Zhang and Stephens, 1992).

The second attachment step is irreversible with high affinity binding to host cell receptors. Multiple host receptors and their binding bacterial partners have been identified so far, but some grey areas remain to be elucidated (Gitsels et al., 2019). Some of the identified host receptors-chlamydial adhesins (*C. trachomatis*) couples are: Cystic fibrosis transmembrane conductance regulator (CFTR) with LPS (Ajonuma et al., 2010); Beta-1 integrin (ITGB1) with CT017 or Ctad (Stallmann and Hegemann, 2016); and 3'sulfogalactolipid (3'SGL) with Hsp70 (Mamelak et al., 2001). Additional identified host receptors involved in chlamydial adhesion are the platelet-derived growth factor the receptor beta (PDGFR β) (Elwell et al., 2008), the EphrinA2 receptor (Subbarayal et al., 2015), the fibroblast growth factor receptor (FGFR) via Fibroblast growth factor 2 (FGF2) as an intermediate (Kim et al., 2011), and the protein disulfide isomerase (PDI) (Abromaitis and Stephens, 2009; Conant and Stephens, 2007). PDI, a component of the estrogen receptor complex, has been shown to have two independent roles in infection. On one hand, it promotes bacterial attachment, and on the other hand, its active enzymatic activity is necessary for bacterial entry, possibly to reduce disulfide bridges in the type 3 secretion machinery (see below) (Abromaitis and Stephens, 2009; Betts-Hampikian and Fields, 2011). On the bacterial side, putative adhesins also include proteins of the outer membrane complex, namely OmcB (Fadel and Eley, 2007), the major outer protein, MOMP

(Stephens et al., 2001; Su et al., 1996) and also the polymorphic outer membrane proteins (Pmps) (Becker and Hegemann, 2014).

ii. The entry

One important feature of chlamydiae is that they all express a multi-component secretion machinery called the type 3 secretion (T3S) system, that we will describe in further detail later. Upon host cell binding, the T3S system is activated allowing injection of pre-packaged bacterial effectors into the host. That promotes rapid bacterial internalization favored by cytoskeletal rearrangements, which actually is a constant theme throughout infection (**Figure 7**) (Elwell et al., 2016; Gitsels et al., 2019). To this date, there are controversial findings regarding the involvement of clathrin-coated pits and caveola in *C. trachomatis* entry process (Gitsels et al., 2019). In any case, the internalization step is fast, with about 50% of the bacteria being internalized within 10 min in the case of bacteria of the LGV biovar (Vromman et al., 2014). *C. trachomatis* serovars A to K are internalized less efficiently, and a centrifugation step is commonly used in experimental conditions to enhance bacterial entry. In all cases, EBs play an active role in this internalization step, through the secretion of “effector” proteins, that contribute to rearrangement of the cytoskeleton and the plasma membrane.

Effectors mediating invasion identified so far are the actin recruiting phosphoprotein TarP (CT456) and TmeA (CT694). TarP mediates actin nucleation and enhance filament polymerization (Jewett et al., 2006). Phosphorylation of TarP post injection allows the Rac1 (RAS-related C3 botulin toxin) dependent recruitment and activation of the Arp2/3 complex, leading to a local actin remodeling (Carabeo et al., 2004, 2007; Elwell et al., 2008) (Figure 7). Rac1 is an actin polymerization regulator which is part of the Rho GTPases family. TmeA functions synergetically with TarP, by directly activating host N-WASP to promote Arp2/3-dependent actin polymerization (Keb et al., 2021).

Finally, our laboratory showed that genetic disruption of the effector CT622 (TaiP) resulted in a decrease in bacterial entry (Cossé et al., 2018). However, it is not clear at this stage whether this reflects a role for CT622 in the entry step per se, or whether it reflects a general defect in the formation of EBs at the preceding infectious cycle from which they were collected.

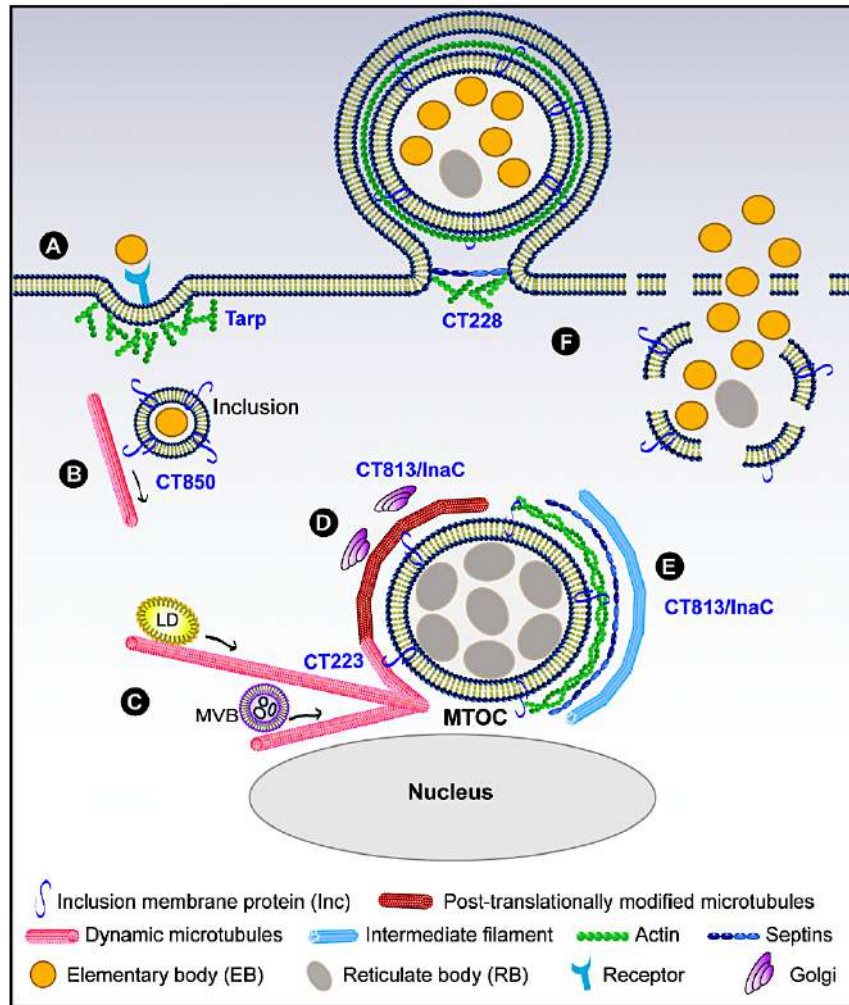


Figure 7. Cytoskeletal modulations during *C. trachomatis* infection

The cytoskeleton is reorganized throughout the course of chlamydial infection. (A) Upon entry the bacterial translocated actin-recruiting phosphoprotein (TarP) induces polymerization of actin. (B) The newly formed inclusion is transported to the microtubule organizing center (MTOC) with the help of CT850. (C) Microtubules cages form around the inclusion which involves probably CT223, with lipid droplets (LD) and multivesicular bodies (MVB) movements towards the inclusion. (D) Post-translational modifications of microtubule cages and mini-Golgi positioning around the inclusion is mediated by CT813/InaC. (E) CT813 is also involved in the stabilization of the inclusion with actin, septins and intermediate filaments fibers. (F) *Chlamydia* exit cell either through lysing cells (right), or through an extrusion process (left) (Wesolowski and Paumet, 2017)

b. RBs take over!

i. Conversion into RBs

During the first hours of infection, various events leading to EB to RB conversion are activated. The exact signal inducing EB to RB differentiation is not known (Belland et al., 2003; Shaw et al., 2000). Nevertheless, that conversion requires some significant changes. To begin with, the proteins of the chlamydial outer membrane complex (COMC) which are highly cross-linked in EBs get reduced, allowing EBs “relaxation” (Hackstadt et al., 1985; Hatch et al.,

1986). Furthermore, the EBs highly compact DNA decondenses through the dissociation of the histone-like proteins Hc1 and Hc2, allowing active gene transcription (Barry et al., 1993; Brickman et al., 1993; Christiansen, 1993). Changes in the gene expression profile and in bacterial morphology are detected as early as 2 hpi. Twenty-nine immediate early genes have thus been identified, which are mainly involved in nutrient acquisition and inclusion membrane modification. One of the early protein synthesized is Cap1 (CT529), a protein that associates with the inclusion membrane (Belland et al., 2003; Shaw et al., 2000). The first doubling of bacterial genome is completed at 6 hpi (Shaw et al., 2000).

ii. Translocation to the microtubule organizing center (MTOC)

The inclusion is progressively modified by secreted proteins that are incorporated into the inclusion membrane via a type 3 secretion process, called Inc proteins (Bannantine et al., 2000). This process, which will be described in more details in Chapter 3.2, allows interactions with the host in order to establish the replicative niche. The inclusion is transported along microtubules through interactions of the inclusion with dynein toward the microtubule organizing center (MTOC) at the peri-Golgi region. That transport is p50 dynamitin independent suggesting that *C. trachomatis* has effectors playing its role, linking cargo to microtubule (Grieshaber, 2003) (Figure 7).

During *C. trachomatis* infection, Src family kinases (SFKs) activation increases and active SFKs are recruited at the inclusion membrane. Those SFKs were proven to be essential for inclusions migration to the MTOC (Mital and Hackstadt, 2011; Mital et al., 2010). Moreover, several Inc proteins, namely IncB or CT232, CT101, and CT222, are located in cholesterol rich microdomain at the contact point of centrosomes and inclusion. They also colocalize with active SFKs indicating that they may be involved in inclusions transport (Mital et al., 2010). One identified contributor to this transport is CT850, which also colocalizes with active SFKs, binds directly to dynein light chain 1 (DYNLT1) to facilitate traffic to the MTOC (Mital et al., 2015) (**Figure 7**).

iii. RBs proliferation

RBs proliferate within the inclusion, with a doubling time of about 2-3 hours (Shaw et al., 2000). Bacterial division was long thought to occur through binary fission, a model that seems to be supported by three-dimensional reconstitution of inclusions viewed by electron

microscopy (Lee et al., 2018). However, some immunofluorescence data support a polarized cell division mechanism resembling budding (Abdelrahman et al., 2016), so the question remains opened, especially in light of the very peculiar features of *Chlamydiae* division machinery, and in particular the absence of a FtsZ orthologue, a protein involved in bacterial division mechanism (AbdelRahman and Belland, 2005; Stephens, 1998). In addition, *Chlamydia* cell wall has been a mystery for years, and was even coined the “chlamydial anomaly”, based on the fact that numerous studies had failed to detect peptidoglycan in *Chlamydia* (Barbour et al., 1982; Fox et al., 1990) even though genomic studies showed the presence of a complete set of genes required for its synthesis (Stephens, 1998). To top that, chlamydial growth is sensitive peptidoglycans targeting antibiotics such as penicillin (Barbour et al., 1982). The peptidoglycan paradox has finally been resolved by their detection using different techniques *in vitro* (Liechti et al., 2014) or using cell lysates (Packiam et al., 2015). They were later shown to localize at the division septum of bacteria (Liechti et al., 2016). Their low abundance could be a strategy to prevent host immune activation through stimulation of pathogen recognition receptors (PRRs) such as NOD2 that is known to be activated by chlamydial peptidoglycan (Liechti et al., 2016; Packiam et al., 2015).

iv. The growing inclusion needs to be stabilized

As mentioned previously, RBs proliferation is accompanied by a considerable expansion of the inclusion; thus, inclusions need to be stabilized to preserve their integrity. This stabilization is achieved by multiple actors of the host cell. Already at 12 hpi, a network of post-translationally modified microtubule surrounds the inclusion, which remains until the end of the cycle (**Figure 7**, Figure 8) (Al-Zeer et al., 2014). The formation of this network depends on the interaction between the centrosomal protein 170 kDa (CEP170) and the Inc protein IPAM (inclusion protein acting on microtubules) (Dumoux et al., 2015). The effector CT813/ InaC has been proven to mediate the microtubules post-translational modifications in addition to the repositioning of Golgi mini stacks around the inclusion (Kokes et al., 2015; Wesolowski and Paumet, 2017).

Other stabilizing actors are F-actin and intermediate filaments, which form a dynamic scaffold around the inclusion to stabilize it (Bastidas et al., 2013; Kumar and Valdivia, 2008a). F-actin recruitment and assembly involve RhoA GTPase (Kumar and Valdivia, 2008b, 2008a), septins (Volceanov et al., 2014), epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) signaling (Patel et al., 2014) and the effector CT813.

Scaffold stability also involves intermediate filaments. Indeed glycosylation of vimentin, a cytoplasmic intermediate filament, which is important for intermediate filaments morphology, was shown to be required for *C. trachomatis* stability and development (Tarbet et al., 2018). Disruption of this cytoskeletal scaffold around the inclusion leads to leakage of its contents into the cytosol, followed with a strong host immune response. Therefore, re-organizing host cytoskeleton around the inclusion can be seen as an immune modulation mechanism (Kumar and Valdivia, 2008b, 2008a).

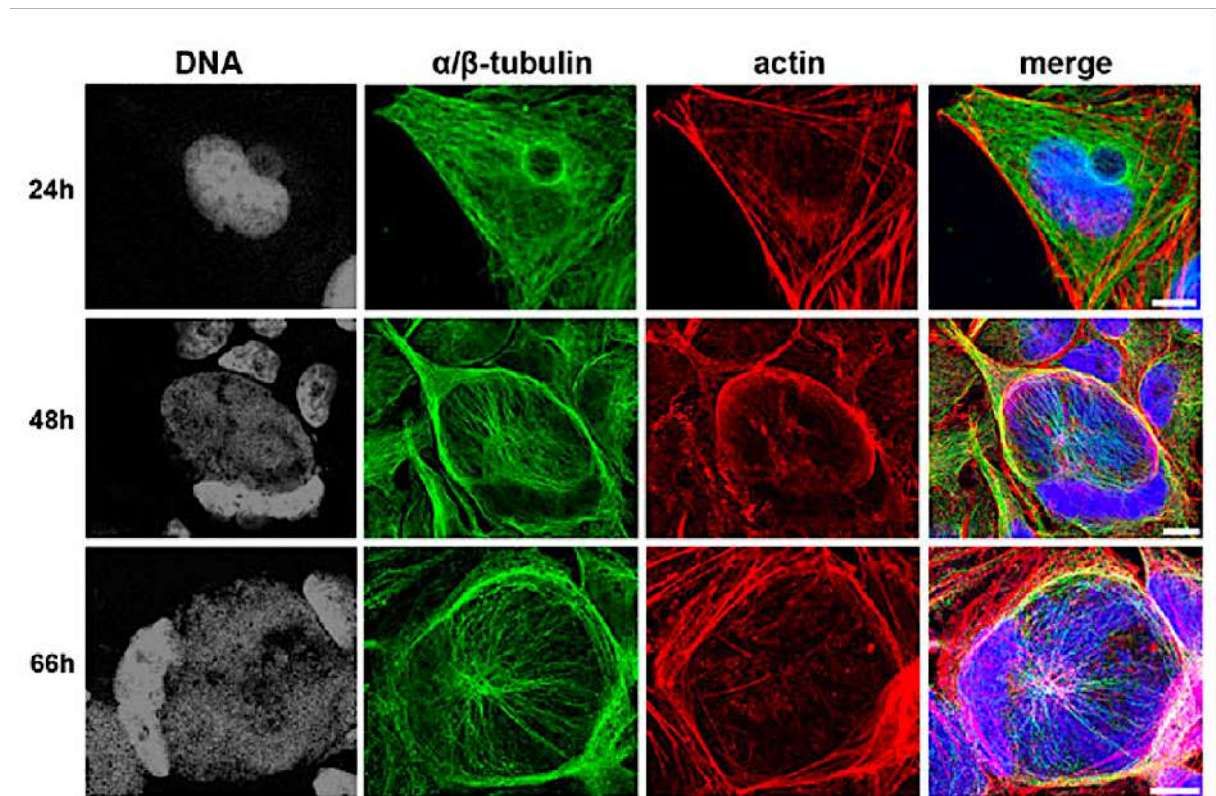


Figure 8. Organization of actin and tubulin around *C. trachomatis* inclusions

HeLa cells were infected with *C. trachomatis* and fixed at three time point (24, 48 and 66 h). Cells were stained for confocal microscopy which revealed tubulin (green) and actin (red) filaments surrounding the inclusion. DNA is represented in grey and inclusions are marked by stars. Maximum projections obtained from z-stacks are represented. Scale bars: 10 μ m. (Dumoux et al., 2015)

c. Back to where we started

i. The RB to EB conversion

RBs differentiate back into EBs in an asynchronous manner, with the first EB appearing 24 hpi (Belland et al., 2003; Shaw et al., 2000). The trigger for RB to EB conversion remains to be elucidated, with several hypotheses being considered. The contact-dependent hypothesis speculates that the RBs conversion into EBs could be initiated through detachment of RBs from the inclusion membrane resulting in the disruption of the RBs T3S system activity (Wilson et

al., 2006). Wilson et al. (2009) tested that hypothesis by recording live-cell imaging of *C. trachomatis* infected cells and tracking individual chlamydial particles. They observed that RBs that were almost immobile were tethered to the membrane and coincidentally detach from it preceding conversion into EBs (Wilson et al., 2009). A recent hypothesis proposes that the bacterial size itself, below a certain threshold, triggers the conversion. This hypothesis is based on the observation that the average diameter of RBs tends to diminish with time, and is supported by mathematical models (Lee et al., 2018). Finally, confrontation of mathematical models with video recording of bacteria expressing fluorescent tracers recently suggested that RB-to-EB development followed a cell-autonomous program that does not respond to environmental cues (Chiarelli et al., 2020).

Prior to RB to EB conversion, late cycle genes are expressed. Those include the *hctA* and *hctB* genes coding for the histone-like protein Hc1 and Hc2 whose role is to condense DNA (Barry et al., 1993; Brickman et al., 1993; Belland et al., 2003). Another step involved in this conversion is the expression of genes encoding proteins such as OmcA and OmcB necessary for re-assembly of the COMC. In addition, the COMC goes back to its highly disulfide cross-linked state, probably through isomerases that are expressed in the late cycle (AbdelRahman and Belland, 2005; Belland et al., 2003). The disulfide bonds in the T3S apparatus go through the same fate as in the COMC (Betts-Hampikian and Fields, 2011).

Various stress factors including antibiotics treatments or nutritional deficiency can trigger chlamydial persistence by mechanisms not fully understood yet. This state is characterized by the presence of enlarge, but still viable, aberrant bodies, with a quiescent metabolism (Reviewed in Mpiga and Ravaoarino, 2006).

ii. Cellular exit

Chlamydial egress from host cells happens through two mutually exclusive pathways, lysis and extrusion (Figure 6).

Lysis is a fast step-wise process, starting with inclusion membrane, followed by plasma membrane, permeabilization. Within 15 min, for *C. trachomatis* serovar L2, the cell lyses with the plasma membrane rupturing, a process relying on cysteine proteases.

During extrusion, inclusions exit cells which remain intact as well as inclusions themselves. Extrusion is a slower process than lysis, that can take up to 3 h. It starts with pinching of the inclusion, followed by a protrusion out of the cell then finally detachment from the cell (Hybiske and Stephens, 2007). Extrusion is a calcium dependent process. Indeed,

Nguyen et al. (2018), discovered an interaction between the Inc protein MrcA and a Ca²⁺ channel and proved, through knockdown and mutagenesis experiments, that Ca²⁺ signaling pathways are required for *C. trachomatis* release (Nguyen et al., 2018). This process requires actin polymerization, neuronal Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome protein (WASP), myosin II and the RhoA GTPase (Hybiske and Stephens, 2007). Extrusion also involves the myosin phosphatase pathway with the active myosin phosphatase targeting subunit 1 (MYPT1) interacting with an Inc protein which has been shown to be involved in cell exit, CT228. Moreover, silencing myosin light chain II (MLC2), myosin light chain kinase (MLCK), and myosin IIA and IIB reduced extrusion formation of *C. trachomatis* suggesting their importance in this exit mechanism (Lutter et al., 2013). Released inclusions being intact, extrusion enhances survival of EBs extracellularly and would prevent immune response from host cells. Moreover, extruded bacteria can be engulfed by macrophages and dendritic cells, and might lead to the release of still infectious particles if they survive in these cells (Sherrid and Hybiske, 2017; Zuck et al., 2017).

III. *Chlamydia trachomatis* interactions with its host cell

1. The central role of type 3 secretion

Over the course of infection, chlamydiae translocate a number of “effector” proteins across the inclusion membrane, to facilitate invasion and establish a suitable replication niche, as detailed below. Three different secretion systems are encoded in *Chlamydiaceae* genomes: type 2, 3 and 5 secretion system (T2S system, T3S system, and T5S system, respectively) (Fields, 2012; Henderson and Lam, 2001; Stephens, 1998) (Figure 9). The main mechanism for effectors’ transport into the host cytoplasm is the T3S system. The T3S apparatus resembles a molecular syringe referred to as injectisome. It is composed of over 20 proteins coded by at least 4 gene clusters, spread across chlamydial genome (Galán et al., 2014). Phylogenetic studies reveal that the T3S system has evolved from a flagellum that lost its motion ability and gained a protein transport one (Abby and Rocha, 2012; Galán et al., 2014).

The T3S apparatus is activated upon contact of the tip of injectisome’ needle and the host cell membrane (Nans et al., 2014). Effectors are then directly delivered in their target’s cytoplasm with the help of chaperone proteins. Indeed, secretion through the injectisome requires effectors to be unfolded which is facilitated by chaperon proteins (Dai and Li, 2014; Pais et al., 2013; Parsot, 2003; Spaeth et al., 2009). T3S dependent effectors possess a secretion

signal in their first 20-25 amino acids, which is not fully characterized and is highly variable, (Galán et al., 2014). Machine learning techniques have been developed in order to predict which effector protein uses the T3S system (An et al., 2016). They are only partly successful at identifying T3S effectors in *Chlamydiaceae*.

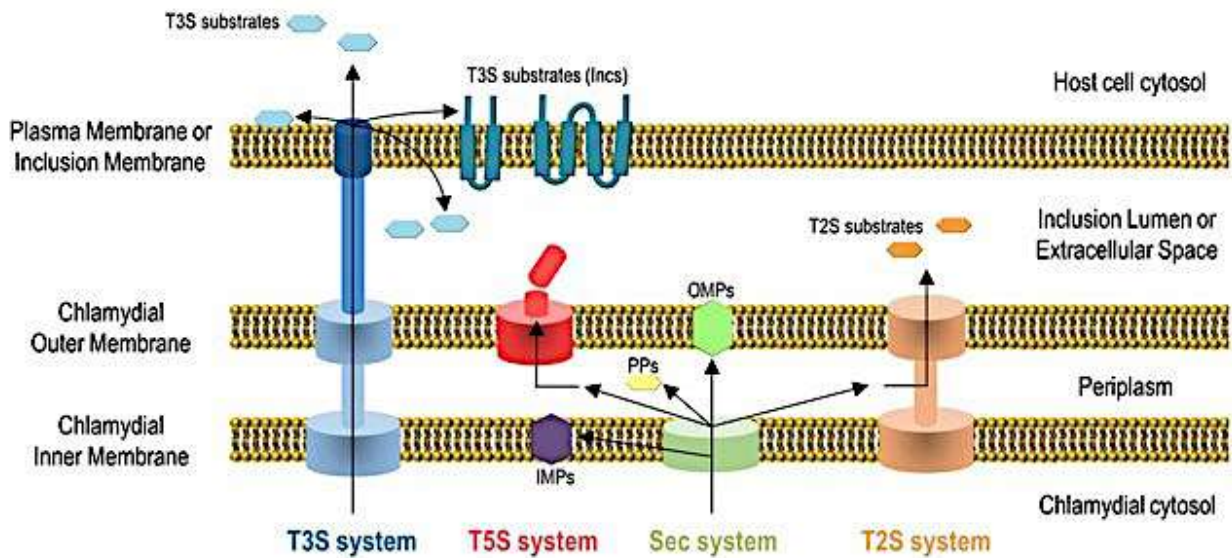


Figure 9. Diversity of *C. trachomatis* secretion systems

C. trachomatis as other members of the *Chlamydiaceae* family uses multiple systems in order to secrete effectors into the host. Secretion can be done in a one step process (through the T3S system), or in a two steps process (through the T2S system, T5S system, and the sec system). Abbreviations: OMPs: Outer membrane proteins; PPs: periplasmic proteins; IMPs: Inner membrane protein (Bugalhão and Mota, 2019)

Some effectors, such as CPAF (chlamydial protease-like activity factor), are secreted through other pathways. Indeed, CPAF is translocated into the chlamydial periplasm through a general secretory pathway, the Sec-dependent pathway. Its secretion into the host cytoplasm from the periplasm is unclear. It has been hypothesized that its process could happen through either the T2S pathway or through budding vesicles from the outer membrane that would fuse with the inclusion membrane prior to release in the cytoplasm (Chen et al., 2010).

2. T3S effectors target numerous cellular activities

C. trachomatis genome codes for probably close to 80-100 effectors that are either released into the host cytoplasm, in the inclusion lumen, or inserted in the inclusion membrane. The latter are called Inc proteins and represent probably the largest class of effectors. Indeed, over 50 effectors have been predicted to be Incs, based on the bilobed hydrophobic domain

which anchors Incs in the inclusion membrane, as they are exposed toward the cytosol (Bannantine et al., 2000; Dehoux et al., 2011; Li et al., 2008; Lutter et al., 2012).

Due to the fact that *Chlamydia* was intractable to genetic manipulations, identification of chlamydial T3S dependent effectors has been based for years on heterologous secretion assays using genetically tractable bacteria possessing a functional T3S system such as *Yersinia pseudotuberculosis* or *Shigella flexneri* (da Cunha et al., 2014; Subtil et al., 2005). The development of a transformation method for *C. trachomatis*, has since opened the door to more direct characterization of these effector proteins (Wang et al., 2011).

So far, multiple roles have been identified for chlamydial effectors, from protecting bacteria from the host to promoting a successful infection. As mentioned in the previous section, cytoskeleton reorganization is induced by infection upon bacterial entry (Balana, 2005; Carabeo et al., 2002; Clifton et al., 2005; Thalmann et al., 2010) and during the pathogen development (Dumoux et al., 2015). Effectors are also involved in apoptosis inhibition (Rajalingam et al., 2008a; Sarkar, 2015; Sixt et al., 2017; Weber et al., 2017), modulation of the immune response (Carpenter et al., 2017; Chen et al., 2014; Patton et al., 2016; Rajeeve, 2018), and also in interfering with various cellular trafficking routes, discussed more in detailed below (Paul et al., 2017; Stanhope et al., 2017; Wesolowski et al., 2017).

3. *Chlamydia* hijack resource from their hosts

a. The inclusion membrane is an interaction platform

The inclusion membrane represents a barrier protecting on one hand the pathogen during its development from the host, but on the other hand, it limits access to host nutrients. In fact, while the inclusion membrane is likely permeable to some ions (Grieshaber et al., 2002) and molecules larger than 520 Da cannot pass through (Heinzen and Hackstadt, 1997). Thus, obtaining various nutrients from the host requires transport channels, or fusion with various host compartments containing the nutrients needed (Figure 10) (Triboulet and Subtil, 2019). Several host proteins known to regulate intracellular traffic such as Rab GTPases and SNAREs proteins are present at the inclusion membrane, in such a way that this vacuole, which has co-evolved with the eukaryotic cell, can be considered just like another intracellular compartment, following the “rules” of intracellular traffic (Aeberhard et al., 2015; Herweg et al., 2015; Saka et al., 2011). Most interactions between the inclusion membrane and intracellular compartments are mediated by Incs, although it is likely not their exclusive role, as they also contribute to the maintenance of the integrity of the inclusion membrane (Moore and Ouellette, 2014).

b. *Chlamydia* hijack the vesicular traffic

i. *Chlamydia* control their interactions with host organelles

Chlamydia obtain nutrients required for their proper development by hijacking multiple organelles. Rab GTPases are key regulators in membrane trafficking. Multiple endosomal and Golgi associated Rabs have been associated with inclusions. Some are species specific, with Rab 6, for instance, which is only recruited by *C. trachomatis* or Rab 10 only by *C. pneumoniae* and *C. muridarum*, while Rab 1, 4, and 11 are recruited by all three (Damiani et al., 2014; Rzomp et al., 2003) (Figure 10). Recruitment of Golgi associated Rabs such as Rab6, 11 and 14 allow the rerouting of exocytic vesicles rich in lipids (Rzomp et al., 2003). Another pathway hijacked by *Chlamydia* is the slow transferring recycling pathway, mediated by Rabs 4 and 11. Disrupting this pathway, which could be a source of iron for the pathogen impaired bacterial growth (Ouellette and Carabeo, 2010) and is mediated by the Inc protein CT229 (Faris et al., 2019). CT229 also regulates trafficking of mannose-6-phosphate receptor, a marker of late endosomes which have also been associated with the inclusion (Faris et al., 2019).

Rabs also allow vesicles fusion by recruiting lipid kinases. The latter enriches the inclusion membrane with Golgi-specific lipid phosphatidylinositol-4-phosphate (PI4P) probably disguising it as a Golgi compartment (Damiani et al., 2014; Moorhead et al., 2010) (Figure 10).

Vesicles fusion with the inclusion membrane is mediated by specific SNAREs which allow rerouting of the Golgi exocytic pathway for instance (Gitsels et al., 2019). Some effectors such as InaA, InaC and IPAM possess SNARE-like motifs. While SNARE-like molecules at the inclusion surface may facilitate fusion with some compartments, it might in some instances have an inhibitory role, for instance by limiting the fusion with lysosomes, (Delevoye et al., 2008; Kokes and Valdivia, 2012; Ronzone and Paumet, 2013). Nonetheless, even though *Chlamydia* inhibit lysosomal fusion, lysosomes remain in close proximity to inclusions. This allows the pathogen to hijack lysosomal derived amino acids and or oligopeptides (Ouellette et al., 2011). The same was also observed for autophagic vesicles, that remain close to the inclusion, without proceeding into a xenophagic stage. *Chlamydia* might intercept these vesicles to get more nutrients (Al-Younes et al., 2004).

Another target of *Chlamydia* is the Golgi apparatus. Infection induced Golgi fragmentation into mini stacks surrounding the inclusion (Heuer et al., 2009). This phenomenon involves multiple host proteins and at least the effector CT813/InaC which bind Arf GTPases and the 14-3-3 proteins to remodel F-actin and microtubule, and to recruit Golgi mini stacks to

the inclusion (Al-Zeer et al., 2014; Kokes et al., 2015). Those mini stacks could be a source of lipids, such as sphingomyelin and cholesterol, for bacteria. However, Golgi fragmentation (Gurumurthy et al., 2014) along with the presence of InaC (Kokes et al., 2015) were shown to be dispensable for lipids delivery in inclusions. Thus, this indicates that *Chlamydia* acquire lipids through multiple routes and that Golgi fragmentation may play another role during infection.

Mitochondria have also been reported to be associated with inclusions of *C. caviae* and *C. psittaci* (Vanrompay et al., 1996). Chlamydial dependence or exact interaction with mitochondria remain to be elucidated, especially since mitochondrial interactions seems to be species specific. Nonetheless, *Chlamydia* could use mitochondria for energy metabolites, or associate with them in order to prevent them to release cytochrome C, which is an apoptotic signal (Gitsels et al., 2019; Kokes and Valdivia, 2012).

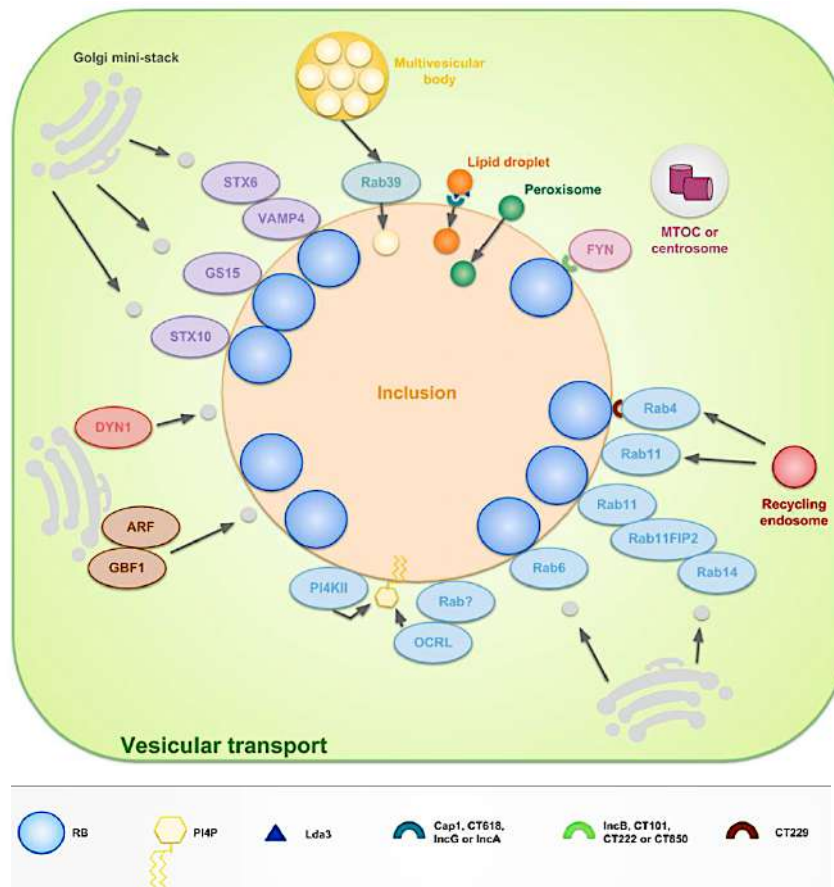


Figure 10. Schematic representation of *C. trachomatis* vesicular transport pathway

Throughout infection, *C. trachomatis* interacts selectively with host organelles. Those interactions are mediated by inclusions membrane proteins, recruitment of cellular trafficking regulators or direct uptake of host organelles. Endosomal (1, 4, 6, 11) and Golgi-associated Rab proteins (6, 11 and 14) allow interaction with those compartments. *C. trachomatis* also hijacks phosphatidylinositol-4-phosphate (PI4P) from fragmented Golgi surrounding the inclusion. It also interacts with Trans-Golgi SNARE proteins syntaxin 6 and 10 (STX10, STX6), vesicle associated membrane protein 4 (VAMP4), and GS15 which regulate the Golgi exocytic pathway. The inclusion membrane protein IncaA, InaC and IPAM prevent lysosomal fusion

through their SNARE-like motifs. Some organelles are translocated directly into the inclusions, namely multivesicular bodies (MVBs), lipid droplets and peroxisomes which provide lipids to the bacteria. Acquisition of sphingomyelin from the host is regulated by the host FYN kinase and depends on the Arf1 GTPase/ Golgi-specific Brefeldin A resistance factor 1 (GBF1) pathway. Dynamin (DYN1) which allows formation of vesicles from the trans-Golgi network is required for *C. trachomatis* growth. Adapted from (Gitsels et al., 2019)

ii. Some organelles are translocated into the inclusion

Some of *Chlamydia* targets are lipid droplets (LDs) which are storage organelles from the ER for neutral lipids or long fatty chain acids. They are indeed observed in the lumen of inclusions where they could be used to generate energy or as a fatty acid source for the inclusion membrane (Figure 10) (Cocchiario et al., 2008; Kokes and Valdivia, 2012; Martin and Parton, 2006). During infection, LDs proteome becomes enriched in proteins involved in lipid metabolism and biosynthesis (Saka et al., 2015). Some of those LD associated proteins are found inside inclusions and can even influence *Chlamydia* by modulating their effector activity. This is the case for CT775 whose acyltransferase activity is regulated by the ACBD6 protein (acyl-coA-binding domain containing protein 6) thus affecting phosphatidylcholine formation in *C. trachomatis* (Soupene et al., 2012, 2015). LDs are associated with the chlamydial proteins Lda1, 2, and 3. A mechanistic model has only been proposed for the role of Lda3 in lipid droplets translocation into the inclusion. Secreted Lda3 would bind LDs close to the inclusion, after what it will be tethered to the membrane by an hypothetical Inc protein, before being engulfed in the inclusion (Cocchiario et al., 2008). Other chlamydial proteins are associated with LDs namely IncA, IncG, Cap1 and CTL0882 which may each have a specific role in LDs translocations (Cocchiario et al., 2008; Saka et al., 2015).

Other chlamydial targets are peroxisomes and multivesicular bodies (MVBs) (Figure 10). Indeed both have been observed in the inclusions (Beatty, 2006; Boncompain et al., 2014). The mechanism of peroxisomes' import into the inclusion lumen is still unclear. In addition, they were shown to be dispensable to bacterial development as bacteria can develop and produce infectious progenies in cells deprived of peroxisomes biogenesis (Boncompain et al., 2014). As for MVBs, they are a source of lipids such as sphingomyelin, cholesterol and phospholipids for *Chlamydia* (Beatty, 2006). Effectors allowing MVBs translocation have not been identified, however, the host GTPase Rab39 contributes to its delivery in inclusions (Gambarte Tudela et al., 2015).

Chlamydia also hijack multiple vesicular pathways in order to acquire lipids (Figure 10). Some of them involve dynamin (Gurumurthy et al., 2014), the FYN kinase (Elwell and

Engel, 2012; Mital and Hackstadt, 2011), or the Arf GTPase and the Arf exchange factor GBF1 (Elwell et al., 2011; Moorhead et al., 2010; Reiling et al., 2013), just to name a few.

c. *Chlamydia* also acquires lipids through non-vesicular pathways

The fusion of host compartments with the inclusion membrane contributes to inclusion expansion. Another strategy used by *Chlamydia* to acquire lipids is by taking over non-vesicular pathways (Figure 11). The lipid transporter “CERamide transport protein” (CERT) is enriched at ER-inclusion membrane contact sites (MCSs), where it directly binds the effector IncD in order to redirect non-vesicular transport of ceramide to the inclusion. (Agaisse and Derré, 2014; Derré et al., 2011; Elwell et al., 2011). Once at the inclusion, ceramide is converted into sphingomyelin probably by the sphingomyelin synthase 2 (SMS2), also recruited at the MCSs (Derré et al. 2011; Elwell et al., 2011). The MCSs are also enriched with the ER-resident “vesicle-associated membrane protein-associated protein” (VAP) B, whose recruitment is mediated by the CERT/IncD interaction, others VAPs which interacts with IncV (Stanhope et al., 2017), and the ER calcium sensor Stromal interaction molecule 1 (STIM1) whose role is still unclear as its depletion does not affect *C. trachomatis* growth (Agaisse and Derre, 2015), in contrast to CERT and VAPB (Derré et al., 2011; Elwell et al., 2011).

In addition, even though the mechanism is still unclear, *Chlamydia* was shown to depend on members of the HDL (high density lipoprotein) biogenesis machinery, which controls cholesterol and phospholipids efflux (Cox et al., 2012; Samanta et al., 2017). *C. trachomatis* hijacks a host lipid transport system normally involved in the biogenesis of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) by mediating efflux of cholesterol and phospholipid. The lipid binding proteins ATP-binding cassette transporters A1 (ABCA1), CD36 and LIMPII Analogous-1 (CLA1) and Apolipoprotein A1 (ApoA) localize at the inclusion membrane. Moreover, inhibition of ABCA1 and CLA1 activity prevented phospholipid recruitment to the inclusion and prevented *C. trachomtis* growth (Cox et al., 2012). Host glycerophospholipids are also stolen by *Chlamydia* through the activation of the cytosolic phospholipase A2 (ERK-cPLA2) signaling pathway (Elwell and Engel, 2012; Su et al., 2004).

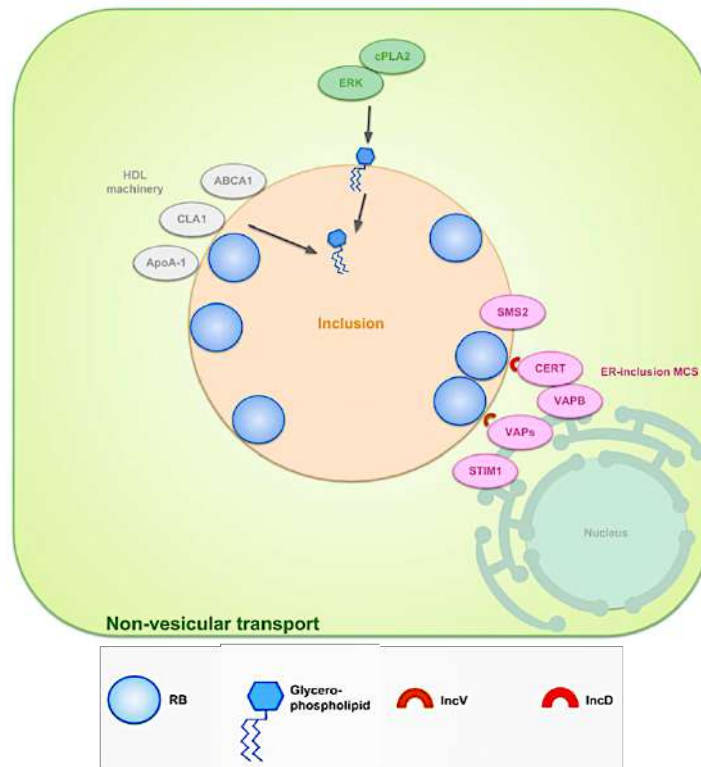


Figure 11. Schematic representation of *C. trachomatis* non-vesicular transport pathway

C. trachomatis also uses a non-vesicular pathway to acquire lipids. Glycerophospholipids are hijacked through activation of the cytosolic phospholipase A2 (ERK-cPLA2) signaling pathway. ER derived sphingomyelin is obtained at ER-inclusion membrane contact sites (MCS). The latter are enriched in “ceramide endoplasmic reticulum transport” (CERT) protein, ER-resident vesicle-associated membrane protein-associated protein (VAP) B, sphingomyelin synthase 2 (SMS2) and Stromal interaction molecule 1 (STIM1) which ER calcium sensor. CERT and other VAPs interacts at the inclusion membrane with IncD and IncV, respectively. HDL machinery is also recruited at the inclusion membrane to facilitate obtention of phospholipids. This includes ATP-binding cassette transporters A1 (ABCA1), CD36 and LIMPII Analogous-1 (CLA1) and Apolipoprotein A1 (ApoA). Adapted from (Gitsels et al., 2019)

4. Nutriments transport across the inclusion membrane

Promoting fusion of selected organelles with the inclusion membrane allows the bacteria to feed the inclusion with nutriment contained within these fusing vesicles. It also provides a mean to supply the inclusion membrane with host-derived membrane transporters, that can now function to feed the bacteria. This seems to be the mechanism by which *Chlamydia* acquire biotin, a vitamin and a cofactor for carboxylase enzymes. Its uptake involves the host protein sodium multivitamin transporter (SMVT) which is recruited at the inclusion membrane allowing entry into the inclusion. Then, RBs import it into the bacterial cytoplasm through their biotin transporter, BioY (Fisher et al., 2012). Another illustration is glucose import into the inclusion which is mediated by the UDP-glucose transporter, SLC35D2, (Gehre et al., 2016) which is also an N-acetylglucosamine transporter.

Intriguingly, proteomic studies identified only one transporter at the inclusion membrane, SLC7A5 (a transporter for neutral amino acids) (Aeberhard et al., 2015). This is probably due to the fact that these membrane-imbedded proteins often escape identification by mass spectrometry. It is likely that many host-derived transporters remained to be identified at the inclusion membrane. Inc proteins might also contribute to nutrient transport across this lipidic barrier.

IV. Metabolism seen from two angles

1. Glucose metabolism in mammalian cells

a. Glucose as a source of energy

Glucose is one of the main carbon sources used by mammalian cells to generate energy. (Figure 12). Upon entry into glycolysis, this six-carbon molecule is broken down into three-carbon molecules. Under normal oxygen levels the end product, pyruvate, is then tunneled into the Kreb's cycle, also designated as the tricarboxylic acid (TCA) cycle (Figure 13). Throughout those pathways, but mostly in the TCA cycle, the redox cofactors nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD⁺) and flavin adenine dinucleotide (FADH⁺) are reduced into NADH,H⁺ and FADH₂, respectively (Figure 12, Figure 13).

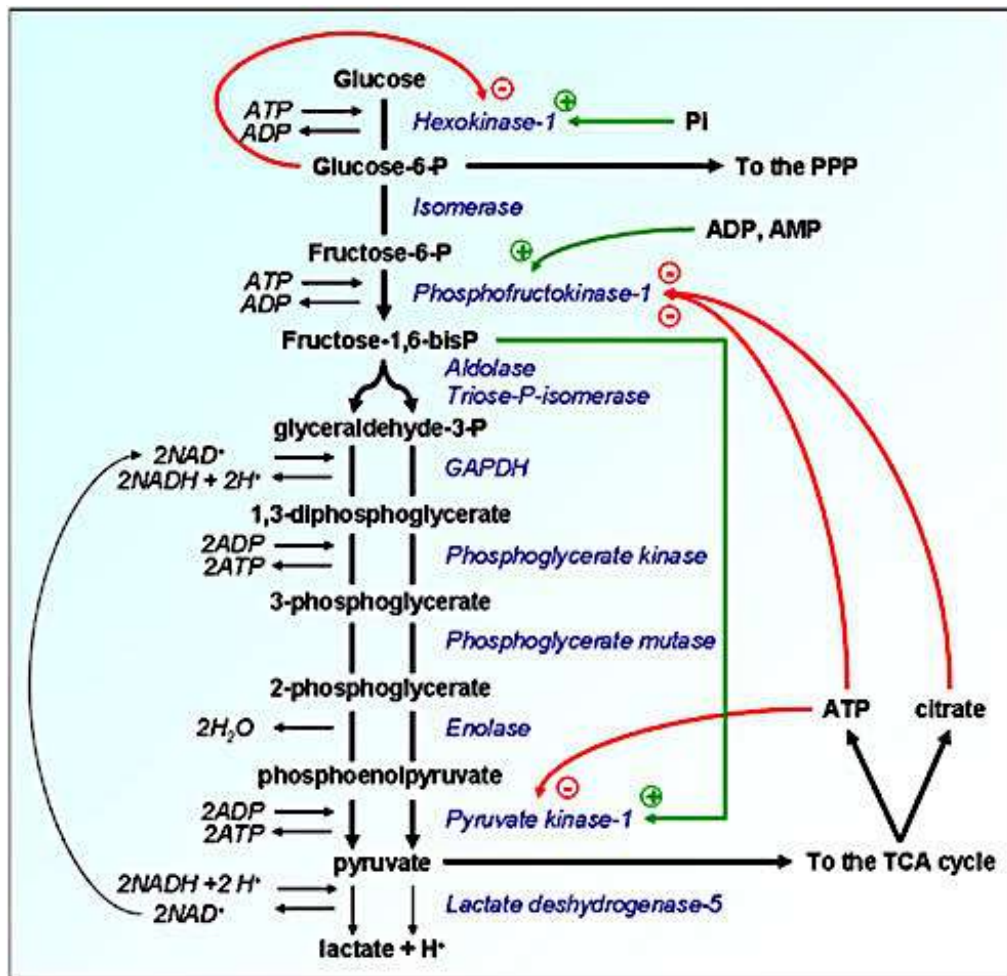


Figure 12. Glycolysis pathway and its regulation

In glycolysis, glucose is broken down after multiple steps into pyruvate. Under normal oxygen levels, the latter mostly enters the TCA cycle, otherwise, it is converted into lactate. Glycolysis flux is influenced by three key enzymes namely hexokinase, phosphofructokinase-1 and pyruvate kinase (Porporato et al., 2011)

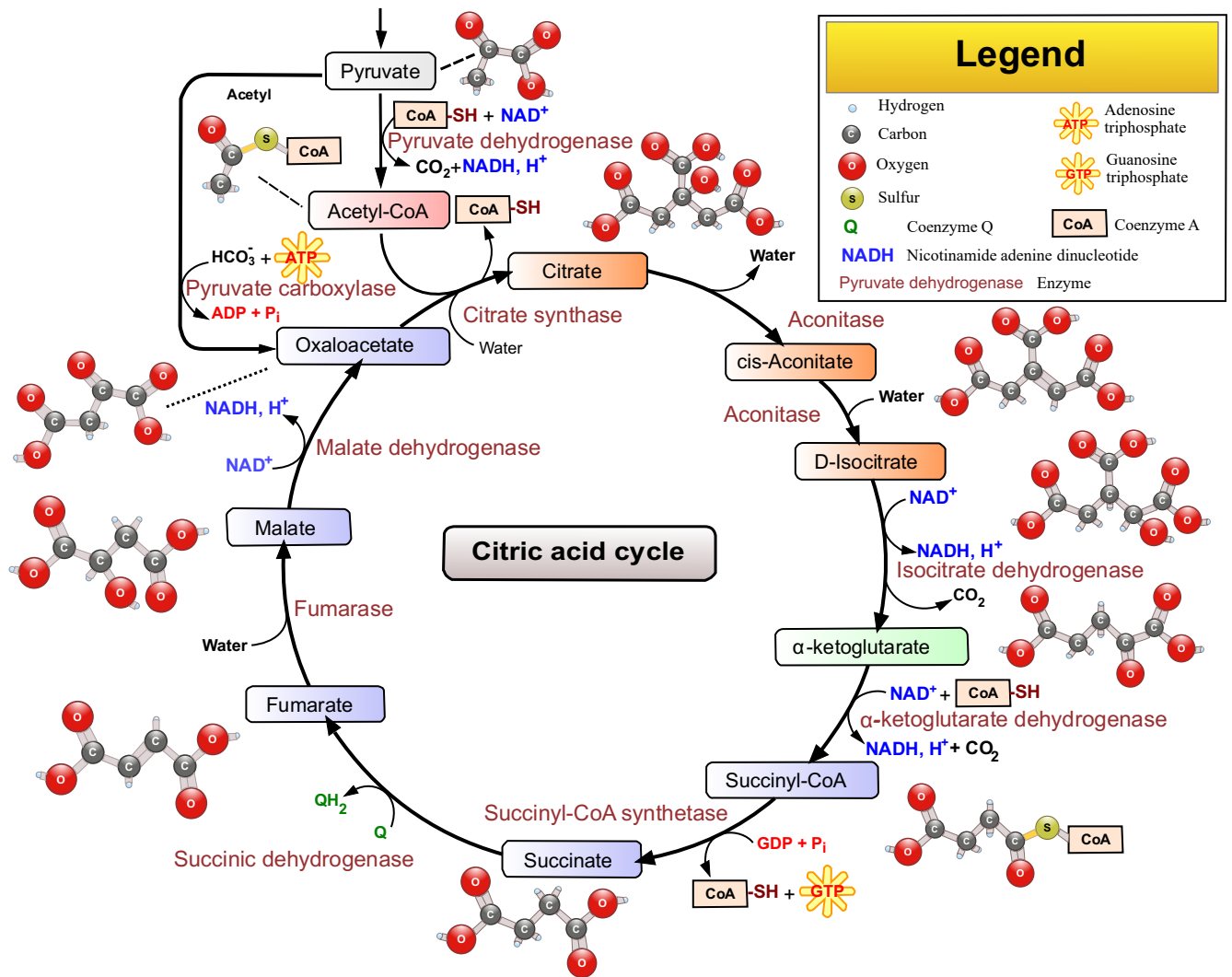


Figure 13. The citric acid or TCA cycle

The TCA cycle is initiated by the conversion of pyruvate into acetyl-CoA which is first converted itself into citrate followed by a succession of conversions leading back to citrate. In this pathway mostly, the redox cofactors NAD^+ and FADH^+ are converted into NADH, H^+ or FADH_2 , providing them reducing power. Wikipedia.

The reduction power of the cofactors is used during oxidative phosphorylation (OxPhos) which occurs in the inner membrane of the mitochondria (Figure 14). Indeed, during this last step, an electron is transferred from either a molecule of NADH, H^+ or FADH_2 to a series of electron acceptor molecules, the last of which being a dioxygen molecule. This generates a water molecule on one hand and creates a proton gradient in the inner mitochondrial membrane, on the other hand. Proton then move down their concentration gradient into the mitochondrial matrix through ATP synthase, referred to as complex V. This results in the activation of the latter, which couples phosphate to adenosine diphosphate (ADP) producing cell's energy currency adenosine triphosphate (ATP) (Figure 14). The complete oxidation of one glucose molecule produces around 36 molecules of ATP (2 ATP from glycolysis, 2 ATP

equivalent, GTP, from the TCA cycle; 32 ATP from OxPhos), with OxPhos being the major contributor to ATP production.

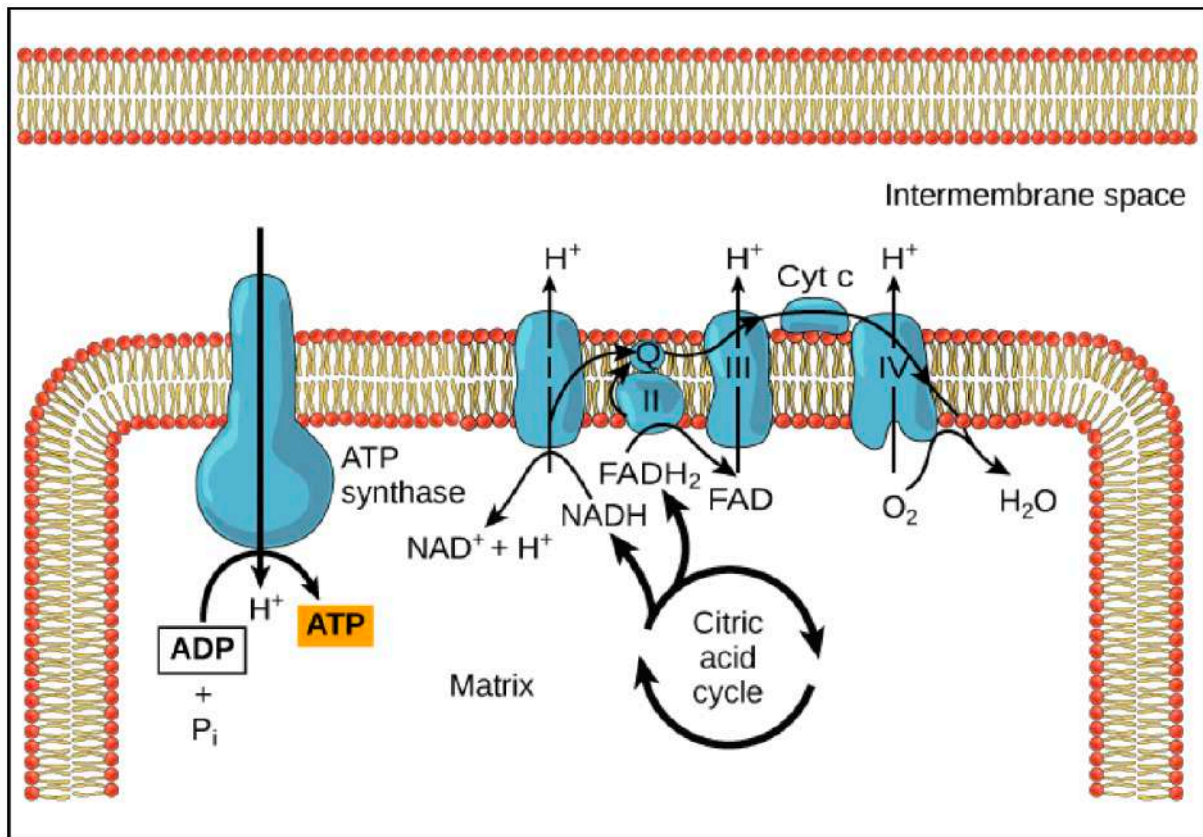


Figure 14. Oxidative phosphorylation (OxPhos) overview

OxPhos occurs in the inner mitochondrial membrane. NADH, H⁺ or FADH₂ are re-oxidized by the complex I (I) and complex II (II), respectively. The resulting electrons produced through the oxidation reactions are transferred to other complexes (III and IV) and intermediate molecules (ubiquinone (Q), ant cytochrome c (cyt c)), then to the final electron acceptor oxygen (O₂). An efflux of protons from mitochondrial matrix into the intermembrane space is generated during this process which is stabilized by ATP synthase (complex V). The latter pumps protons back into the matrix coupling it with ATP molecules generation.

(<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/wm-biology1/chapter/reading-electron-transport-chain/>)

b. Glucose metabolism intertwines with other metabolic pathways

Glucose hydrolysis generates diverse intermediates than can feed other metabolic pathways. One of those pathways involves G6P which results from glucose phosphorylation. G6P is converted into glucose-1-phosphate (G1P) by a phosphoglucomutase (PGM), then into UDP-glucose. The latter is in turn used to produce a glucose storage molecule, glycogen, through the glycogen synthesis pathway. G6P can also be redirected into the PPP (pentose phosphate pathway) which is divided into the oxidative and the non-oxidative phase (Figure 15). The oxidative phase generates the reducing cofactor Nicotinamide Adenine Dinucleotide Phosphate (NADPH). NADPH is involved in both promoting and reducing oxidative stress,

through the formation of free radicals and the antioxidant glutathione (GSH), respectively (Fisher and Zhang, 2006). The non-oxidative phase leads to the synthesis of pentose sugars including ribose-5-phosphate (R5P) which is a starting point for nucleotides synthesis. This phase is characterized by series of non-oxidative reactions resulting in the interconversion of carbon sugars containing either 3, 5, 6 or 7 carbons (Figure 15). PPP is also interconnected to glycolysis through the reversible conversion of R5P into glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate (G3P) and fructose-6-phosphate (F6P), two intermediates of glycolysis (Figure 15, Figure 16).

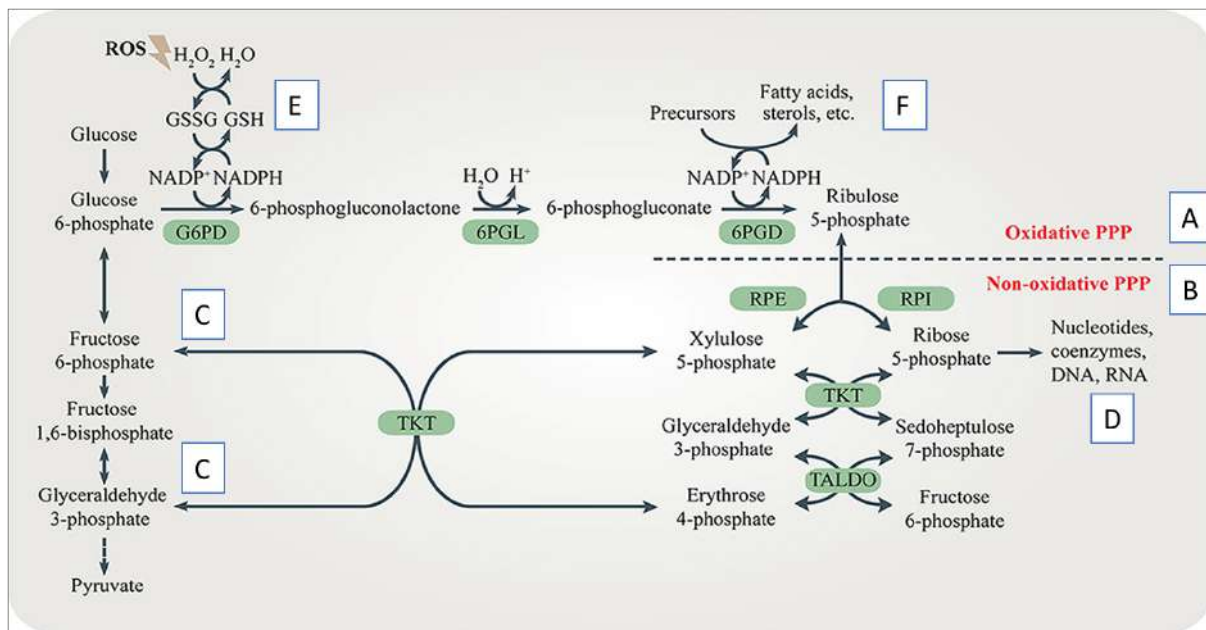


Figure 15. The Pentose Phosphate Pathway

PPP is divided in two phases: the oxidative phase where G6P is converted through multiple oxidation reactions into ribulose-5-phosphate (A), and the non-oxidative phase characterized by a series of reactions leading to various number-carbon molecules (B). Depending on cell needs, intermediates of the second phase can be re-shuffled into glycolysis (C). The two most important products of the PPP are ribose-5-phosphate sugar that is used for nucleotides synthesis and NADPH which is involved in multiple cellular processes (E and F) (adapted from (Ge et al., 2020))

Some non-essential amino acids biosynthesis pathways also rely on various intermediates from glucose metabolism. Those include alanine, serine, glutamate, and aspartate, that are respectively derived from pyruvate, 3-phosphoglycerate, α -ketoglutarate (also known as oxoglutarate) and oxaloacetate (Figure 16).

Another pathway relying on glucose degradation is the lipid biosynthesis pathway which uses acetyl-coA for fatty acid elongation and/or cholesterol biogenesis, and glycerol-3-phosphate and ceramide for fatty acid and sphingolipids biogenesis (Figure 16).

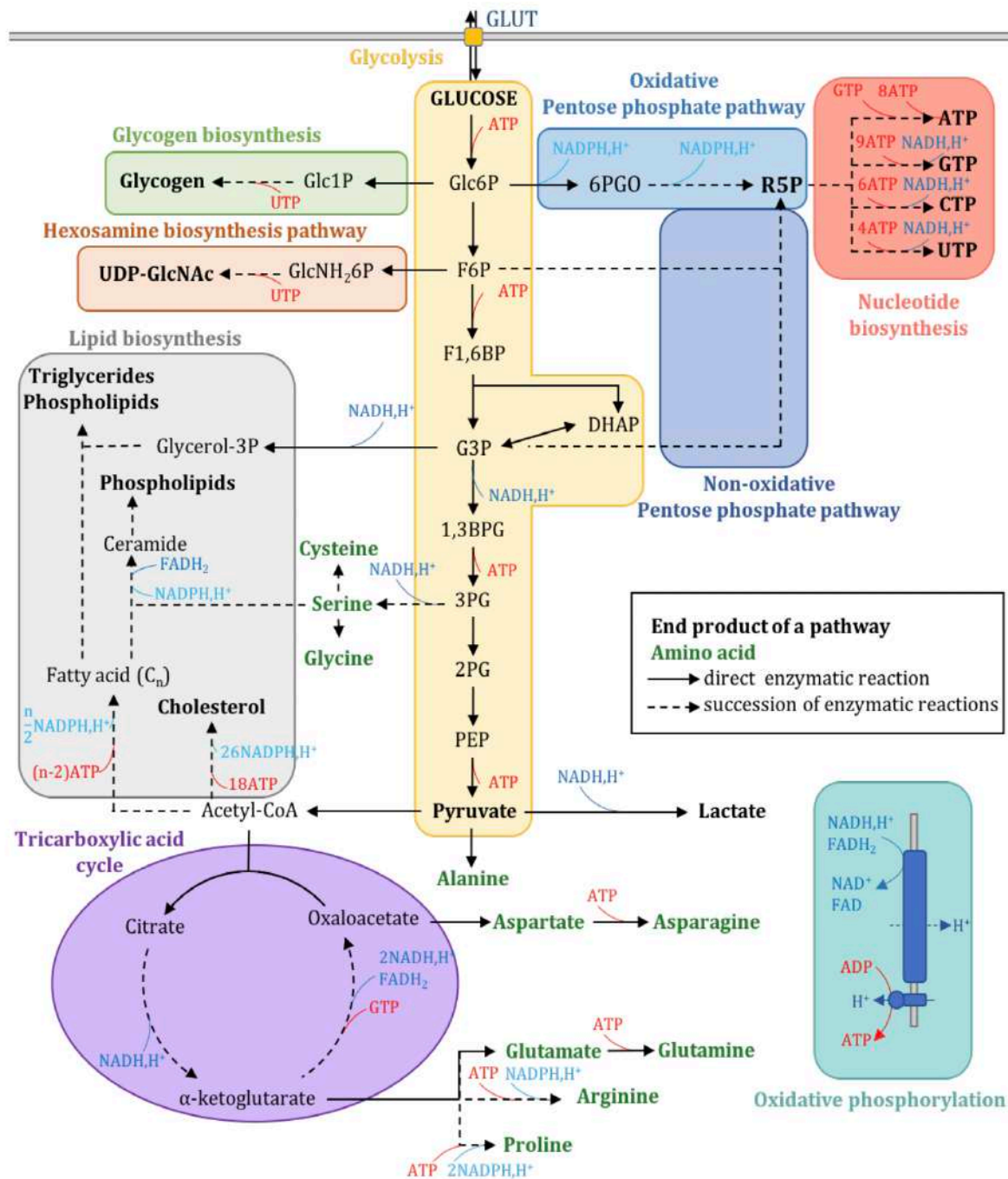


Figure 16. Metabolic network associated with Glucose metabolism

Abbreviations: Glucose-6-phosphate (Glc6P), fructose-6-phosphate (F6P), fructose-1,6-bisphosphate (F1,6BP), glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate (G3P), dihydroxyacetone-phosphate (DHAP), 1,3-bisphosphoglycerate (1,3BPG), 3-phosphoglycerate (3PG), 2-phosphoglycerate (2PG), phosphoenolpyruvate (PEP), Glucose-1-phosphate (Glc1P), 6-phosphogluconolactone (6PGO), ribose-5-phosphate (R5P), glucosamine-6-phosphate (GlcNH₂6P), uridine diphosphate-N-acetylglucosamine (UDP-GlcNAc). (Maffei, 2018)

One more pathway linked to glucose metabolism is the hexosamine biosynthesis pathway (HBP) which uses fructose-6-phosphate as its starting point (Figure 16). This pathway leads to the formation of UDP-N-acetylglucosamine (UDP-GlcNAc) which can further be

converted into other sugars that are in turn used in N- and O- linked glycosylation of Golgi and ER proteins. UDP-GlcNAc is also a substrate for O-N-acetylglycosylation, a post-translational modification that has been shown in vivo to modulate aging, cell proliferation, and histone remodeling or transcription (Denzel et al., 2014; Love and Hanover, 2005).

c. Glucose metabolism regulation

Three enzymes, namely hexokinase (HK), phosphofructokinase-1 (PFK1) and pyruvate kinase (PK) tightly regulate glycolysis and its opposite pathway, gluconeogenesis that synthesizes glucose from lactate. Both pathways are regulated so that one is always more active than its counterpart. Stimulation of one pathway over the other is determined by the amount and activity of specific enzymes of the pathway. For instance, an increase of AMP or ADP, demonstrating the need for additional energy or upstream metabolites, triggers PFK1. In contrast, indicators that of the pathway saturation such as high levels of ATP or citrate accumulation would instead inhibit PFK1 as well as PK, turning off glycolysis (Figure 12) (Jm et al., 2002).

Furthermore, under hypoxic conditions either due to environmental constraints or in an oncogenic context, the transcription factor HIF-1 (hypoxia inducible factor 1) stimulates glycolysis at different levels (Figure 17). On one hand, it increases the expression of both isoforms of glucose transporters, glucose transporter 1 and 3 (GLUT1 and GLUT3) resulting in an increase of glucose import, fueling glycolysis (Ebert et al., 1995, 1996). The HK isoform HK2 is also a target of HIF-1 which cooperates with the oncogene transcription factor c-Myc to activate it under hypoxia (Kim et al., 2007). HIF-1 and c-Myc duo also act together under hypoxia to transactivate pyruvate dehydrogenase kinase 1 (PDK1) (Figure 17), an inhibitor of pyruvate dehydrogenase (PDH) (Kim et al., 2007). PDH is the enzyme determining entry into the TCA cycle. Its inhibition redirects pyruvate into lactate production, leading to replenishing NAD⁺ pools. With low levels of dioxygen in hypoxia, electrons produced from the respiratory chain are coupled to water molecules producing reactive oxygen species (ROS). Thus, an additional advantage to PDH inhibition is the reduction of ROS production through a decrease activity of the electron transport chain (Kim et al., 2006). HIF-1 also induces expression of lactate dehydrogenase A (*LDHA*) which, in contrast to its isoform *LDHB* which has a lower affinity for pyruvate, favors fermentation by converting pyruvate into lactate, instead of going through OxPhos (Figure 17) (Doherty and Cleveland, 2013; Porporato et al., 2011)

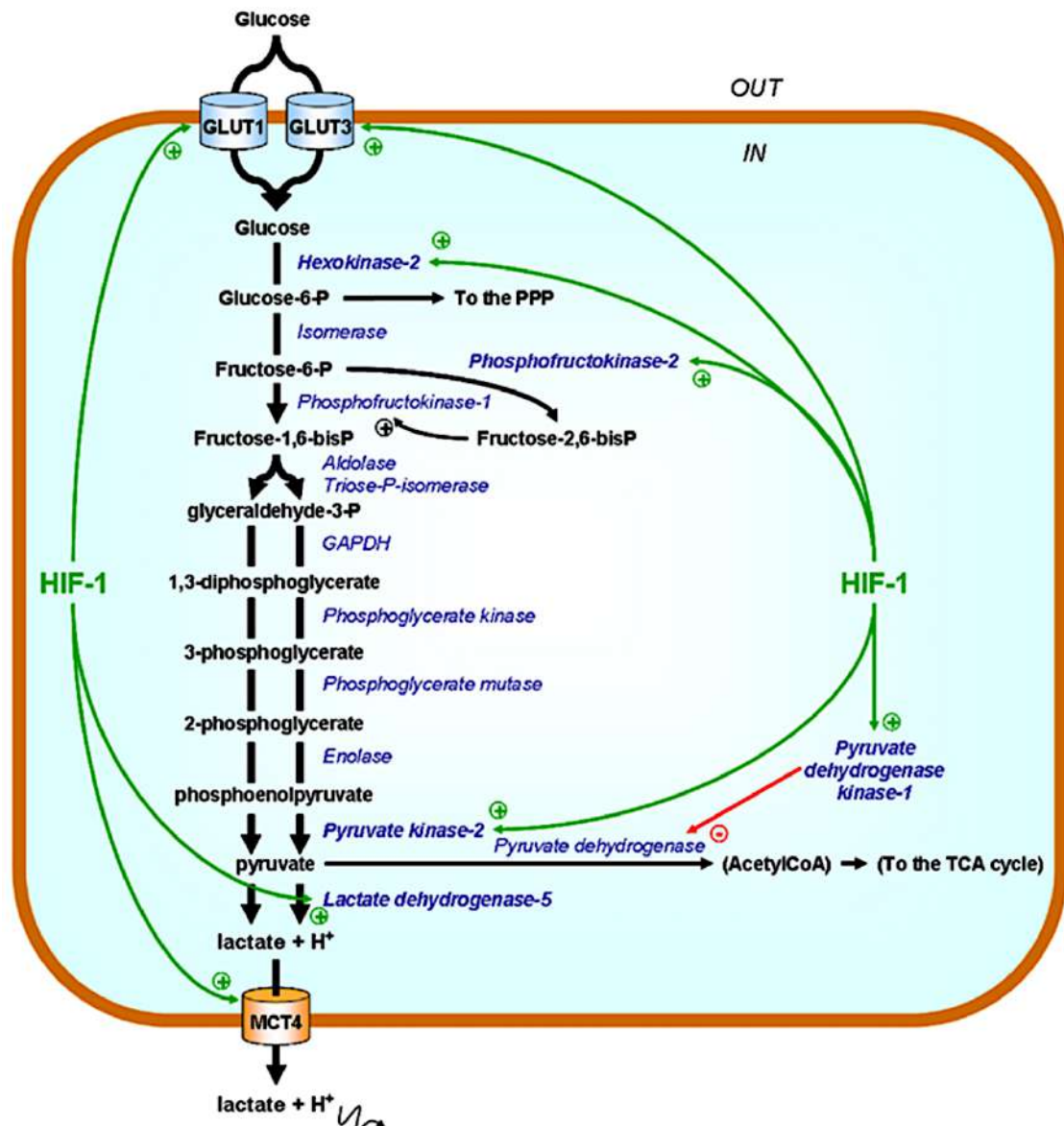


Figure 17. Glucose regulation by the transcription factor HIF-1

HIF-1 accelerates glycolytic flux by promoting the expression of glucose transporters, GLUT1 and GLUT3, and multiple glycolytic enzymes (green arrows) (Porporato et al., 2011)

Another key regulator of glycolysis is Fructose-2,6-bisphosphate (F2,6BP) which strongly stimulates PFK1 (Figure 17). Its level decreases during starvation resulting is higher predominance of gluconeogenesis over glycolysis (Jm et al., 2002). F2,6BP is made from Fructose-6-Phosphate (F6P) by phosphofructo-2-kinase/fructose-2,6-bisphosphatases (PFKFB). PFKFB are bifunctional enzymes that either stimulate the formation (through PFK2 activity) or degradation (through FBPase activity) of F2,6BP. HIF-1 targets one isoform, the *PFKFB3* gene (Minchenko et al., 2002), which mostly has a PFK2 activity. Under hypoxic conditions, that activity is increased by an AMP-activated protein kinase (AMPK)-dependent phosphorylation (Marsin et al., 2002) (Figure 17).

One of the four PK isoforms, PKM2 can transactivate glycolysis related genes by directly interacting with HIF-1 and enhancing its binding to its target genes (Luo et al., 2011). PKM2 is associated with increased nucleic acid synthesis in normal proliferating cells, embryonic cells and cancer cells (Porporato et al., 2011). It is more expressed in tumorigenic cells and it exists as an active tetrameric or a nearly inactive dimeric form. Its active form is stimulated by accumulation of upstream intermediates such as F1,6P and Serine, promoting glycolysis. The dimeric form is induced by accumulation of biosynthetic products downstream such as lipids, alanine and other amino acids (Mazurek, 2011). In addition, oxidative stress inhibits PKM2 activity along with another enzyme Glyceraldehyde phosphate dehydrogenase (GAPDH). GAPDH inhibition induces the accumulation of G6P which drives the metabolic flux into the PPP. This allows the generation of the antioxidant NADPH used to dampen the ROS effect (Anastasiou et al., 2011).

Other factors triggering entry into pathways linked to glycolysis is the amount of enzyme available. An example is the increase of glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) and transketolase (TKT) expression during replication. This probably results from the organism's needs of nucleotides for DNA synthesis, which is met through boosting the PPP (Vizán et al., 2009). In addition, glucosamine-fructose-6-phosphate amidotransferase (GFPT), the enzyme determining entry into HBP, is inhibited by the final product of that metabolic pathway, UDP-GlcNAc (Assrir et al., 2014).

d. The Warburg effect

Rapidly dividing cells such as cancer cells display high glycolytic rate similar to what occurs in fermentation, even in the presence of oxygen. This switch in metabolism is referred to as the Warburg effect (Figure 18). Under this state, key enzymes and transporters involved in glycolysis are upregulated, leading to an increase of lactate production and regeneration of redox cofactors. This metabolic state is not associated with dysfunctional mitochondria or OxPhos (Zu and Guppy, 2004).

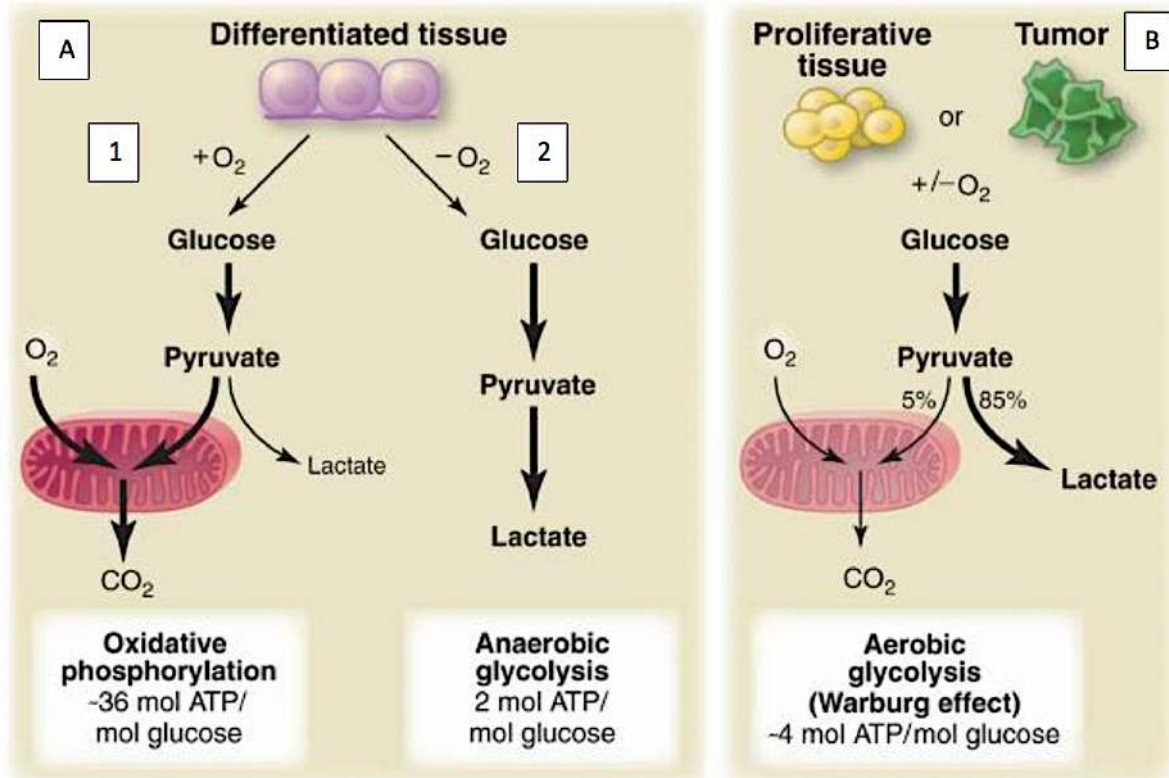


Figure 18 Glucose metabolism under different O₂ levels

Un normal levels of O₂, non-proliferating tissues metabolize glucose into pyruvate after what the latter mostly OxPhos (A.1). When O₂ becomes limiting, pyruvate can be redirected to lactate synthesis (anaerobic glycolysis, A.2) which however generates less ATP compared to OxPhos. In the Warburg effect (aerobic glycolysis), regardless of O₂ levels, pyruvate is mostly used for lactate production (B) (Vander Heiden et al., 2009).

Knowing that glycolysis produces less ATP than OxPhos, the question raises as to why this would be a preferred pathway for proliferating cells. One explanation is that producing less ATP would only become detrimental to cells in situations where resources become scarce. As long as glucose and other nutrients are available, the ATP produced would be sufficient to sustain cell growth. One advantage of increasing the glycolytic flow is that dividing cells require amino acids, lipids and nucleotides in addition to energy to replicate their cellular content. This can be met by reshuffling intermediates of glycolysis in the PPP for instance for the required nucleotides, or even NADH both for its antioxidant properties but also for its role in lipids synthesis. Thus, under circumstances where cells need to commit most of their carbon source available to producing intermediates such as: acetyl-coA and NADPH for lipids synthesis; glycolysis intermediates for non-essential amino acids synthesis, and ribose for nucleotides, switching to aerobic glycolysis might be advantageous (Vander Heiden et al., 2009).

As for cancer cells, the Warburg effect can also be advantageous due to the acidic environment created by increased lactate production which favors tumor growth (Swietach et al., 2007). Moreover, levels of O₂, which is required for ATP production through OxPhos, can fluctuate in tumor due to the distance from blood vessels. It is then not beneficial to entirely depend on the latter for ATP production (Pouyssegur et al., 2006).

2. An overview of *C. trachomatis*' metabolism

a. Investigating *Chlamydiae* metabolic features in the pre-genomic era

One technique for studying *Chlamydiae* involved infecting embryonated chicken eggs to cultivate the pathogen (Burnet and Rountree, 1935). Under these experimental conditions, amino acids such as glutamate (Perrin, 1952), and intermediates of glucose metabolism including glucose, glutamate, fumarate, succinate, α -ketoglutarate, and pyruvate (Allen and Bovarnick, 1957) were not oxidized by purified bacteria. This apparent lack of enzymatic capacities led to the theory that *Chlamydiae* entirely depended on their host's for energy supply, an idea presented by Moulder as the "energy parasite" hypothesis in the 1960s.

Further experiments began to clarify the metabolic capacities of *Chlamydiae* and to question that hypothesis. Weiss and colleagues demonstrated that *C. trachomatis* and *C. psittaci* are capable of utilizing glucose (Ormsbee and Weiss, 1963; Weiss et al., 1964). Indeed, they detected that high levels of radioactive CO₂ were released when using radio-labelled glucose (Ormsbee and Weiss, 1963). They also showed that the purified bacteria produced pyruvate from labelled D-glucose, confirming that glycolysis is active (Weiss et al., 1964). However, even though glycolysis should generate some ATP, several *Chlamydia* species surprisingly depended on exogenous addition of ATP in order to metabolize D-glucose (Weiss, 1965). Another study solved this paradox by demonstrating that addition of a co-purified host HK allowed the conversion of glucose into G6P, suggesting *Chlamydia* did not possess a functional HK (Vender and Moulder, 1967).

Conversely, Ormsbee and Weiss (1963) did not detect an increase in oxygen consumption in their experimental settings. Hence, they concluded that *Chlamydiae* did not have the capacity to perform OxPhos and speculated on their use of the PPP combined with additional decarboxylation (Ormsbee and Weiss, 1963). This hypothesis was later supported by enzymatic activity experiments proving the functionality of the PPP in *C. psittaci* (Moulder et al., 1965).

Following experiments also investigated the enzymatic activity of the TCA cycle related enzymes. The presence of TCA cycle was demonstrated in *C. psittaci* (Moulder, 1962). Indeed, when using labelled pyruvate at carbon 1, labelled CO₂, derived from acetyl-CoA conversion, was produced. Though, no other carbon molecules were produced suggesting that it was unlikely that acetyl-CoA progresses through the TCA cycle (Weiss, 1967).

Another observation supporting the “energy parasite” hypothesis was the fact that RNA synthesis in *C. psittaci*, was reliant on exogenous addition of nucleotides (Hatch, 1975a). Additionally, it was demonstrated that they import host ATP through an ATP-ADP exchange mechanism (Hatch et al., 1982). Hatch postulated that ATP hydrolysis is required to create a membrane potential for transport of molecules such as amino acids on which *Chlamydia* also rely on (Hatch et al., 1982).

b. The “energy parasite” unmasked

i. Some of *Chlamydiaceae*'s metabolic pathways are complete

It is not before the late 90s that *C. trachomatis* serovar D genome was sequenced, which brought the first global picture of the metabolic capacities of the bacterium (Stephens, 1998) (Figure 19). As of 2014, genome sequence of all *Chlamydiaceae* members was available. Genomic sequence confirmed previous observations such as the absence of HK enzyme, and the presence of a complete PPP. In addition, the presence of a complete glycolysis pathway, which relies on phosphorylated glucose supply from the host, was revealed (Stephens, 1998).

Regarding phospholipid synthesis, *C. trachomatis* encodes for all genes necessary for phospholipids biosynthesis via a type II fatty acid synthesis (FASII) pathway (Stephens, 1998). In fact, using a heterologous expression system in *E. coli*, was also shown to produce *de novo* phospholipids (Yao et al., 2014, 2015a, 2015b). They can synthesize branched-chain fatty acids using acetate, glycerol-3-phosphate, isoleucine, and serine (Yao et al., 2015a). Nevertheless, they hijack host phospholipids (Su et al., 2004; Wylie et al., 1997) that they modify through their acyl-acyl carrier protein synthetase, before they can incorporate them in their own phospholipids (Yao et al., 2015b). However, FASII was shown to be required for bacterial replication indicating that the bacteria are not entirely dependent on host phospholipids (Yao et al., 2014).

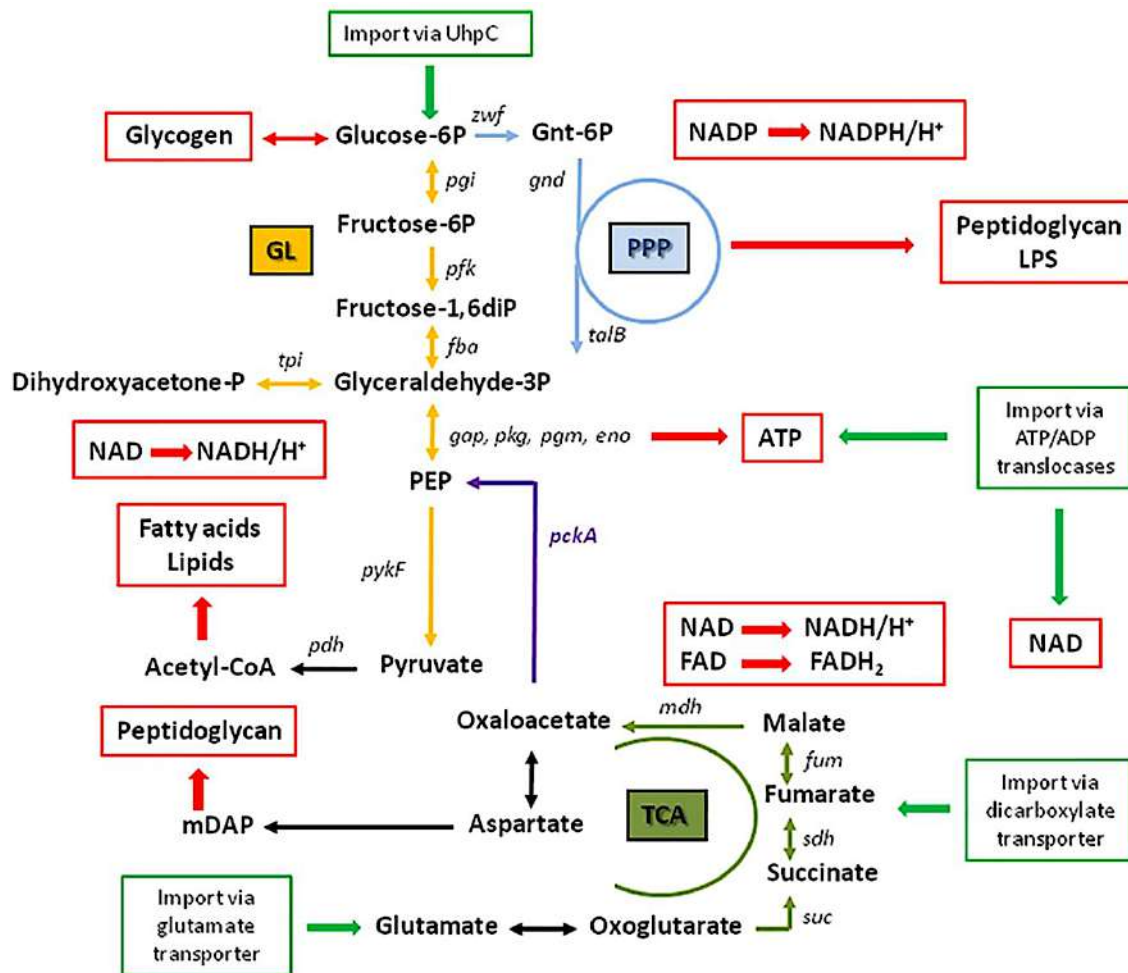


Figure 19. Schematic representation of the central *C. trachomatis* carbon metabolism based on published genomic data

C. trachomatis lacks HK but possesses a complete glycolysis pathway (yellow arrows) and PPP (blue arrows). Its TCA cycle (olive-green arrows), however, is incomplete and is connected to glycolysis by the PEP carboxylase PckA (purple arrows). Import of various metabolites is represented in green boxes and red arrows indicate major products of bacterial metabolism (Mehlitz et al., 2017)

ii. The TCA cycle is incomplete

All *Chlamydiaceae* have an incomplete TCA cycle. Genome sequence revealed that they lack the first three enzymes of that pathway, namely citrate synthase, aconitase and isocitrate dehydrogenase (Stephens, 1998). Citrate synthase is the enzyme responsible for converting acetyl-coA into citrate. Thus, even though *Chlamydiaceae* can synthesize acetyl Co-A, the latter can't be redirected into the TCA cycle (Figure 19). These revelations are consistent with earlier observations (Weiss 1967). The pathway thus relies on importing of various substrates from the host to fuel this pathway. To do so, McClarty (1999) hypothesized that the bacteria may import α -ketoglutarate (also called oxoglutarate) while exporting of malate, and

this potentially through a dicarboxylate transporter, SodTi. Another possibility may be the import of glutamate, that would be converted into α -ketoglutarate, or directly of α -ketoglutarate from the host (McClarty, 1999 Omsland) (Figure 19).

The TCA cycle is linked to glycolysis through the phosphoenolpyruvate carboxykinase (PckA) enzyme, which allows the bacteria to synthesize phosphoenolpyruvate (PEP) from oxaloacetate (Figure 19). This allows the pathogen to utilize various dicarboxylic acids from host TCA cycle as other carbon source than glucose. Indeed, using ^{13}C -malate, Mehlitz et al. showed that this metabolite is taken up by *C. trachomatis* and further converted into fumarate and succinate (Mehlitz et al., 2017).

Some enzymes of the TCA cycle, even though present, carry mutations preventing them to play their role in the pathway. Indeed, all strains of *C. trachomatis* sequenced present a frameshift mutation in succinate dehydrogenase resulting in a truncated non-functional protein. Another enzyme, fumarate hydratase has two frameshift mutations, in two *C. trachomatis* strains L2/434/Bu and L2/UCH-1/proctitis (Thomson et al., 2007).

iii. *Chlamydiaceae* are capable of producing energy

One way to make energy is through the electron transport chain. Genome data revealed that *Chlamydiaceae* are capable of producing ATP through OxPhos. They possess genes encoding for: a sodium-dependent NADH dehydrogenase (Na^+ -NQR, complex I), succinate dehydrogenase (SdhA-C, complex II), cytochrome bd oxidase (CydAB, complex IV), and an A1–A0-ATPase (complex V) (Dibrov et al., 2004; Omsland et al., 2014; Stephens, 1998) (Figure 20). In contrast to mitochondrial complex I, Na^+ -NQR relies on Na^+ transport, energizing their plasma membrane through a sodium gradient across it.

The observation that succinate dehydrogenase, as mentioned above, is a truncated protein raised questions as to the ability of the pathogen to produce energy. The capacity to do so has been demonstrated recently. Liang et al. were able to measure respiratory activity in *C. trachomatis* infected cells. They used inhibitors against various complexes of mitochondrial oxidative phosphorylation system which did not completely reduced respiratory activity. They were able to further inhibit that activity using an Na^+ -NQR inhibitor proving its functionality (Liang et al., 2018). They also investigated the reliance on host ATP by inhibiting its production at two stages of infection: at early stages (1hpi) and in mid-cycle (12hpi). Their observations suggest that bacterial development depends only partially on host energy supply, with a stronger susceptibility in early steps of infection (Liang et al., 2018). The authors did not investigate the

steps of the developmental cycle that were impaired when the host respiratory chain was blocked, nor did they measure the consequences on the production of infectious particles.

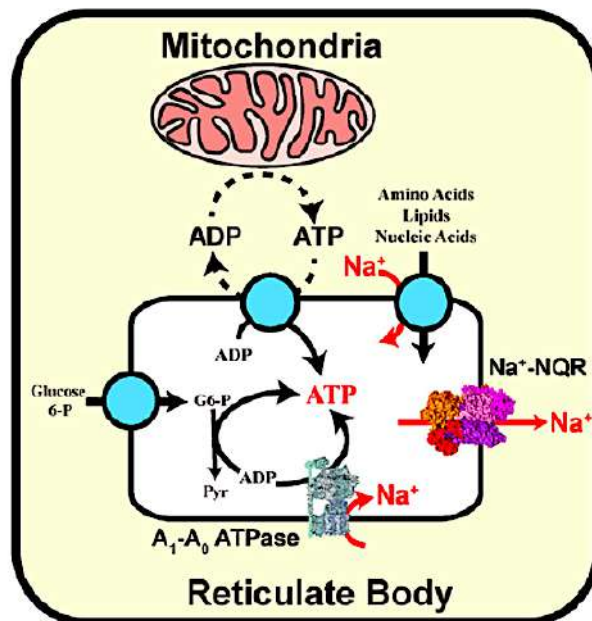


Figure 20. The chlamydial oxidative phosphorylation system

Chlamydiae are capable of producing ATP. Their oxidative phosphorylation system is composed of multiple components including a NADH dehydrogenase (Na⁺-NQR), and an A₁-A₀-ATPase. Na⁺-NQR generates a sodium gradient by pumping it out of reticulate bodies. External sodium is then pumped back in through the A₁-A₀-ATPase to produce ATP. Adapted from (Liang et al., 2018)

c. The limited biosynthetic capacities of *Chlamydiaceae*

Even though *Chlamydiaceae* were shown to be somewhat independent metabolically from the host, they remain dependent on diverse host precursors to fuel several of their pathways. Bader et al. (1958) showed that *C. trachomatis* required an exogenous source of amino acids for replication (Bader and Morgan, 1958). Early work had shown that *C. trachomatis* require glutamine, histidine, phenylalanine, leucine, valine for their growth (Allan and Pearce, 1983; Hatch, 1975b). Genome sequencing confirmed that the bacteria were auxotroph for several amino acids, which they hijack from their host potentially using amino acid pumps they encode (Braun et al., 2008; Read, 2000; Stephens, 1998). Tracing the incorporation of heavy isotopes from donor metabolites showed that the bacteria conserved the ability to make some amino acids *de novo* such as alanine, asparagine or glutamine, using metabolites imported from the host (Mehlitz et al., 2017). Interestingly, although the bacteria have retained the capacity to make glutamine, this amino acid is also directly scavenged from the host to meet the high needs for peptidoglycan synthesis (Rajeeve et al., 2020). Peptidoglycan synthesis also uses meso-

diaminopimelate (mDAP) as crosslinkers. The precursor for the latter is aspartate whose pool could also be replenished through hijacking host TCA cycle intermediates such as malate, previously mentioned, before being redirected into *de novo* mDAP biosynthesis (Mehlitz et al., 2017).

Another important gap in the biogenesis capacities of *Chlamydiaceae* concerns nucleotides (Hatch, 1975a; Hatch et al., 1982). Bacterial transporters for ATP, GTP, CTP, UTP and NAD have been described (Fisher et al., 2013; Tjaden et al., 1999). This dependence from the host could be exploited for therapeutic intervention against *Chlamydiae*. In fact, it was shown indeed that inhibiting the *de novo* GMP (Guanine monophosphate) synthesis pathway of the host strongly impaired infection both in cell cultures and *in vivo* (Rother et al., 2018).

d. A second dogma revisited: the metabolic inertia of EBs

For years EBs have been considered as metabolically inert since early experiments failed to detect protein, RNA and DNA synthesis in this form of the bacteria as opposed to RBs (Crenshaw et al., 1990; Hatch et al., 1985; Plaunt and Hatch, 1988). In the latter, protein synthesis was shown to be sustained by addition of exogenous ATP for *C. psittaci* (Hatch et al., 1985) and *C. trachomatis* (Omsland et al., 2012). Their rigid outer membrane was suggested to be a permeability barrier (Bavoil et al., 1984). In fact, reducing their outer membrane using dithiothreitol (DTT) was shown to increase metabolic activity (Hackstadt et al., 1985). Moreover, ATPase activity could be detected in *C. trachomatis* EBs following treatment with reducing agents such as β -mercaptoethanol and glutathione (Peeling et al., 1989).

However, proteomics analyses showed that EBs were equipped with relatively more enzymes dedicated to energy metabolism than RBs (Saka et al., 2011). This was attributed to a higher energetic demand in the early phase of infection, at a stage when mechanisms for ATP scavenging from the host are not yet in place (Sixt et al., 2011; Skipp et al., 2005; Vandahl et al., 2001).

Omsland et al. (2012) developed a host cell-free growth conditions for *C. trachomatis* using axenic medium. They demonstrated that protein synthesis is active in EBs when they are supplied with G6P as an energy source, while, in contrast, RBs required ATP. This publication, together with the proteomic data revealing the enzymatic capacity of EBs changed the vision of the EBs from “inert” particles to metabolically capable entities (Omsland et al., 2012; Rother et al., 2018). The question of their energetic autonomy, i.e. their ability to sustain at least the first steps of infection, remains open.

e. Glucose metabolism of the host and the pathogen are tightly linked

i. The bacteria need glucose to develop

Glucose is the carbon source that fuels the major energy producing pathways. It was shown that lowering glucose concentration in the culture medium is detrimental for *C. trachomatis* development (Harper et al., 2000; Iliffe-Lee and McClarty, 2000; Maffei et al., 2020). Furthermore, bacterial growth was significantly reduced in cells supplied with other carbon sources than glucose. Those included glutamate, malate, α -ketoglutarate and oxaloacetate (Iliffe-Lee and McClarty, 2000) which are potential carbon sources for the gluconeogenesis pathway. In addition, the absence of fructose-1,6-bisphosphatase based on genomic data, which is an enzyme involved in gluconeogenesis, supports the hypothesis that the latter is not functional in *C. trachomatis*.

As described previously, bacteria rely on phosphorylated glucose from their host as they lack the HK enzyme (Omsland et al., 2012; Stephens, 1998; Vender and Moulder, 1967). The G6P transporter gene *UhpC* was found to be expressed throughout infection and could thus permit G6P import both in EBs and RBs (Gehre et al., 2016; Iliffe-Lee and McClarty, 1999; Schwoppe et al., 2002).

ii. *C. trachomatis* orchestrates glucose uptake by GLUT1/3

Glucose is an important actor for the metabolism of both host and bacteria, consequently, it is not surprising that one of the first impact of infection is the upregulation of glucose uptake, observed in several species of *Chlamydiaceae*. Indeed, Rupp et al. (2007) showed that infection with a *C. pneumoniae* strain results in an upregulation of glucose import during infection (Rupp et al., 2007). Moreover, infection with *C. caviae*, induced this time an upregulation of glucose transporter GLUT1 (Ojcius et al., 1998). As for *C. trachomatis*, infection was also shown to induce the same effect (Siegl et al., 2014). Wang and al. demonstrated that not only GLUT1 but also GLUT3 were upregulated at the transcriptional and protein level (Wang et al., 2017c). The increase in transcription of *GLUT1* and *GLUT3* was shown to be dependent on the transcription factor HIF-1 and on the activation of host transglutaminase 2 (Maffei et al., 2020). HIF-1 is a known regulator of key steps of the glycolysis pathway, as discussed extensively previously. HIF-1 α , the HIF-1 subunit inducible by hypoxia, was shown to become stabilized in infections with both *C. trachomatis* (Sharma et al., 2011) and *C. pneumoniae* (Rupp et al.,

2007). Transglutaminase 2 is an enzyme responsible of post-translational modifications on its targets. It becomes activated upon infection, and the mechanism by which it regulates gene transcription remains unsolved (Maffei et al., 2020).

iii. *C. trachomatis* accumulates glycogen in the inclusion lumen

Glycogen accumulation in inclusions has been describe as early as 1965 by Gordon and Quan who observed that *C. trachomatis* infected cells stained positive for iodine (Gordon, 1965). Recently, Gehre et al. showed that glycogen and UDP-glucose are the glucose sources hijacked by *C. trachomatis* from its host cytoplasm to build luminal glycogen (Figure 21) (Gehre et al., 2016). UDP-glucose is translocated into the inclusion through at least one host transporter, the solute carrier family 35 member D2 (SLC35D2), itself being hijacked from the host by *C. trachomatis*. Once inside the inclusion, UDP-glucose is used as a starting point for *de novo* glycogen synthesis (Gehre et al., 2016). Indeed, two bacterial enzymes involved in glycogen synthesis, GlgA and GlgB, are secreted in the inclusion lumen, with GlgA being detected in the inclusion lumen as early as 12hpi (Lu et al., 2013). In parallel to this *de novo* glycogen synthesis in the inclusion membrane, a second pathway contributes to glycogen accumulation in the inclusion: bulk import of the polysaccharide directly from the host cytoplasm. However, the exact mechanism for this pathway remains to be elucidated (Gehre et al., 2016).

iv. The G1P/G6P conundrum

To perform glycolysis, *C. trachomatis* needs to import phosphorylated glucose molecules from the inclusion's lumen. Schöppe et al. (2002) had demonstrated that the *C. pneumoniae* UhpC transporter was only capable of importing G6P (Schwoppe et al., 2002), not glucose nor G1P, a finding that was confirmed using *C. trachomatis* EBs (Gehre et al., 2016).

The capture of glycogen in the lumen of the inclusion is presumably beneficial if it can be converted back to a form of glucose usable by the bacteria. However, glycogenolysis generates G1P, not G6P. This raises the question of the mechanism by which G1P is converted into G6P in the inclusion lumen.

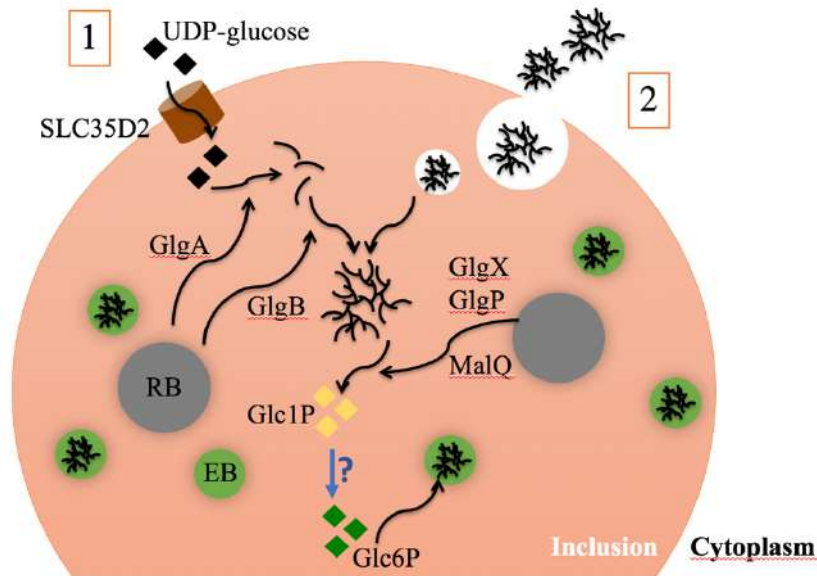


Figure 21. Glucose acquisition by *C. trachomatis*

C. trachomatis obtains glucose from the host under two different forms. It imports directly UDP-glucose (UDP-Glc) through the SLC35D2 transporter (1). Once inside the inclusion lumen, UDP-Glc can be converted into glycogen by the chlamydial glycogen synthase GlgA and GlgB. Host glycogen is also imported in bulk into the inclusion (2). Glycogen break-down generates G1P, which needs to be converted into G6P for uptake by the bacteria. Adapted from (Gehre et al., 2016)

v. Variation of the bacterial energetic demand over the infection cycle

Overall, the metabolic demand that *C. trachomatis* exert on the host cell evolves considerably during an infectious cycle. It is not known whether their glycogen reserve provide them with sufficient autonomy to establish the infectious niche and start replicating. Importantly, in the first hours of infection, the bacterial biomass is very small compared to that of their host, therefore their metabolism does not represent a significant burden. However, by 24 hpi, there is already an average of >300 bacteria per cell (Shaw et al., 2000). With about 10^6 bp for the bacterial genome against 3×10^9 for the host, at that stage of infection, bacterial DNA represents about 10% of total DNA in an infected cell. Demand in ATP, amino acids, glucose has also become significant. Twenty-four hpi is about the time when RBs start converting into EBs in an asynchronous manner, with thus a gradual shift towards lower nutritional need per bacteria, but because the number of RBs continues to increase, the metabolic burden also does. Only by after ~30-32 hpi, when the number of RBs per inclusion starts decreasing (Lee et al., 2018), does the metabolic pressure follow. Although EBs rely on glucose-6-phosphate (G6P) for survival, even glucose demands probably also decreases by that time, because the bacteria obtain it from the degradation of the glycogen that they have accumulated in the inclusion lumen during the first half of their developmental cycle (Gehre et al., 2016).

3. Hosting an intracellular bacterium: metabolic consequences for the host

a. Cellular metabolic modulations

i. A metabolic switch seems to be promoted by chlamydial infection

Several features of chlamydial infection have suggested that infected cells go through a metabolic switch, favoring glycolysis over OxPhos. As mentioned earlier, chlamydial infection induces an upregulation of GLUT transporters. In HeLa cells, lactate production was enhanced by *C. caviae* infection (Ojcius et al., 1998). Moreover, the transcription factor HIF-1 which has been largely documented to favor glycolysis (Figure 17) was shown to be upregulated in *C. trachomatis* infected cells (Sharma et al., 2011). In addition, the Protein kinase B/Akt (PKB) signaling pathway is activated throughout the infection (Rajalingam et al., 2008b). PKB is involved in multiple cellular processes such as cell survival and proliferation but also controls glucose uptake and utilization (Hajduch et al., 2001). Put together, these observations indicate that chlamydial infection might induced a metabolic switch similar to the Warburg effect. The parallel can be drawn further between infected cells and tumor cells: both undergo increased nutritional needs, to feed bacterial growth on one hand, and to feed increased cell division on the other hand.

ii. A metabolic snapshot of infected cells

Metabolic modifications upon infection has been increasingly investigated in the recent years. Rother et al. (2018) used GC-MS (gas chromatography-mass spectrometry) in order to generate a profile of various metabolites upon infection. They also performed a genome wide RNAi screen to identify host proteins important for bacterial development, among which metabolic enzymes. They found that many metabolites including G6P, lactate and pyruvate were upregulated upon infection. Furthermore, one enzyme involved in the metabolic switch of the Warburg Effect, Pyruvate dehydrogenase kinase 2 (PDK2), was also shown in to be essential for bacterial development (Rother et al., 2018). PDK2, as PDK1, block the pyruvate to acetyl-CoA conversion, forcing cells to perform aerobic glycolysis. All these observations support the hypothesis that *C. trachomatis* infected cells undergo a metabolic switch akin to the Warburg effect. However, this study was performed in HeLa cells, which are tumor derived cells, with an abnormal metabolism. Moreover, it could not distinguish host from bacterial metabolites, when more than one hundred bacteria are present in a single cell starting about 24

hpi, thus contribute significantly to the global picture (Lee et al., 2018). Thus, any change in concentration of a given metabolite needs to be interpreted with caution.

TCA cycle intermediates including succinate, fumarate, malate and citrate were also upregulated upon infection (Rother et al., 2018). However, upregulation of those metabolites could result from utilizing alternative carbon sources such as glutamate. Another possibility is that these metabolites could be produced by the bacterial TCA cycle, so it is not very informative on the potential changes in host metabolism. One important finding of that study was the demonstration that the *de novo* synthesis pathway for GMP, was essential for bacterial development. Exposure to a drug blocking inosine-5'-monophosphate dehydrogenase 2 (IMPDH), the first enzyme of this pathway, severely abrogated infection in cell cultures and *in vivo*. This validates the concept that drug targeting the host metabolism could give rise to a new generation of anti-chlamydial antibiotics (Rother et al., 2018).

b. p53 down regulation in infection and its consequences on host cell metabolism

The tumor suppressor protein p53 regulates many faces of cell homeostasis, one being the metabolic balance in the cell. Interestingly, p53 level is downregulated in *C. trachomatis* infected cells (González et al., 2014; Siegl et al., 2014) which necessarily has implications in the metabolic balance of the cell. Stabilizing p53 expression was detrimental to bacterial development, indicating that p53 downregulation benefits the bacteria. One known target of p53 is G6PD which regulates entry into the PPP (Jiang et al., 2011). Overexpression of G6PD, reversed the inhibitory effect of p53 stabilization on bacterial growth, indicating that the deleterious effect of p53 stabilization is due to its inhibitory effect on G6PD, and thus likely on the boost of PPP required in infection (Siegl et al., 2014).

On the mechanistic side, the downregulation of p53 during infection was shown to be mediated, on one hand, by activation of the phosphoinositide-3-kinase (PI3K)/Akt/HDM2 pathway leading to its proteasomal degradation (Siegl et al., 2014). On the other hand, p53 is also the target of a microRNA, miR-30, which is upregulated during infection (Chowdhury et al., 2017).

c. The impact of infection on the spatial distribution of key players in energy production in the cell

i. Mitochondrial network

Another consequence of p53 degradation during infection is the downregulation of Dynamin protein related 1 (Drp1) (Chowdhury et al., 2017). The role of the latter is to regulate mitochondrial fission, which had been shown to be modulated by miR-30 (Li et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2017a). Thus, infection induced elongation of mitochondria (Chowdhury et al., 2017). Kurihara et al (2019) also reported elongated mitochondria early in infection with *C. trachomatis* through a Drp1 inhibition mediated mechanism (Kurihara et al., 2019).

Mitochondria are dynamic organelles that are constantly fusing and breaking, and their architecture is tightly linked to their metabolic function and their quantity (Sarin et al., 2013; Touvier et al., 2015). Modulating their architecture is a strategy to adapt to various condition such as stress or apoptotic signals for instance (Suen et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2017b). In fact, ROS would promote fission, while starvation would instead induce more fusion (Frank et al., 2012; Gomes et al., 2011). In the context of infection, even though ROS production is induced (Abdul-Sater et al., 2010), mitochondria surprisingly end up elongated, at least early in infection. Indeed, Chowdhury et al. showed that mitochondria are not broken-down during infection, even upon treatment with excess peroxide which should normally fragment mitochondria (Chowdhury et al., 2017). However, Kurihara et al. (2019) only observed mitochondrial elongation at early stages of infection, while at late stages mitochondria did get fragmented (Kurihara et al., 2019).

As Drp1 mediated mitochondrial fission can be a pre-apoptotic signal (Frank et al., 2001; Röth et al., 2014), preventing fission could be one of *C. trachomatis*' strategies to prevent cell death. An additional role for maintaining mitochondrial integrity could be a means to maintain ATP production throughout infection, thus ensuring a constant energy source availability. Indeed, fragmented mitochondria were shown to be less efficient at energy production (Sarin et al., 2013).

ii. Glycolysis enzymes

A recent study revealed that three host glycolytic enzymes, PK, LDHA, and aldolase A (Aldo A), are recruited at the *C. trachomatis* inclusion membranes. The authors further showed that downregulating Aldo A decreased bacterial load in HeLa cells. Moreover, the expression of three bacterial glycolytic enzymes decreased over the course of infection, while the

percentage of inclusions positive for host glycolytic enzymes increased. The authors hypothesized that the localization of host glycolytic enzymes at the inclusion membrane could provide an easier access to host glycolysis substrates (Ende and Derré, 2020).

Another consequence of infection is the upregulation of the glycolysis regulator hexokinase II (HKII). This upregulation occurs at the transcriptional level and is dependent on the 3-phosphoinositide-dependent protein kinase-1 (PDK1)-Myc signalling pathway. HKII becomes enriched at the mitochondrial surface, through association with the mitochondrial voltage dependent anion channel (VDAC), a feature that was needed for optimal bacterial growth (Al-Zeer et al., 2017). One known outcome of HKII association to VDAC on mitochondria is prevention of apoptosis. Indeed, HKII recruitment to mitochondria appears to play a role in the resistance of infected cells to apoptosis (Al-Zeer et al., 2017). Possible metabolic implications were not investigated.

V. Questions tackled during this research project: Investigating metabolic modifications and requirements during *C. trachomatis* infection

There has been an increasing effort to elucidate the metabolic modulations upon infection, though, multiple grey areas remain. Rother and al. (2018) provided an overview of the metabolic modifications upon *C. trachomatis* infection indicating that glycolysis is likely upregulated, nevertheless this study had some limits. Indeed, the metabolomics did not distinguish between host and bacterial metabolites. Moreover, as for multiple previous studies, the model used for the metabolomics experiment is HeLa cells which are highly glycolytic cells. In addition, as the focus of the study shifted to the purine synthesis pathway, the respective contribution to bacterial development of glycolysis and OxPhos, remains unanswered.

Beside Rother et al work, a previous study evaluated the metabolic changes induced by infection. Using NMR experiments Ojcius et al. (1998) showed that ATP production increases upon infection along with an increase in glucose consumption and lactate production, suggesting glycolysis is upregulated, and potentially OxPhos as well (Ojcius et al., 1998). Nonetheless, this study was performed in HeLa and using an animal strain *C. caviae*.

The goal of the present study was to address two main questions:

- 1) What is the effect of *C. trachomatis* infection on the main two glucose-derived, ATP synthesis pathways, glycolysis and OxPhos?
- 2) To what extent are these pathways necessary for *C. trachomatis* to undergo its developmental cycle?

The ambition of my project was to answer those questions in conditions as close as possible to physiological conditions. Ideally, we would have performed all our experiments using primary epithelial cells isolated from the ectocervix (Tang et al., 2021). However, the Covid19 pandemic made it difficult to obtain material from hospitals. To circumvent this limitation, we also performed experiments in the endo-cervix derived A2EN cell line, which was immortalized by E6/E7 transformation but conserved its epithelial phenotype, and which we cultivated in the same culture medium designed for epithelial cell selection as the primary cells (Herbst-Kralovetz et al., 2008). For all features we tested, primary cells and A2EN behaved identically, indicating that A2EN make an acceptable substitute for primary epithelial cells. In addition, we also performed experiments in HeLa cells because this is the reference cell line used in the field, and it was often interesting to compare the data obtained in the different cellular backgrounds. Beside this main project, I have been implicated in the project of a post-doctoral fellow, Sébastien Triboulet, aiming at solving the G1P/G6P conundrum. A first version of the results has been submitted for publication and is included in the Annex section.

Material and Methods

Cells and bacteria

Human cervix-derived epithelial HeLa cells (ATCC), human colon derived epithelial LS174T WT and GPI-KO cells (de Padua et al., 2017), monkey epithelial Vero cells (ATCC) were grown in Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium with Glutamax (DMEM, Thermo Fisher Scientific), supplemented with 10 % (v/v) heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum (FBS) (complete medium). LS174T cells were a kind gift from Dr. J. Pouyssegur (Institute for Research on Cancer and Aging, Nice). Primary epithelial cells were isolated from ectocervix biopsies of female patients and were cultivated in keratinocyte serum free medium (KSFM, Thermo Fisher Scientific) containing 50 mg/L of bovine pituitary extract (Thermo Fisher Scientific) and 5 µg/L of epidermal growth factor (EGF) human recombinant (Thermo Fisher Scientific) (Tang et al., 2021). A2EN cells (kind gift from Dr Alison Quayle, New Orleans, USA) were cultivated in the same conditions as the primary epithelial cells. *C. trachomatis* serovar D/UW-3/CX (CTD) and mCherry transformed serovar D/UW-3/CX (CTDm) were propagated in HeLa cells as described in (Scidmore, 2006). EBs were stored in sucrose-phosphate-glutamic acid buffer (SPG: 10 mM sodium phosphate [8 mM Na₂HPO₄- 2 mM NaH₂PO₄], 220 mM sucrose, 0.50 mM l-glutamic acid) at -80 °C.

Cell culture and treatment

Cells were cultured at 37 °C, in 5 % CO₂ atmosphere and were routinely tested, with bacteria stocks, for mycoplasma using the standard PCR method. Confluent cultures of A2EN and primary cells were detached with 0.3% trypsin/EDTA for 3 min at 37 °C before a wash in RPMI 1640 (Thermo Fisher Scientific). Cells were centrifuged for 15 min at 2500 xg and the pellet was resuspended in KSFM to be seeded or passed. When confluent, HeLa cells and LS174T cells were detached with 0.5 mM EDTA in PBS before being seeded or passed in complete medium. For experiments of glucose deprivation from HeLa cells, cells were seeded in normal medium. On the following day, the medium was replaced with DMEM without glucose (Thermo Fisher Scientific, A14430) complemented with 5 mM sodium pyruvate (Sigma-Aldrich), 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS). Experiments were performed 48 h from the start of glucose deprivation. Experiments preceding lactate and ATP measurements in HeLa cells were performed in DMEM medium deprived of pyruvate (Thermo Fisher Scientific, 61965059). CTD and CTDm infections were always followed by a 30 min centrifugation step at 270xg at 37 °C, unless otherwise stated.

Cells were treated with the following chemicals (stock solutions): Phenformin: 200 mM in H₂O (Sigma-Aldrich, P7045); Oligomycin: 5 mM in DMSO (Cayman Chemical, 11341); GNE-140: 4 mM in DMSO (Sigma-Aldrich, SML2580). All chemicals were stored at -20 °C.

Bacterial transformation

The L2-based p2TK2-SW2 plasmid encoding the fluorescent protein mCherry under the control of the promoter of the early gene *incD* (Agaïsse and Derré, 2013) was used to transform CTD. EBs (10⁸ IFU) were incubated with 6 µg of plasmid in 0.05 M CaCl₂ for 20 min. The resulting mixture was divided in 4 and plated in a 6 well plate containing Vero cells and warm complete medium, centrifuged at 1000xg 30 min and cells were allowed to grow for 48 h. At this point, cells were checked for inclusions before being detached and broken with glass beads to release EBs (48h). Broken cells were centrifuged at 190xg for 5 min and 0.5 mL of the EBs containing supernatant was used to infect two 6 well plates of Vero cells with complete medium supplemented with cycloheximide (1 µg/mL) and penicillin (1 U/mL), centrifuged at 1000xg 30 min. Subsequent passages were performed in a similar manner but using all lysate to infect fresh cells. At each passage, mCherry expression by the bacteria was verified. Once mCherry expression was detected, transformed *C. trachomatis* were amplified in HeLa cells. Once infected HeLa cells were close to 100% infection, EBs were extracted by cells lysis in SPG buffer. Lysed cells were first centrifuged at 270xg 5 min to remove cell debris, after what the supernatant was centrifuged at 12,000xg at 4°C for 40 min. The pellet containing EBs was then re-suspended in SPG buffer and aliquots were frozen at -80 °C.

Adhesion assay

Adhesion assays were performed as previously described (Vromman et al., 2014). HeLa cells were plated in a 24 well plate (100*10³ cells/well) the day before the assay. Cells were pre-cooled 30 min at 4 °C after what they were incubated for 4 h at 4 °C (including a 30 min centrifugation step also at 4 °C) with either equal genome number of CTD or CTDm. Prior to infection, bacteria were sonicated in order to disrupt bacterial aggregates. Cells were then washed gently with cold PBS, lysed directly in the plate followed by genomic DNA (gDNA) extraction using the DNeasy Blood and Tissue Kit (Qiagen). Bacterial adhesion was determined through qPCR.

Progeny assay

Cells were seeded in a 24 well plate (120×10^3 cells/well for HeLa, 175×10^3 cells/well for A2EN and primary cells, and 250×10^3 cells/well for LS174T cells). For experiments using chemical inhibitors, GNE-140, oligomycin or phenformin were added to the culture medium at the indicated concentrations when infecting cells, unless otherwise stated. Cells with an infection lower than 30 % (checked by microscopy, and at least 50% for A2EN cells) were detached with 0.5 mM EDTA in PBS for HeLa cells or 0.3 % trypsin for LS174T cells, primary cells and A2EN cells, 48 hpi (or 30 hpi for the silencing experiment). They were lysed using glass beads and the supernatant was used to infect HeLa cells plated the day before (120×10^3 cells/well in a 24 well plate), in serial dilutions. In order to evaluate the first round of infection, cells from duplicate wells were fixed in 2 % paraformaldehyde (PFA, Merk-Millipore) 2% sucrose in PBS and analyzed by flow cytometry at 24 hpi to determine the bacterial titer (Vromman et al., 2014).

Flow cytometry

Cells were washed with PBS and gently detached using 0.5 mM EDTA in PBS. Samples were fixed in 2% PFA 2% sucrose in PBS and stored overnight at 4 °C. Cells infected using CTDm were analyzed directly on 1/10 of the sample diluted in PBS. Cells infected with CTD were stained with a mouse antibody against GroEL (Thermo Fisher Scientific) followed with Alexa488-coupled secondary antibody against mouse (Molecular Probes). Flow cytometry analysis was performed with a CytoFLEX S (Beckton Coulter). A minimum total of 10,000 gated events were collected for each sample. Data were then analyzed using FlowJo software (version 10.0.7) to determine the bacterial titer as described in (Vromman et al., 2014).

Immunofluorescence

All cells were grown on cover slips in a 24 well plate. After the indicated time of infection, the cells were fixed in 4% PFA (Merk-Millipore) 4% sucrose in PBS for 20 min and was followed with 10 min quenching with 50 mM NH_4Cl , in PBS. Cells were then either stained for DNA then mounted or stained. Staining consisted of first permeabilizing cells in 0.05% Saponin (Sigma-Aldrich), 1 mg/mL bovine serum albumin (BSA Sigma-Aldrich) in PBS for 10 min. Primary antibodies used in this study were anti-*Chlamydia* antibody (a home-made mixture of rabbit polyclonal antibodies against several *Chlamydia* antigens) and rabbit anti-Cap1 antibody (Gehre et al., 2016). DNA was stained using 0.5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$ of Hoechst 33342

(Thermo Fisher Scientific) which was added to the secondary antibody. Coverslips were then mounted in Mowiol (Sigma-Aldrich).

Images were acquired on an Axio observer Z1 microscope equipped with an ApoTome module (Zeiss, Germany) and a 63× Apochromat lens. Images were taken with an ORCAflash4.OLT camera (Hamamatsu, Japan) using the Zen software. Images were analyzed with ImageJ software. CTD and CTDm inclusions size was determined using the cell image analysis software CellProfiler.

qPCR

Total DNA was isolated with the DNeasy Blood and Tissue Kit (Qiagen). To determine plasmid number (pDNA) and bacterial genome number (gDNA), 100 uL of CTD and CTDm EBs were used for DNA extraction. DNA concentrations were determined with a spectrophotometer NanoDrop (Thermo Fisher Scientific) and normalized to equal contents. Quantitative PCR (qPCR) was performed using LightCycler 480 SYBR Green Master I (Roche) following the manufacturer's instructions. To normalize for equal genome number a standard curve was made using a plasmid containing the target gene *glgA* used to measure genome number as described in the Applied Biosystem protocol "Creating Standard Curves with Genomic DNA or Plasmid DNA Templates for use in quantitative PCR" (2003). Primers against a conserved sequence within ORF2 were used to assess plasmid number, and then were analyzed using the $\Delta\Delta C_t$ method (Schmittgen and Livak, 2008). To determine gDNA quantities relative to cell (adhesion assay, assessment of bacterial genomes in cells infected in the presence of oligomycin), primers for *GlgA* and for the *36B4* gene (encoding for an acidic ribosomal human phosphoprotein P0) were used to determine the relative number of bacteria per cell. Each qPCR experiment was performed in triplicate and repeated at least three times. The primer sequences are as follows:

- *GlgA* Forward: 5'-AATGATTGGAATGCGTTACGG-3',
- *GlgA* Reverse: 5'-CGGTAGGTTGTCAGTCTTCC-3';
- *36B4* Forward: 5'-TGCATCAGTACCCCATCTATCAT-3';
- *36B4* Reverse: 5'-AAGGTGTAATCCGTCTCCACAGA-3';
- *Ctrachplas* Forward: 5'-CAGCTTGTAGTCCTGCTTGAGAGA-3';
- *Ctrachplas* Reverse: 5'-CAAGAGTACATCGGTCAACGAAGA-3'.

Measurement and quantification of intracellular ATP

Intracellular levels of ATP were analyzed using the CellTiter Glow luminescence assay (Promega) according to the manufacturer's instructions. Cells (60×10^3 for HeLa in a 48 well plate, 75×10^3 for primary cells in a 48 well plate and 30×10^3 for A2EN cells in a 96 well plate) were treated or infected for the indicated time in pyruvate free medium. The cell medium was then discarded or used for lactate measurement in the case of primary cells. Cells were then lysed directly in the plate with ATP Assay Buffer after what luminescence was measured with the Cytation 5 Cell Imaging Multi-Mode Reader (BioTek). ATP concentrations were calculated using an ATP (Sigma-Aldrich) standard curve (0 to 200 pmole). To normalize ATP levels to protein levels, duplicate wells of cells were lysed in 2 M urea buffer (Tris 30 mM, NaCl 150 mM, 2 M urea, 1 % SDS, pH=8.0) after what a BCA assay kit (Pierce) was used as indicated by the manufacturer to measure proteins levels.

Measurement of Lactate production

Cells (60×10^3 for HeLa in a 48 well plate, 75×10^3 for primary cells in a 48 well plate and 30×10^3 for A2EN cells in a 96 well plate) were treated or infected for the indicated time. Plates were then centrifuged for 5 min at $250 \times g$ then 56 μ L of medium or lactate standard (Sigma-Aldrich) was used for the assay. Lactate produced was measured using a colorimetric lactate detection assay as described in (Powers et al., 2007) with the following reagents: nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (14.3 mM NAD⁺, Sigma-Aldrich), 0.52 M Hydrazine (Sigma-Aldrich) both prepared in assay buffer (0.50 M Glycine (Sigma-Aldrich) and 2.5 mM, EDTA, pH 9.5); lactate dehydrogenase (19 U/mL, LDH, Sigma-Aldrich), 9.0 M urea buffer. Absorbance at 340 nm was measure with Cytation 5 Cell Imaging Multi-Mode Reader (BioTek). A lactate standard curve (0 - 4.6 μ mole) was used to calculate lactate concentrations. For normalization to protein levels, cells were lysed in 2 M urea buffer and proteins level was measured with Pierce BCA protein assay kit (Thermo Fisher Scientific), as indicated by the manufacturer.

RNA Interference

For siRNA experiments, 50×10^3 HeLa cells were mixed with Lipofectamine RNAiMAX (Invitrogen), following the manufacturer's recommendation, with 10 nM siRNA, before being plated in a 24 well plate. The culture medium was changed the following day and progeny assay were performed two days post treatment with the siRNA. Downregulation efficiency was

verified by performing a lactate assay. Two sets of siRNA against glucose-6-phosphate isomerase (GPI) were used and their sequences are as follows:

- siGPI1-sense: 5'-CCAAGCUCACACCAUUCAU-3';
- siGPI1-antisense: 5'-AUGAAUGGUGUGAGCUUGG-3';
- siGPI2-sense: 5'-CAUGGAGUCCAAUGGGAAA-3';
- siGPI2-antisense: 5'-UUUCCCAU UGGACUCCAUG-3'

Metabolic flux analysis

Seahorse XF96 extracellular flux analyzer (Agilent Technologies) was used to measure oxygen consumption rates (OCR) and extracellular acidification rates (ECAR) of cells, in order to evaluate mitochondrial respiration and glycolysis, respectively. OCR and ECAR were measured following the Mito Stress test and Glyco stress test protocols, respectively. Cells were seeded (25,000 cells/well) on Seahorse 96 well-plate and were infected at various times, so that on the day of measurement, cells had been infected for 24, 30 or 48h, or left uninfected. One hour prior to the assay, cell media was replaced by Seahorse XF Base Medium (Agilent Technologies), 1 mM glutamine (Sigma-Aldrich) adjusted at pH 7.4 for the Glyco Stress test. For the Mito Stress test, the medium was replaced with Seahorse XF Base Medium (Agilent Technologies), 1 mM pyruvate (Sigma-Aldrich), 2 mM glutamine (Sigma-Aldrich), and 10 mM glucose (Sigma-Aldrich), pH 7.4) and the plates were incubated in a non-CO₂ incubator at 37 °C. For both tests, basal levels of OCR and ECAR were recorded for 30 min before consecutive addition of drugs that modulate OxPhos or glycolysis. In the Mito stress test, we added 2 μM oligomycin (Cayman Chemicals), 1 μM Carbonyl cyanide-4 (trifluoromethoxy) phenylhydrazone (FCCP (Cayman Chemicals), and a mix of 0.5 μM rotenone (Sigma-Aldrich) and 0.5 μM antimycin A (Sigma-Aldrich). In the Glyco Stress test, we added 10 mM glucose (Sigma-Aldrich), 2 μM oligomycin (Cayman Chemicals), 50 mM 2-Deoxy-D-glucose (2-DG) (Sigma-Aldrich). Unless otherwise stated, ECAR refers to glycolysis and OCR refers to ATP-linked respiration measurements.

In the Mito stress test, the roles of the above-mentioned drugs consist of:

- Oligomycin inhibits ATP synthase (complex V),
- FCCP uncouples oxygen consumption from ATP production transporting protons across the mitochondrial inner membrane, resulting in an increase of OCR
- Rotenone and antimycin A inhibit complexes I and III, respectively.

In the Glyco stress test, the roles of the above-mentioned drugs consist of:

- Glucose stimulates glycolysis
- Oligomycin inhibits OxPhos resulting in an increase of ECAR
- 2-DG inhibits glycolysis by competitively binding to hexokinase

Data were analyzed with the Wave software (Agilent Technologies).

Metabolic flux plates normalization

Following each experiment, plates were fixed in 2.5% PFA for 10 min then stained in 5 µg/mL DAPI (Invitrogen #D1306), 3% BSA in PBS. They were then washed three times with PBS then before analysis by a Cytation 5 Cell Imaging Multi-Mode Reader (BioTek) for cell count. Images were acquired on a 7x7 grid (394 µm x 291 µm for each square) and were analyzed with the cell image analysis software CellProfiler. In summary, the pipeline counted DAPI stained nuclei and subtracted mCherry stained inclusions from the nuclei to give the cell count per well. The obtained count was adjusted according to the actual number of pictures obtained per well and the size of the Seahorse 96 well plate well (0,106 cm²). Normalization to cell number was performed in the Seahorse analysis Wave software and data were presented as mpH/min/cell for ECAR and as pmol/min/cell for OCR or as a ratio to the non-infected or non-treated cells.

Statistical analysis

The R environment v4.0.5 was used for all the analyses (R Core Team, 2020). Data were neither averaged nor normalized prior analyses. Data were fitted to a linear model that includes the variable of interest + the experiment date as covariate, but only when technical replicates are available (i.e., more than one value per variable of interest and per experiment date). Two by two effect comparisons (contrast comparisons) were performed with the emmeans() function of the emmeans package. Unequal variance t test (Welch test) was used in bivariate designs. Statistical significance was set to $P \leq 0.05$. In each figure, type I error was controlled by correcting the p values according to the Benjamini & Hochberg method (“BH” option in the p.adjust() function of R). Results are detailed in Table 1 in the annexe.

Results

I. Cell attachment and growth are enhanced in stably transformed *C. trachomatis* serovar D bacteria

The reference strain *C. trachomatis* D/UW-3/CX was stably transformed with the L2-based plasmid encoding the fluorescent protein mCherry under the control of the promoter of the early gene *incD* (Agaïsse and Derré, 2013). mCherry expression allowed to quantitatively track infection by flow cytometry: at 18 hours post infection (hpi), mCherry expressing bacteria (CTDm) detached from the non-infected population, with a gradual increase in the fluorescent signal with time (Figure 22).

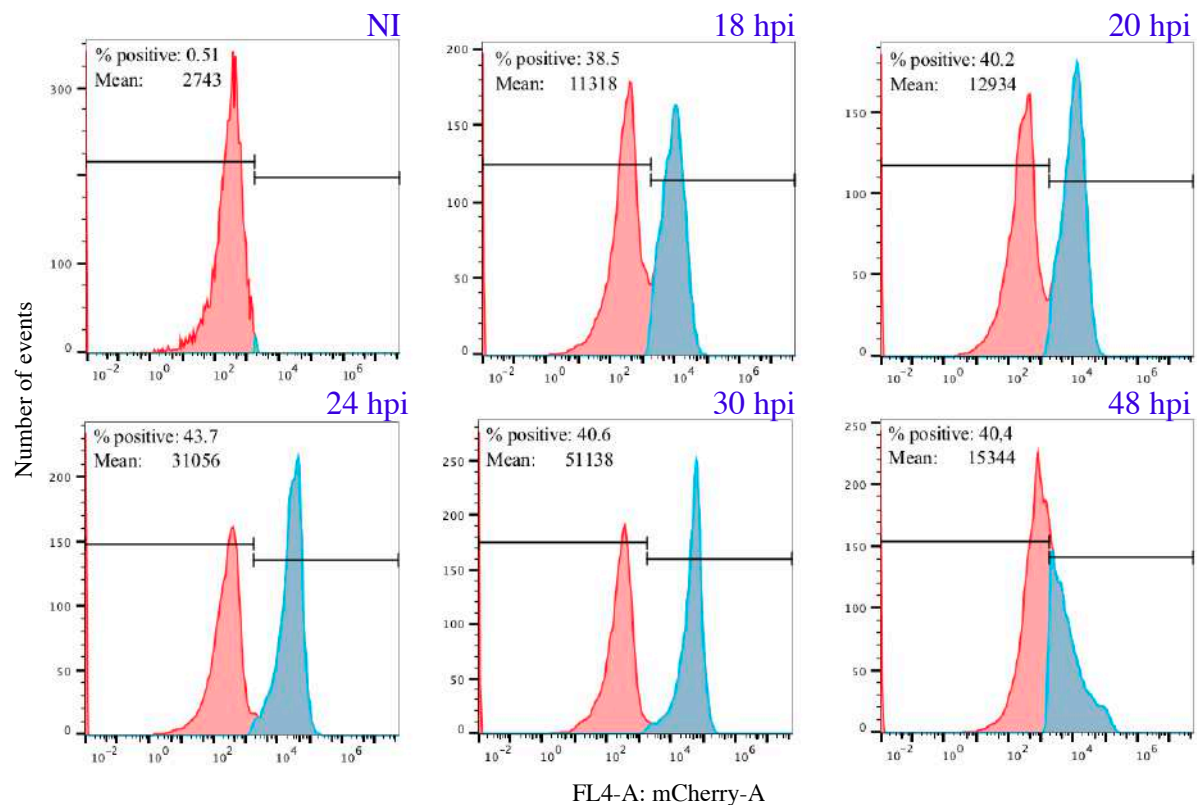


Figure 22. Quantification of mCherry expressing *C. trachomatis* D/UW-3/CX (CTDm) over time
Hela cells were infected with CTDm and fixed 18, 20, 24, 30 and 48 hpi. Samples were analyzed through flow cytometry in the red channel (FL4-A). mCherry negative cells are represented in red and the positive cells are in blue. The percentage of infection (out of total cells) and the mCherry mean fluorescence of the positive population (average signal per cell) are displayed on the graphs. This experiment is representative of two. Note that at 48 hpi reinfection events have occurred, precluding the distinction between the infected and non-infected population. Abbreviation: NI = non-infected.

We observed that even without the centrifugation step classically applied to facilitate infection with serovars of *C. trachomatis* others than LGV, we obtained good infection rates when using CTDm. When normalizing the stocks to equal genome number, we observed more and bigger inclusions in cells infected with CTDm than with CTD (Figure 23A, B). This suggested that bacteria gained in infectivity upon stable transformation. To verify this

hypothesis, we quantified the infectious forming units (IFU) obtained in cells infected with equal amounts of IFUs of the parental and of the stably transformed strain. CTDm gave rise to ~8-fold more IFU than the parental CTD strain (Figure 23C).

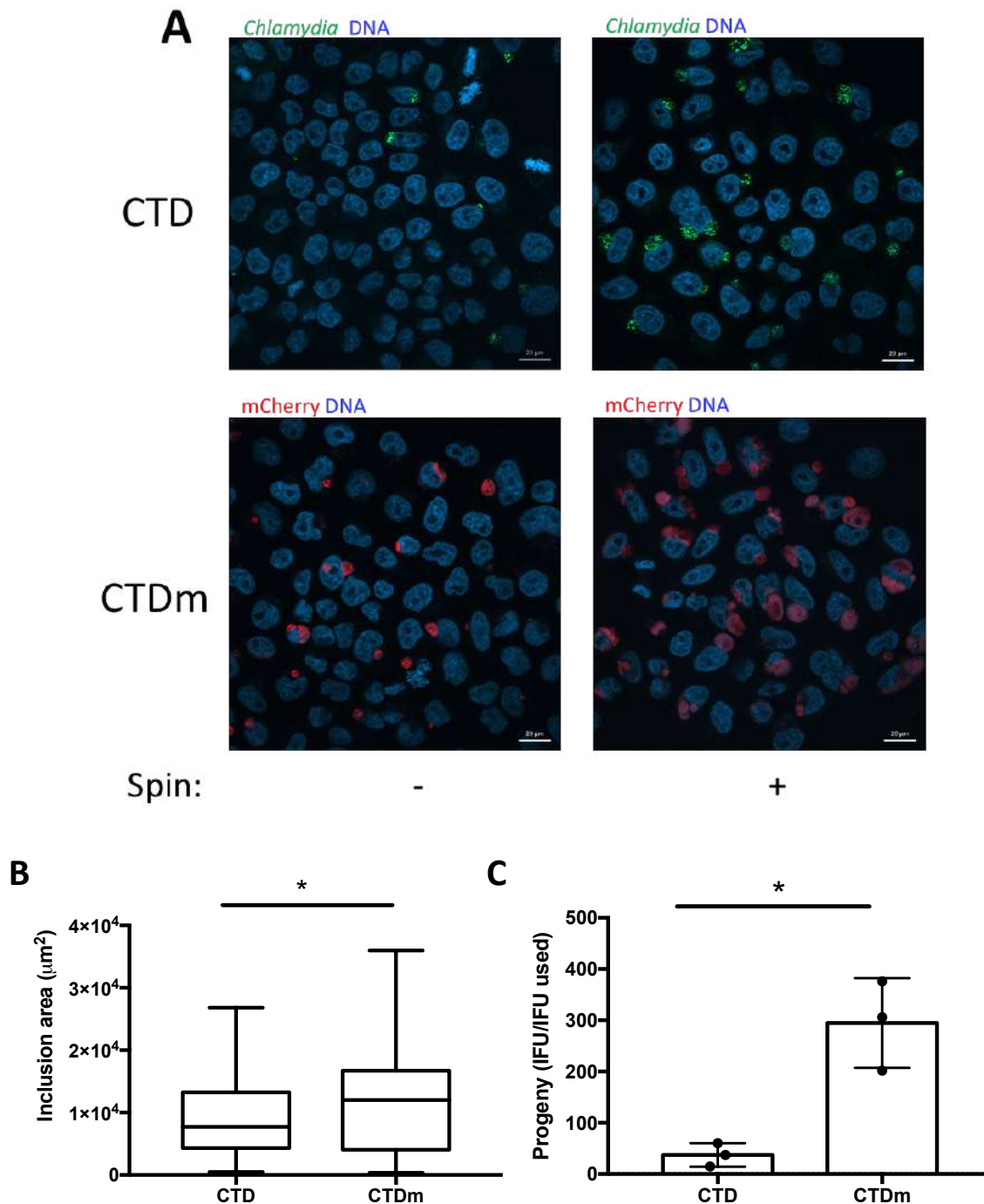


Figure 23. CTDm is more infectious than CTD

(A) HeLa cells were infected with CTD or CTDm and fixed 24 hpi. CTD infected cells were permeabilized and immuno-stained with antibodies against *Chlamydia* followed with Alexa488-conjugated secondary antibodies (green). DNA is stained with Hoechst. Scale bar = 20 μm . (B) CTD and CTDm inclusion size was measured with the CellProfiler software. The graph displays the mean \pm SD (n=38 inclusions/condition). (C) HeLa cells were infected with equal IFUs of CTD and CTDm for 48 hpi. Cells were lysed and bacterial IFU were determined by re-infecting fresh HeLa cells as described in the methods. Significance is defined as: ns (not significant) = $P > 0.05$; (*) = $P \leq 0.05$

The plasmid used for the transformation is the natural plasmid of *C. trachomatis*, that was shown to provide a selection advantage over plasmid-free bacteria *in vitro* and *in vivo* (Russell et al., 2011). We hypothesized that selection of plasmid-transformed bacteria may have increased the quantity of plasmid per bacteria. This was indeed the case, since quantitative PCR (qPCR) measurement of the relative quantity of a plasmidic sequence over a chromosomal sequence revealed that CTDm bacteria displayed ~3 fold more plasmid copies per bacteria than the parental strain (Figure 24A). Thus, the gain in infectivity may be related to an increase in expression of plasmid-encoded genes. Among those, Pgp3 was shown to be required for full virulence of *C. muridarum* *in vitro* and *in vivo*, and might contribute to bacterial adhesion (Galaleldeen et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2014). We observed a ~3-fold increase in the adhesion capacity of the fluorescent strain (Figure 24B), consistent with the increase in the percentage of infected cells when using the CTDm compared to CTD (Figure 23A). Thus, stable transformation increases plasmid number and favors adhesion. At 24 hpi the sizes of the CTDm inclusions were about 30% larger (Figure 23B) than those of parental inclusions, indicating that the selection of stable transformants also provides an advantage on the growth rate.

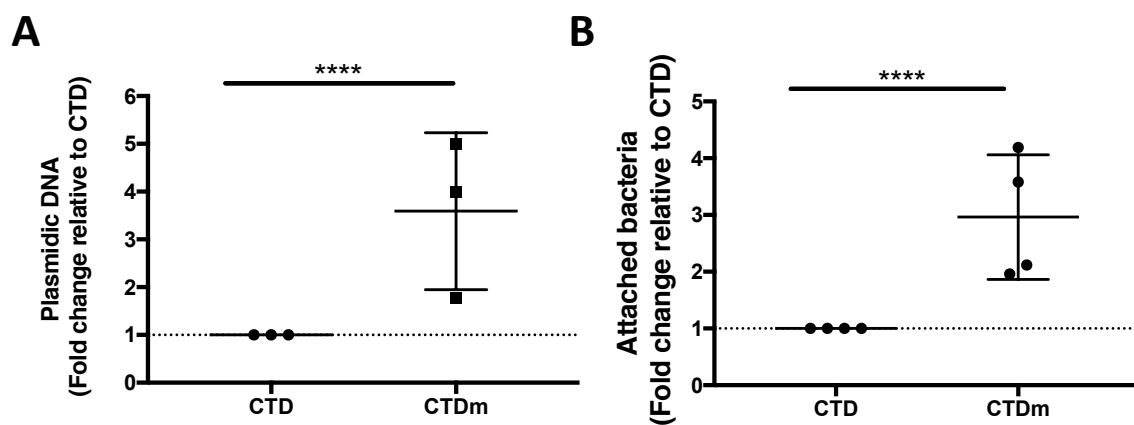


Figure 24. CTDm bacteria harbor more copies of the plasmid and display enhanced attachment capacity compared to the parental strain

(A) Total DNA was extracted from CTD and CTDm EBs. Bacterial plasmidic DNA (pDNA) was measured by qPCR and was normalized to bacterial genomic DNA (gDNA). The data are presented as the fold change pDNA over gDNA in CTDm relative to CTD. The mean \pm SD are shown. Each experiment was performed in triplicate and repeated three times. (B) Pre-cooled HeLa cells were infected with equal genome number CTD and CTDm at 4°C, then incubated for 3h30 at 4 °C. HeLa cells were then gently washed with cold PBS then lysed for total DNA extraction. Bacterial gDNA was measured by qPCR and was normalized to human gDNA. Each qPCR experiment was performed in triplicate and repeated at least three times. Significance is defined as: (****)= $P \leq 0.0001$

Altogether, CTDm bacteria represent a convenient model to follow *C. trachomatis* serovar D development, since it is easily tractable and develops better *in vitro*. Regarding the metabolic requirements during the course of infection, which is the focus of the present study, it is expected that the pressure exerted by the bacteria on the host metabolism occurs slightly earlier in time than with the parental strain, since the stably transformed bacteria multiply faster.

II. EBs energetic autonomy towards the early steps of the infectious cycle is incomplete.

The presence of glycogen and of glycolytic enzymes in EBs might cover the energetic needs of the bacteria in the first hours of the infectious cycle. To test this hypothesis and prevent the EBs from obtaining glucose from the host, we decided to use glucose-free medium. Since this formulation is not available for the culture medium used for primary cells, we performed this experiment in HeLa cells. Glucose deprivation for 48 h is expected to affect ATP production both through glycolysis and OxPhos. Indeed, we observed that ATP levels measured 48 h after deprivation were decreased by 50% (Figure 25A). As a read-out of the establishment of the early inclusion we used an antibody against Cap1. Cap1 is one of the bacterial proteins secreted early in the inclusion membrane (Fling et al., 2001). Six hours post infection the bacteria are expected to have clustered at the microtubule organizing center (MTOC), with a concomitant expansion of the inclusion membrane (Grieshaber, 2003). Indeed, in cells cultivated in the presence of glucose, many of the bacteria were already clustered near the nucleus, and Cap1 positive tubules were detected around them. In contrast, in glucose-deprived cells, bacteria were less clustered (Figure 25B). Cap1 staining was detected, but the tubules were shorter than in control cells. Thus, in the absence of glucose EBs are able to initiate the transcription and translation of early genes like *cap1*. However, some of the early steps of infection, e.g. clustering to the MTOC or inclusion tubule extension, necessitate glucose to be present in the culture medium. We concluded from these experiments that EBs have limited autonomy to initiate a successful infectious cycle.

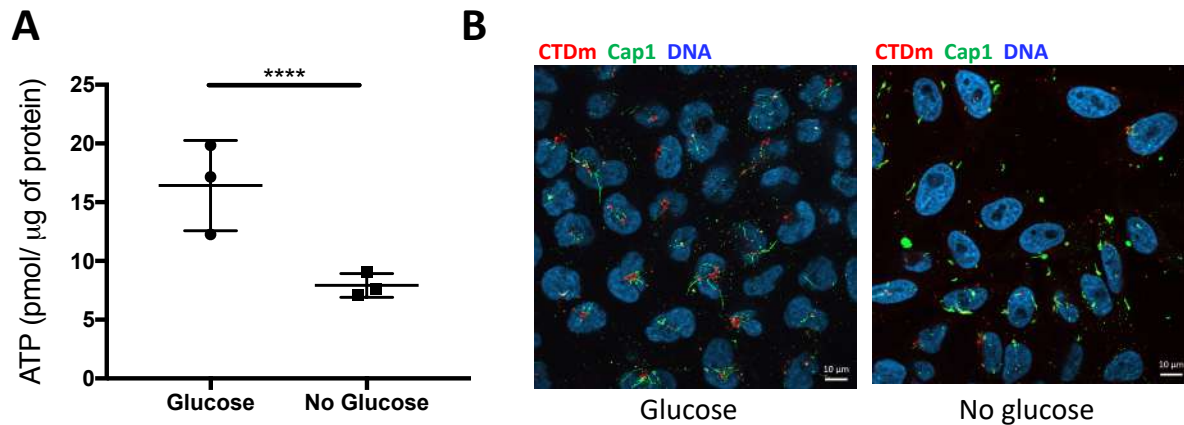


Figure 25. Chlamydial EBs energy source is not sufficient to sustain early bacterial development stages (A) HeLa cells were grown in medium containing glucose or not for 48 h. Intracellular ATP levels was then measured as described in the methods. (B) HeLa cells were grown in medium containing glucose or not for 48 h before infection with CTDm. Cells were fixed 6 hpi then permeabilized before immunostaining with anti-Cap1 followed with Alexa488-conjugated secondary antibodies. DNA is stained with Hoechst. Scale bar = 10 μm. Significance is defined as: (****)= $P \leq 0.0001$

III. The ATP level remains stable in epithelial cells infected by *C. trachomatis* and is mostly generated by glycolysis.

To gain an overall picture of the energetic balance of infected cells we first measured the concentration of ATP over time in primary epithelial cells. We observed that ATP levels remained stable over the course of infection (Figure 26A). It was reported by Kurihara et al. (2019) that *C. trachomatis* infection induced an increase of ATP levels in HeLa cells early (8 hpi) in infection (Kurihara et al., 2019). However, we did not observe an increase in ATP at early time in this cell line, and we measured a small drop at 30 hpi (Figure 26B). ATP concentration is the result of production and consumption, by the host and by the bacteria. These data do not inform us on the rate of glycolysis nor OxPhos in the host but indicate that, in primary cells, supply meets demand even at the peak of bacterial proliferation.

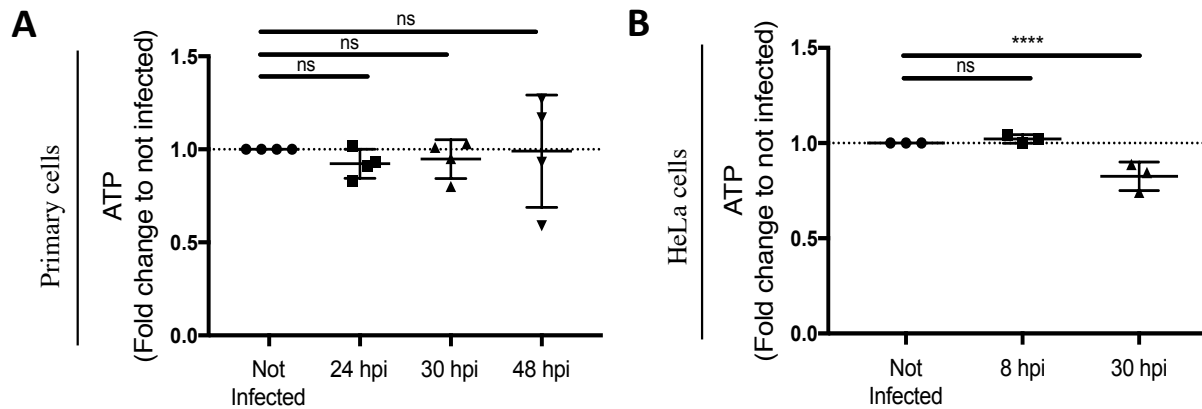


Figure 26. ATP levels remain stable over the course of infection by *C. trachomatis*

(**A**) Primary cells were infected with CTDM and intracellular ATP was measured 24, 30 and 48 hpi. Each experiment was repeated four times. (**B**) ATP levels were measured in CTDM infected HeLa cells at 8 and 30 hpi. Each experiment was repeated at least three times. Significance is defined as: ns (not significant) = $P > 0.05$; (*) = $P \leq 0.05$; (**) = $P \leq 0.01$; (***) = $P \leq 0.001$; (****) = $P \leq 0.0001$

Next, to understand which pathway makes the strongest contribution to the energetic balance in epithelial cells, we determined the consequences of chemical inhibition of glycolysis or OxPhos on ATP levels. Glycolysis is commonly determined through measurements of the extracellular acidification rate (ECAR) of the surrounding media. The latter is mostly governed by the excretion of lactic acid per unit time after its conversion from pyruvate, at the end of the glycolytic pathway. GNE-140 is a potent and specific lactate dehydrogenase (LDH) A/B inhibitor (Boudreau et al., 2016). Cells exposed to GNE-140 show an increase in levels of metabolites associated with glycolysis and the pentose phosphate pathway, which lie upstream of LDHA/B, but levels of metabolites associated with OxPhos remain fairly stable (Boudreau et al., 2016). In two different cancer cell line models GNE-140 was shown to block the glycolytic pathway and force cells towards oxidative phosphorylation (Ždravlević et al., 2018). We first tested the efficiency of GNE-140 by measuring its effect on lactate production. Lactate production being below the sensitivity limit in the lactate assay for A2EN cells, GNE-140 effect was measured on ECAR in that cell line. Increasing doses of GNE reduced both lactate production in HeLa cells (Figure 27A) and ECAR in A2EN cells (Figure 27B). A representative experiment for the glycolytic stress test is represented in Figure 27C.

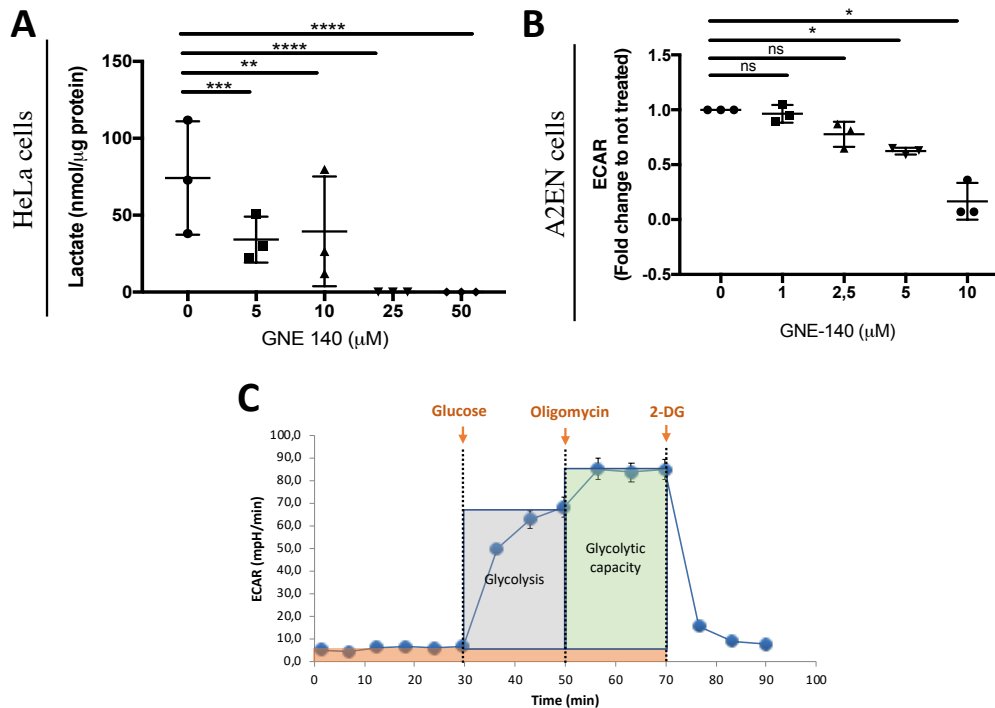


Figure 27. Dose dependent inhibition of lactate production by GNE-140

(A) HeLa cells were treated with indicated GNE-140 concentrations and 24 h later lactate production was measured in the medium as described in the methods. Each experiment was repeated three times (B) A2EN cells were treated with indicated GNE-140 concentrations for 24 h then ECAR was measured as described in the methods. (C) Glycolysis Stress Test profile of one representative experiment using control A2EN cells. Sequential injections of the indicated compounds measure glycolysis (grey box), glycolytic capacity (green box), non-glycolytic acidification (orange box). ECAR values in (B) correspond to the “Glycolysis” measurements. Significance is defined as: ns (not significant) = $P > 0.05$; (*) = $P \leq 0.05$; (**) = $P \leq 0.01$; (***) = $P \leq 0.001$; (****) = $P \leq 0.0001$

We next measured the consequence of GNE-140 treatment on ATP levels in these cells. In A2EN cells, application of GNE-140 for 24 h induced a dose-dependent decrease in intracellular ATP (Figure 28A). The effect of the drug was actually very fast, since it was significant after only 2 h of treatment for 5 μM GNE-140 (Figure 28B). To exclude the possibility that GNE-140 affected ATP production both through glycolysis and OxPhos, thereby accounting for the strong drop in ATP, we measured the OCR upon 24 h of treatment with GNE-140. A representative experiment for the OCR measurements is represented in (Figure 28C). Our results indicate that OCR remains stable upon GNE-140 treatment, suggesting that OxPhos is not affected by the drug (Figure 28D). We concluded from these experiments that GNE-140 affects ATP levels in A2EN, likely through an inhibition of glycolysis, while OxPhos remains functional.

A different picture emerged from HeLa cells, with no significant effect of 2 h treatment with 10 μM GNE-140, and for long term treatment (24 h), a decrease in ATP levels was only

detected at the high concentration of 25 μM (Figure 28E, F). We were surprised with these results because the A2EN and the HeLa cells have a low and high glycolytic activity, respectively. We thus expected that glycolysis would contribute marginally to ATP production in A2EN, and significantly in HeLa cells, at odds with our observations.

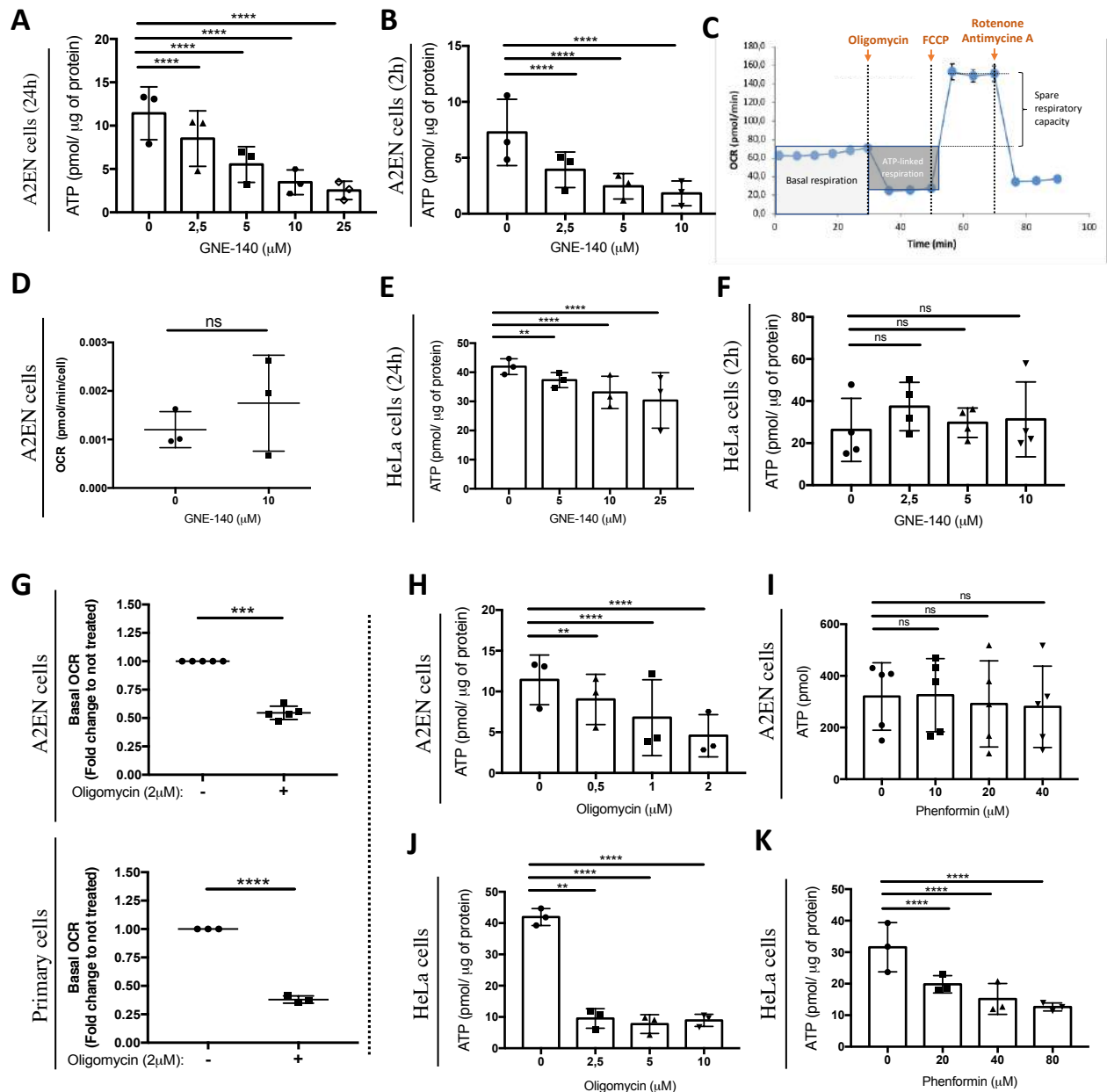


Figure 28. The effect of GNE-140 or OxPhos inhibitors on ATP levels is cell dependent

A2EN cells (**A**) (**B**) (**H**) (**I**) and HeLa cells (**E**) (**F**) (**J**) (**K**) were treated with the indicated concentrations of GNE-140, oligomycin or phenformin for 24 h except in (**B**) (**F**) where cells were treated for 2 h. ATP levels were measured as described in the methods. (**C**) Mito Stress Test profile of one representative experiment using control A2EN cells. OCR values in (**D**) correspond to the ATP-linked respiration measurements. (**D**) A2EN cells were treated or not for 24 h with 10 μM GNE-140 and Mito Stress Test was performed. (**G**) Basal level of OCR was measured on A2EN and primary cells upon addition of oligomycin (2 μM). Significance is defined as: ns (not significant) = $P > 0.05$; (*) = $P \leq 0.05$; (**) = $P \leq 0.01$; (***) = $P \leq 0.001$; (****) = $P \leq 0.0001$

To investigate the relative contribution of OxPhos and glycolysis to ATP levels in these cell lines further we next measured the effect of OxPhos inhibitors. Oligomycin is an inhibitor of the ATP synthase (complex V) of the respiratory chain commonly used to block OxPhos. Indeed, used at 2 μ M in Mito stress test, it reduces efficiently mitochondrial oxygen consumption in A2EN and primary cells (Figure 28G). As an alternative drug, we used phenformin, an inhibitor of the complex I of the mitochondrial respiratory chain (García Rubiño et al., 2019). High concentrations of these drugs were toxic for A2EN, we thus used lower concentrations than in HeLa cells. Phenformin did not significantly affect ATP levels in A2EN cells, while oligomycin did, but to a lesser extent than what we had observed with GNE-140 (Figure 28H, I). Both OxPhos inhibitors had a stronger impact on ATP levels in HeLa cells than in A2EN (Figure 28, K). Altogether, we concluded from these experiments that the respective contribution of glycolysis and OxPhos to maintaining ATP levels are different in the two cellular backgrounds, with glycolysis being preponderant in A2EN cells, versus OxPhos in HeLa cells. We next moved on to understand the consequences of infection on these pathways.

IV. Glycolysis is not upregulated in cervical epithelial cells infected with *C. trachomatis* serovar D

In non-infected cells, ECAR, the rate of acidification of the culture medium, is mostly determined by the rate of excretion of lactic acid, itself a by-product of the glycolytic pathway. Since *C. trachomatis* lacks lactate dehydrogenase, it does not contribute to lactic acid production, and probably makes little contribution to the acidification of the extracellular medium. Thus, even in the context of the infection, it might be possible to use ECAR as a read-out of the glycolytic activity of the host cell. We thus compared the ECAR of A2EN infected or not with CTDm for 24, 30 or 48 h. ECAR increased by 30% starting at 24 hpi but remained stable up to 30 h of infection, when the energy demand of the bacteria is estimated to be at its peak (Figure 29A). A higher acidification was noticeable at 48 hpi, however at this time point there was a lot of cell death in the specific plates used for Seahorse assays. Thus, the increased stress endured by the cells at this time point might account for this high increase in ECAR, and the data should be considered with caution.

Seahorse experiments require a substantial number of cells. To validate these findings in primary epithelial cells we chose to measure directly lactate quantities in the supernatant of cell cultures, infected or not with CTDm, a technique that is less demanding in cell quantities. The second advantage of this readout is that lactate can only be produced by the host, and thus

constitute a more direct readout of glycolysis in the host than ECAR. No difference was seen between lactate concentration in the culture medium of infected and non-infected primary cells (Figure 29B). This was also the case in HeLa cells where we did not detect a significant increase in lactate production during *C. trachomatis* infection (Figure 29C).

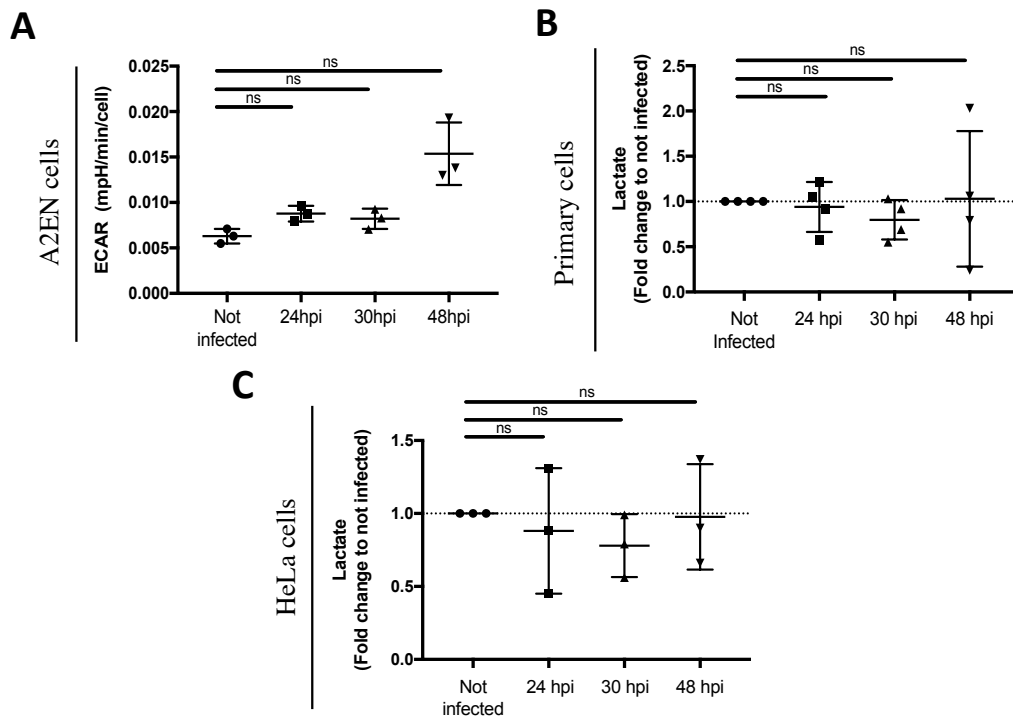


Figure 29 *C. trachomatis* infection does not significantly affect glycolysis

(A) A2EN cells were infected with CTDm for 24, 30 and 48 hpi followed by ECAR measurements as described in the methods. (B) Basal lactate levels were measured in HeLa and A2EN cells grown for 24 h. Primary cells (C) and HeLa cells (D) were infected with CTDm for 24, 30 and 48 hpi after what lactate measurements were performed. Significance is defined as: ns (not significant) = $P > 0.05$

In summary, our data indicate that the glycolytic pathway is not significantly up-regulated in epithelial cells infected by *C. trachomatis* serovar D, even at the peak of the metabolic demand.

V. OxPhos is not up-regulated in *C. trachomatis* infected cells

The level of OxPhos in eukaryotic cells is commonly measured by following oxygen consumption rate (OCR, see Figure 28C). *C. trachomatis* has an active respiratory metabolism, and it was estimated that up to 40% of the OCR in infected cells might represent bacterial oxygen consumption (Liang et al., 2018). Thus, basal OCR cannot be used as a read-out of the level of OxPhos in the host. However, the respiratory chain in *C. trachomatis* is very unusual, as it uses a sodium-linked respiratory chain to produce ATP (Liang et al., 2018). Addition of oligomycin, an inhibitor of the ATP synthase (complex V) of the respiratory chain of the host

allows to measure the mitochondrial respiration, as it has no effect on the bacteria that lack complex V. Similarly, addition of the cyanide-4 (trifluoromethoxy) phenylhydrazone (FCCP), an uncoupling agent that collapses the proton gradient, allows to assess the spare respiratory capacity of the host cell, whether infected or not. We thus decided to use these parameters to determine whether OxPhos was modified by infection in primary epithelial cells. We observed no significant difference in the mitochondrial dependent OCR (Figure 30A), nor in the spare respiratory capacity, in CTDm infected cells compared to control cells (Figure 30B). We observed similar results in A2EN cells (Figure 30C, D).

In summary, our data suggest that despite the significant bacterial load specially at late point of infection, cellular respiration remains stable.

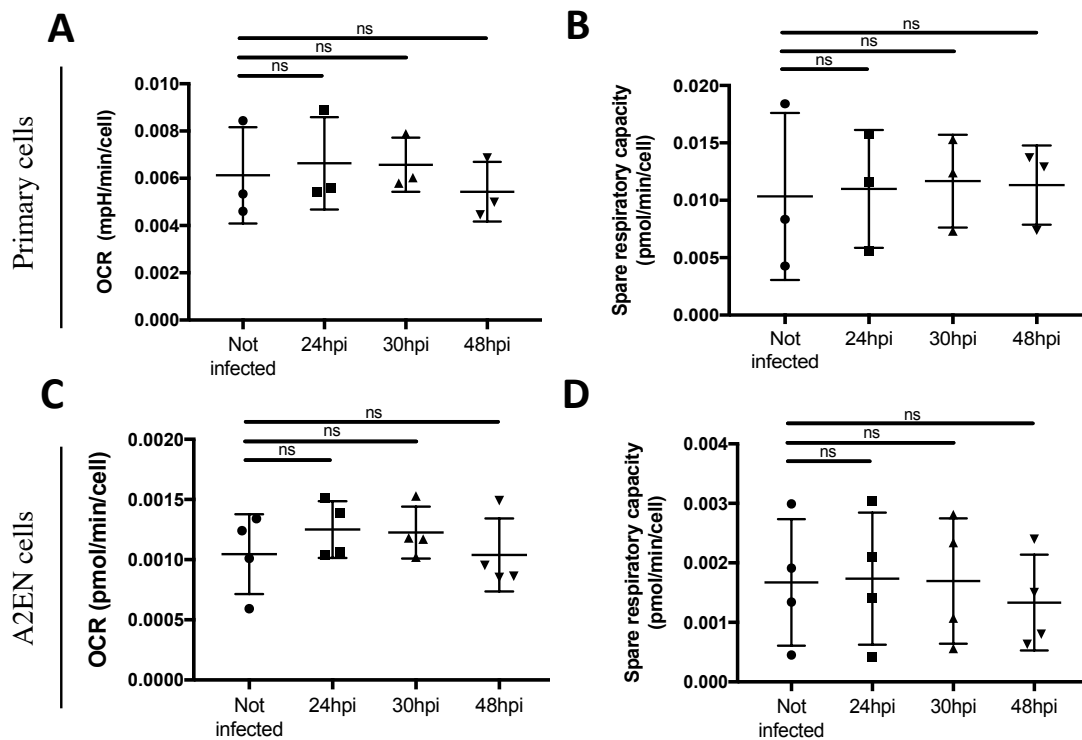


Figure 30. *C. trachomatis* infection does not affect OxPhos in epithelial cells

Primary cells (A) (B) and A2EN cells (C) (D) were infected with CTDm for 24, 30 and 48 hpi followed by OCR measurements as described in the methods. For each experiment the spare respiratory capacity was calculated and is reported in (B) (D). Significance is defined as: ns (not significant) = $P > 0.05$

VI. *C. trachomatis* development is impaired by a LDHA/B inhibitor in primary cells

The absence of up-regulation of glycolysis does not exclude the possibility that the bacteria rely on this pathway to sustain their metabolic need. Unfortunately, there is currently no specific drug that would specifically block glycolysis. Silencing techniques do not work in

the primary epithelial cells (*data not shown*) and their short life-span precludes gene disruption strategy. As shown above (Figure 28A, B), the LDHA/B inhibitor GNE-140 strongly reduces ATP production in A2EN cells, without affecting the mitochondrial oxygen consumption rate. It can be deduced from these observations that GNE-140 likely impairs glycolysis, but not OxPhos. Since the targets of GNE-140, LDHA/B, are absent in *C. trachomatis*, direct effect on the drug on the bacteria is unlikely. We thus decided to measure its effect on infectious progeny.

We first measured the effect of GNE-140 on the ability for the bacteria to undergo a complete developmental cycle. The progeny (IFU) collected after 48 hrs of infection in the absence or presence of the drug was measured by re-infecting fresh HeLa cells and counting the percentage of infected cells one day later. We observed a dose dependent reduction of the infectious progeny in A2EN cells treated with increasing doses of GNE-140, indicating that a functional glycolytic pathway in the host is required for bacterial development (Figure 31A). In mirror of the effect of GNE on IFU production, we observed that increasing concentration of the drug tends to reduce the percentage of infected cells and the mCherry signal in the primary infection (Figure 31B, C), a finding that we confirmed in primary cells (Figure 31D, E).

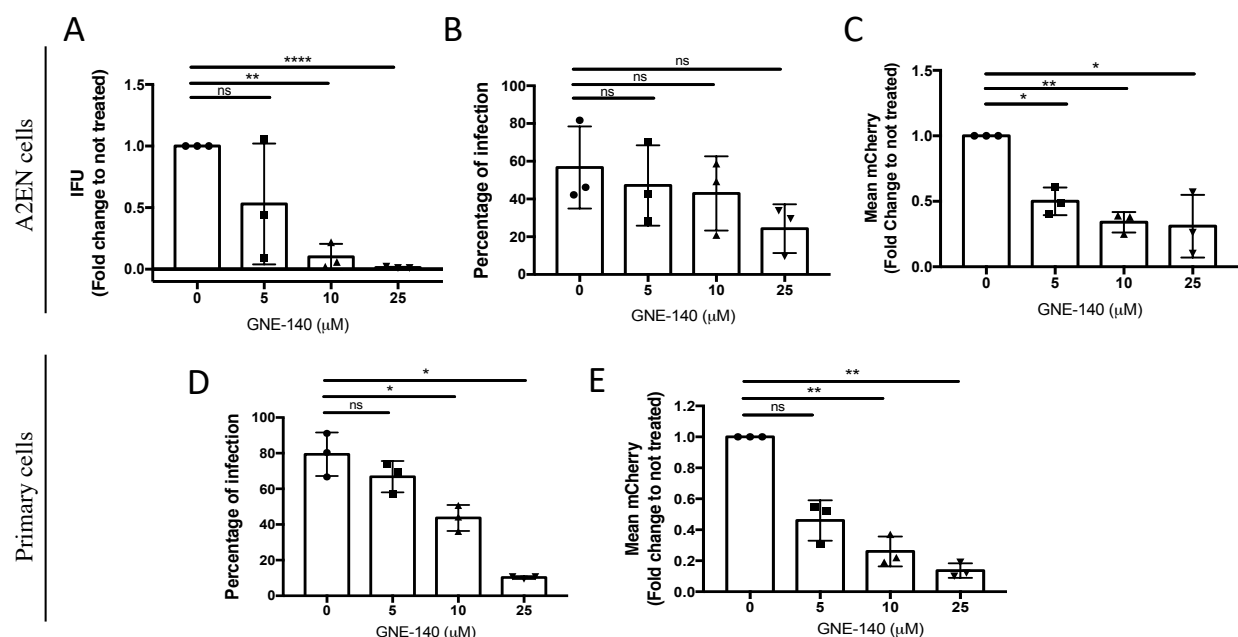


Figure 31. Glycolysis is required for *C. trachomatis* growth

(A) A2EN cells were infected with CTDM and treated with indicated concentrations of GNE-140 for 48 h. Cells were lysed and bacterial IFU were determined by re-infecting fresh HeLa cells as described in the methods. After 24 h, duplicate wells were fixed and analyzed by flow cytometry to determine the percentage of infected cells (B) and the mean fluorescence (mCherry) of the infected population (C). (D) (E) Primary cells were infected with CTDM and treated with indicated concentrations of GNE-140 for 30 h. Cells were fixed and the percentage of infection (D) and the mean mCherry signal (E) were determined by flow cytometry analysis. Significance is defined as: ns (not significant) = $P > 0.05$; (*) = $P \leq 0.05$; (**) = $P \leq 0.01$; (***) = $P \leq 0.001$; (****) = $P \leq 0.0001$

The decrease in the percentage of infection upon GNE-140 treatment suggests that establishment of the infection might be impaired. To address this question, we fixed cells 6 hpi in the absence or presence of the drug and stained them for the early inclusion marker Cap1 after a permeabilization step. GNE-140 treatment resulted in a decrease in bacteria clustering near the nucleus. Cap1-positive staining was observed in both non-treated and GNE-140 treated cells, but appeared reduced in the drug-treated cells, possibly due to the clustering defect, which dispersed the signal throughout the cell volume. Note that the Cap1 staining is different in A2EN cells (Figure 32A) and HeLa cells (Figure 25), with much longer tubules in the latter. Thus, in GNE-140 treated A2EN cells migration to the MTOC, and inclusion formation were impaired, although some Cap1 synthesis and translocation still occurred.

To know if these early events were the only steps sensitive to the LDHA/B inhibitor, we postponed the addition of the GNE-140 to the culture medium to the mid-developmental stage, i.e. 12 hpi, and measured IFUs 48 hpi (Figure 32B). If anything, we observed a stronger effect of GNE-140 when applied 12 hpi versus at the onset of infection (compare Figure 31A and Figure 32B). The stronger effect is likely due to the drug losing activity with incubation time, and these data demonstrate that GNE-140 also impairs mid- and late steps of the *C. trachomatis* developmental cycle. Altogether, these observations indicate that host glycolysis is required to sustain multiple steps of *C. trachomatis* development.

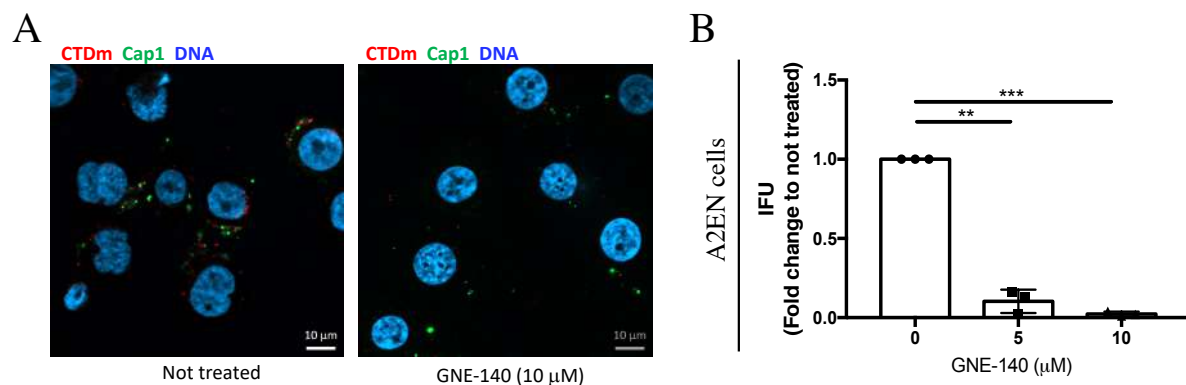


Figure 32. Glycolysis is required for early development steps of *C. trachomatis* in epithelial cells

(A) A2EN cells were infected CTDm and treated or not with 10 μM GNE-140. Cells were fixed 6 hpi then permeabilized before immunostaining with anti-Cap1 followed with Alexa488-conjugated secondary antibodies. DNA is stained with Hoechst. (B) A2EN cells were infected with CTDm and treated with indicated concentrations of GNE-140 12 hpi. Progeny assay was performed 48 hpi as described in the methods, and IFU was determined. Significance is defined as: ns (not significant) = $P > 0.05$; (*) = $P \leq 0.05$; (**) = $P \leq 0.01$; (***) = $P \leq 0.001$

Interestingly, GNE-140 had no significant effect on IFU production in HeLa cells (Figure 33A), even at concentration of 25 μM that completely blocked lactate production in this cell line (Figure 27A). 10 μM GNE-140, which strongly impaired early steps of infection in A2EN, had no effect on bacteria distribution and Cap1 secretion in HeLa (Figure 33B). Consistent with these findings, silencing glucose phosphate isomerase (GPI), one of the early enzymes that control the flux into the glycolytic pathway, had no effect on progeny in HeLa cells (Figure 33C). Efficiency of the siRNA was confirmed by running a lactate assay (Figure 33D). To test another cell line, we used epithelial cell line derived from the human colon, LS174T, in which *GPI* has been knock-out. These KO cells have been well-characterized and rely only on OxPhos for growth (de Padua et al., 2017). When IFU were titrated 48 hpi on two independent *GPI* KO clones, no difference was found compared to IFU obtained from infecting the parental wild-type LS174T cells (Figure 33E). Thus, the reliance of *C. trachomatis* on the glycolytic pathway was observed in A2EN and primary cells but not in two cell lines of tumoral origin. Another important implication of the absence of effect of GNE-140 on progeny in HeLa cells is that it rules out the possibility that its effect on progeny in A2EN cells was due to an off-target effect of the drug on the bacteria.

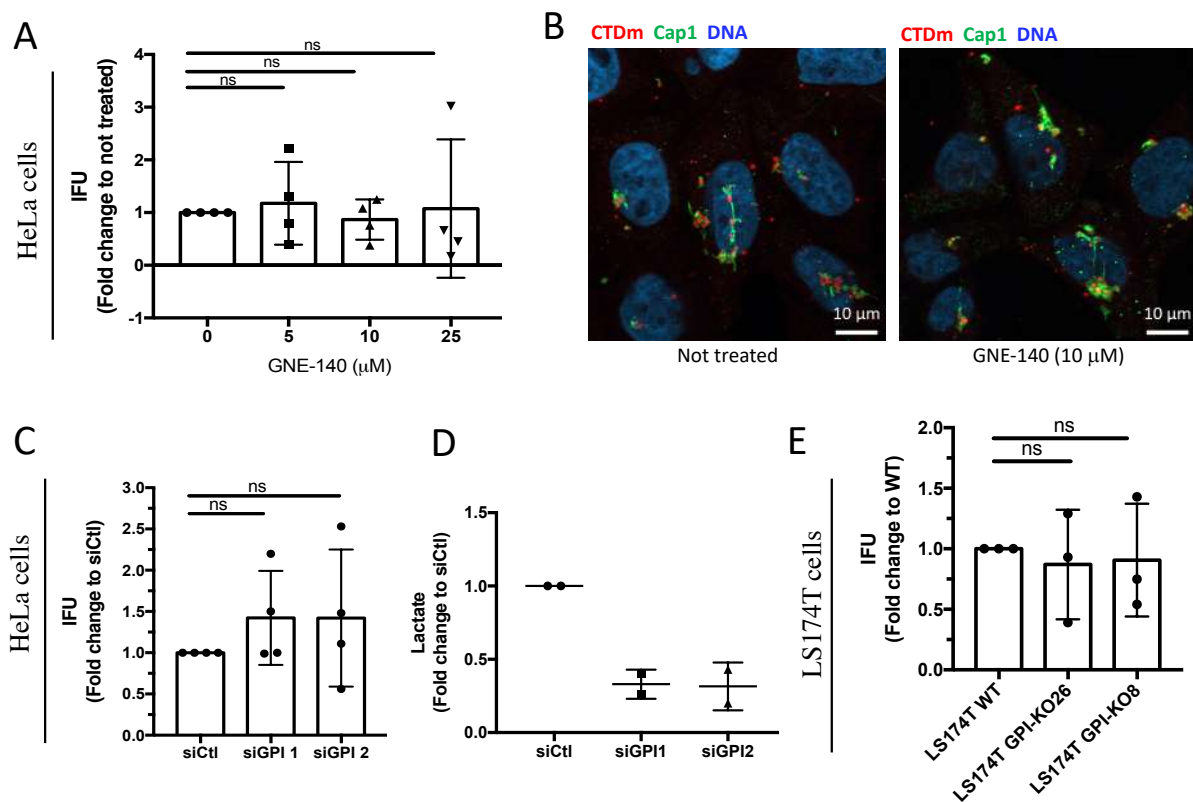


Figure 33. Glycolysis requirement for *C. trachomatis* growth is by-passed in two cancer cell lines (A) HeLa cells were infected with CTDm and treated with indicated concentrations of GNE-140 for 48 h before a progeny assay was performed as described in the methods, and IFU was determined. (B) HeLa cells were infected CTDm and treated or not with 10 M GNE-140. Cells were fixed 6 hpi then permeabilized

before immunostaining with anti-Cap1 followed with Alexa488-conjugated secondary antibodies. DNA is stained with Hoechst. (C) GPI was silenced in HeLa cells with two siRNA for 48 h before cells were infected with CTDm. 30 hpi a progeny assay was performed, and IFU was determined. (D) Efficiency of siRNA treatment was evaluated through a lactate assay 48 h following siRNA treatment in HeLa cells. (E) LS174T WT or GPI-KO (clone #26 and #8) were infected with CTDm for 48 h before performing a progeny assay and determining IFU. Significance is defined as: ns (not significant) = $P > 0.05$; (*) = $P \leq 0.05$; (**)= $P \leq 0.01$; (***)= $P \leq 0.001$; (****)= $P \leq 0.0001$

VII. OxPhos inhibition impairs bacterial proliferation but not the early steps of development.

The absence of up-regulation of mitochondrial respiration does not exclude the possibility that the bacteria rely on this pathway to sustain their metabolic need. To address this question, we measured the effect of the OxPhos inhibitors oligomycin and phenformin on *C. trachomatis* developmental cycle. We observed a dose dependent reduction of the progeny for both drugs, with already 60-75 % reduction of the number of infectious particles collected from A2EN 48 hpi when the culture had been done in the presence of 0.5 μM oligomycin (Figure 34A) and 10 μM phenformin (Figure 34B). To directly measure the effect of these drugs on bacterial proliferation we used qPCR to estimate the relative number of bacterial genomes in the different culture conditions. We observed a similar decrease in the number of genomes as in the number of IFUs, indicating that the drop in IFU when OxPhos was impaired was reflecting a decrease in bacterial numbers at the previous infection round (Figure 34C).

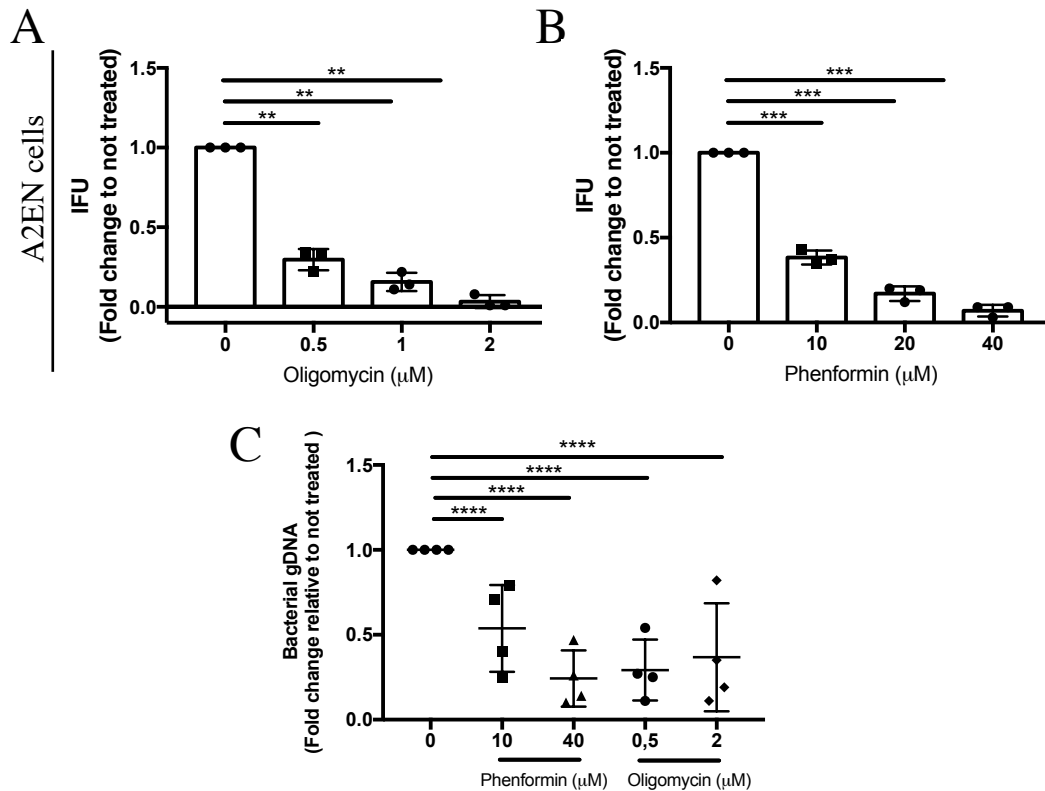


Figure 34. OxPhos is required for *C. trachomatis* growth

A2EN cells were infected with CTDm and treated with indicated concentrations of oligomycin (A) or phenformin (B). A progeny assay was performed for 48 hpi as described in the methods, and IFU was determined. (C) A2EN cells were infected with CTDm and treated with indicated concentrations of oligomycin or phenformin for 48 h. Cells were lysed for DNA extraction and samples were analyzed by qPCR. Bacterial load was determined by quantifying the bacterial *glgA* gene and normalizing it to cell number using the *36B4* gene. Significance is defined as: ns (not significant) = $P > 0.05$; (*) = $P \leq 0.05$; (**)= $P \leq 0.01$; (***)= $P \leq 0.001$; (****)= $P \leq 0.0001$

Interestingly, the presence of phenformin or oligomycin did not affect the percentage of infection in A2EN, although there was a trend to a decrease in the percentage of infected cells upon treatment with 2 μM oligomycin (Figure 35A). This observation indicated that the early steps of development proceeded normally even when OxPhos was not at full capacity. Indeed, inclusions fixed 6 hpi in the presence of 1 μM oligomycin (a concentration that resulted in 80% drop in IFUs, Figure 34A) displayed normal features of development, with the bacteria clustered at the MTOC, surrounded with Cap1-positive tubules (Figure 35B). At 2 μM oligomycin, failure of the bacteria to cluster started to appear. Finally, we postponed the addition of oligomycin to 12 hpi, and measured the impact on IFUs at 48 hpi (Figure 35C). As in the case of GNE-140, we observed an even stronger reduction in IFUs when the drug was applied during the proliferation phase instead of at the onset of infection (see Figure 34A for

comparison), likely because the efficacy of the drug wears off during the incubation time. These data confirm the importance of OxPhos to sustain bacterial replication in epithelial cells.

Altogether, these experiments show that OxPhos needs to work at full capacity to sustain bacterial proliferation in epithelial cells. However, the early steps of infection are more tolerant to suboptimal OxPhos.

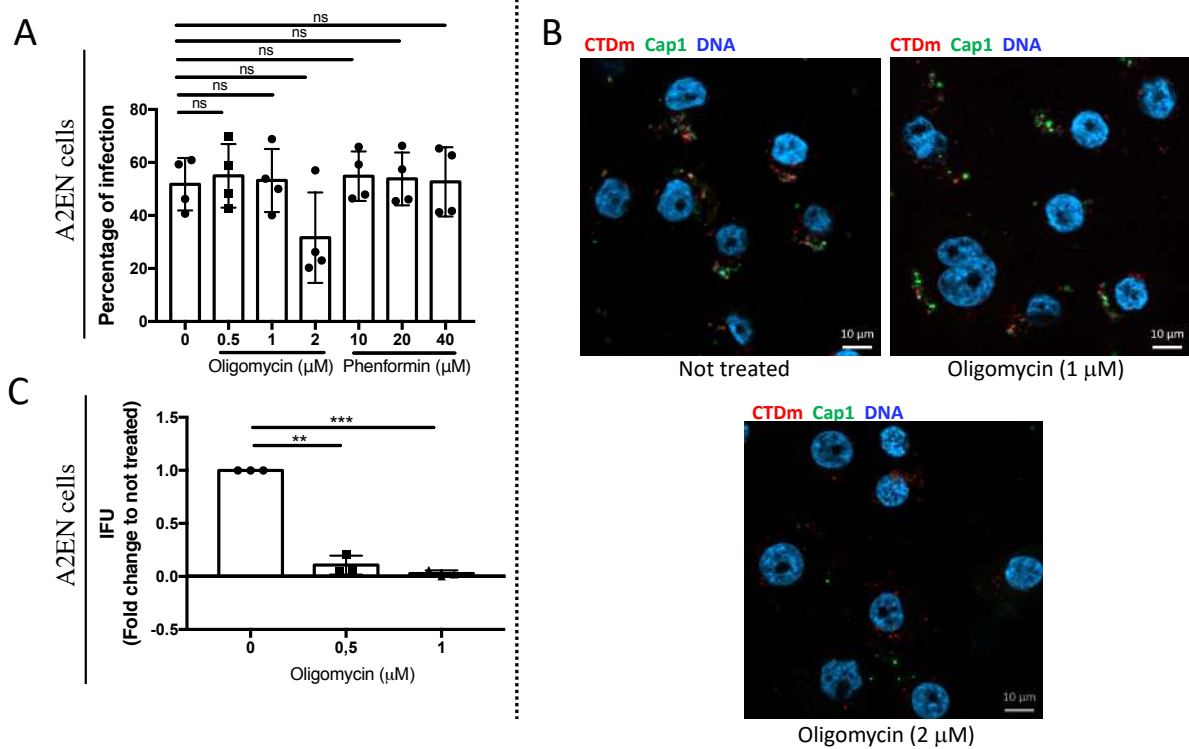


Figure 35. OxPhos is mostly required in the late phases of *C. trachomatis* developmental cycle
 (A) Percentage of infected cells was measured 24 h following CTDm infection and oligomycin or phenformin treatment of A2EN (B) A2EN cells were infected CTDm and treated or not with 1 μM oligomycin. Cells were fixed 6 hpi then permeabilized before immunostaining with anti-Cap1 followed with Alexa488-conjugated secondary antibodies. DNA is stained with Hoechst. (C) A2EN cells were infected with CTDm and treated with indicated concentrations of oligomycin 12 hpi. Progeny assay was performed 48 hpi as described in the methods, and bacterial titer was determined. Significance is defined as: ns (not significant) = $P > 0.05$; (*) = $P \leq 0.05$; (**) = $P \leq 0.01$; (***) = $P \leq 0.001$; (****) = $P \leq 0.0001$

Discussion

At the start of this doctoral work, we made the hypothesis that *C. trachomatis* manipulated the metabolism of its host to produce the energy needed for the bacterial development. This hypothesis was mainly based on observations and speculations:

- The bacteria have been described to have a limited capacity for ATP production of their own, with their truncated TCA cycle (Stephens, 1998). They express an ATP transporter, indicating that they at least partly depend on ATP supply by the host (Tjaden 1999). In agreement with that, supply of ATP in the axenic medium is required for protein synthesis in RBs (Omsland et al., 2012).
- Some data in the literature reviewed in the introduction indicated that glycolysis might be up-regulated. However, these data needed to be taken with caution as they were mostly obtained in the cancerous cell line HeLa, and some were actually obtained with other species than *C. trachomatis*.
- Finally, it was tempting to make a parallel between infected cells and cancer cells: both face a need for increased consumption of some metabolites, to sustain bacterial growth in one case, and cellular proliferation in the other case. This parallel suggested that infected cell may undergo a metabolic shift towards high glycolysis, even in the presence of oxygen, as observed in tumoral cells.

Against our expectations, we observed that glycolysis and OxPhos remained very stable in infected epithelial cells, as we will discuss in detail below. The second question we asked was which of these ATP generating pathway, if any, was required for bacterial development, and at which step. Although glycolysis is rather low in primary cells, compared to tumor cells, it seems to be required throughout bacterial development, including early steps, while OxPhos was mostly important for the proliferative phase. Before discussing the data that led to these conclusions, and their implications, we will comment on the bacterial model that we used to obtain these results and we characterized in this work, i.e. *C. trachomatis* serovar D stably transformed with the *C. trachomatis* plasmid expressing the gene coding for mCherry.

I. Plasmid mCherry expressing bacteria display enhanced infectivity

This study was conducted with a serovar of *C. trachomatis* more representative of the circulating sexually transmitted infections than the more commonly used L2 serovar. For practical reasons, we generated a CTDm strain stably transformed with a *C. trachomatis* L2

derived plasmid engineered to constitutively express the fluorescent protein mCherry. As previously shown for GFP expressing *C. trachomatis* L2, it enabled us to easily quantify infected cells by flow cytometry. However, unlike GFP (Vromman et al., 2014), the mCherry signal was slightly too weak for reliable detection by immunofluorescence on single EBs. Interestingly, we observed that the fluorescent bacteria were more infectious than the parental ones, due to enhanced attachment and intracellular growth. This is in contrast to stably transformed serovar L2 strains, that did not differ from the parental strain for these two parameters (Vromman et al., 2014). To the best of our knowledge this is the first detailed investigation of the difference *in vitro* between a plasmid-bearing parental strain and the transformed strain for a non LGV strain. In the LGV serovars of *C. trachomatis*, in which transformation protocols were initially implemented, comparison of parental and transformed strains led to the conclusion that there was no significant difference in infectivity (Agaisse and Derré, 2013; Wang et al., 2011). Importantly, LGV strains are more infectious than the ocular or other genital serovars *in vitro*. It might be that the advantage provided by the transformation is not significant in the LGV background, that is proliferate already extremely efficiently in tissue culture.

We measured that the CTDm contained on average 3-fold more copies of the plasmid than the parental bacteria. The chlamydial plasmid was shown to provide a selection advantage over plasmid-free bacteria *in vitro* and *in vivo* (Russell et al., 2011). In particular Pgp3, one of the eight proteins coded by this plasmid, is required for full virulence *in vitro* and *in vivo* (Liu et al., 2014) and might be exposed on the EB surface (Hou et al., 2015). Thus, increase in Pgp3 expression might account for the enhanced infectivity observed with the fluorescent strain. It is unknown whether the increase in plasmid copy number accounts for the increase in inclusion size we observed, and if so, by which mechanism. Plasmid-free bacteria lose their ability to store glycogen in the inclusion lumen, and display different inclusion morphology (Miyashita et al., 2000). This original study does not report on difference in inclusion growth in the absence of plasmid, but one study measuring the number of genome copy in a plasmid-less strain of the ocular serovar A also observed a decrease in the replication rate in the first half of infection compared to the parental strain (Porcella et al., 2015). In any case, we concluded from these preliminary experiments that, if anything, the fluorescent bacteria might exert a metabolic pressure slightly earlier than the parental strain, and make a suitable and convenient tool to study the intracellular development of *C. trachomatis* serovar D.

II. *C. trachomatis* infection does not significantly modify glycolysis nor OxPhos

As explained above, we expected the need for ATP of the bacteria to translate into a manipulation of at least one of the two main ATP generating pathways in host cells, glycolysis and OxPhos. Surprisingly, we observed stability for both pathways. This was measured in particular at 30 hpi, which is estimated to correspond to the peak of the metabolic demand. The measure of ECAR indicate that there might be a small increase in glycolysis, however this was not confirmed when directly measuring lactate production, which constitute a more direct readout of the shift of pyruvate consumption by fermentation rather than OxPhos.

Contrasting with our observation, increase in ATP level was reported in HeLa cells infected for 8 h with *C. trachomatis* (Kurihara et al., 2019), an observation we did not reproduce. Moreover, at odds with our observations, mitochondrial activity was reported to increase in CTD infected HeLa cells at 24 hpi (Shima et al., 2021). The main difference between these studies and ours is the cellular background. Our results provide several illustrations of the difference in basal metabolism between HeLa cells and primary epithelial cells, and it is likely that infection has different effects on the metabolism of these two cell types. These difference in cell type might also explain the increase in lactate observed late in infection in HeLa cells (Rother et al., 2018) but not in primary cells.

Interestingly, while our data indicate that glycolysis remains fairly stable in cells infected by *C. trachomatis*, at least one glucose-derived pathways is up-regulated by infection. Indeed, we demonstrated that the hexosamine biosynthesis pathway (HBP) is boosted upon infection both in HeLa cells and in primary epithelial cells (Maffei et al., 2020). This occurs through the activation of a host enzyme called transglutaminase 2 (TG2), which modifies GFPT, the enzyme controlling entry into HBP, and increases its activity. Moreover, several studies have demonstrated that preservation of the pentose phosphate pathway is a key to a successful infection. Siegl et al. (2014) proved that PPP downregulation interfered with bacterial development (Siegl et al., 2014). And Rother et al. (2018) demonstrated that inhibition of the purine synthesis pathway, which is downstream the PPP, is detrimental for bacterial development (Rother et al., 2018). Whether this pathway is upregulated has not been investigated. The phosphoribosyl pyrophosphate amidotransferase (PPAT) enzyme, which converts the activated form of ribose 5 phosphate (R5P), phosphoribosyl pyrophosphate (PRPP), into 5'-phosphoribosylamine (PRA) could be the target of *C. trachomatis* infection as we identified it as another putative substrate of TG2. During my PhD, I started investigating

this question. However, my data remain very preliminary at this stage, and the question will need further work.

III. Individual EB display limited autonomy in the initiation of infection

Glycogen synthesis genes are present in all known families of *Chlamydiae*, including *Estrella lausannensis* and *Waddlia chondrophila*, which use a very original pathway for its synthesis (Colpaert et al., 2021). This observation is surprising since glycogen metabolism loss appears to be universal to most if not all obligate intracellular bacterial pathogens or symbionts that went through genome reduction throughout evolution (Henrissat et al., 2002). This strongly suggests that glycogen plays an essential role in the developmental cycle of *Chlamydiae*. In *C. trachomatis*, proteomics studies have shown a very strong enrichment for enzymes involved in glycogen synthesis and degradation in EBs compared to RBs (Saka et al., 2011). Indeed, glycogen was shown to only be present in EBs (Gehre et al., 2016). These observations support the hypothesis that EBs, more than RBs, uses glycogen to sustain their metabolic need.

We demonstrated that the phosphoglucomutase activity in *C. trachomatis* is exerted by the protein CT295, and not by the related protein CT815. CT295 is one of the metabolic enzymes enriched in EBs (Saka et al., 2011). Catabolism of intra-bacterial glycogen into G1P, and conversion to G6P with CT295, should allow to feed the glycolysis pathway and generate ATP during the extracellular stage, and in the very early stages of intracellular development, when import of host ATP has not been put in place yet. We thus hypothesized that EBs might have some degree of autonomy, and that early steps of infection might occur normally even if glycolysis or oxidative phosphorylation were not functioning at full capacity.

We first investigated this question in HeLa cells, as we could use glucose-free medium to bridle the access of EBs to glucose (a glucose-free formulation for the KSF medium used to grow A2EN or primary epithelial cells does not exist). As expected from previous work, 6 hpi most bacteria were clustered at the MTOC in HeLa cells, and numerous, long Cap1-positive tubules emanating from the inclusion were observed. In glucose-deprived cultures, the bacteria were more dispersed, and the tubules were fewer and shorter. The detection of Cap1, even in the absence of glucose, confirms that the EBs have some metabolic autonomy that allow them to transcribe and express at least some of the early genes of their developmental cycle. However, we observed that several steps of the early development of the bacteria, such as clustering to the MTOC or inclusion formation were affected by glucose deprivation.

Motor-driven transport along microtubules and fusion with host compartments for building the inclusion membrane are host-driven processes that require energy. Thus, we hypothesized that the sensibility of the early steps of development to glucose deprivation is related to the drop of ATP we observed in glucose-deprived cells. Experiments in A2EN corroborated this hypothesis. Indeed, in that cellular background, GNE-140 treatment also decreased bacterial clustering and Cap1 secretion, while OxPhos inhibition did so only at high drug concentration. These phenotypes correlated with the effect of these drugs on ATP levels in the host, with GNE-140 inducing a sharp decrease in ATP, even as early as 2 h after treatment, while OxPhos inhibitors had a milder effect. Also, in HeLa cells, 10 μ M GNE-140 does not affect ATP levels and does not affect the initiation of infection. This experiment is an important control since it allows us to rule out a direct effect of the drug on the bacteria.

A rapid effect of GNE-140 on ATP levels was also observed in a pancreatic cell line within 6 h of treatment with 10 μ M of GNE-140 (Boudreau et al., 2016). We did not expect this strong effect in the primary cells nor in A2EN cells, since they have low glycolysis activity, but our data suggest that this activity contributes to the majority of ATP production in these cells. Consistent with this conclusion, OxPhos inhibitors had a lower impact on ATP levels in A2EN cells than GNE-140.

We concluded from these observations that EBs exhibit some degree of metabolic autonomy, but heavily rely on energy-driven processes of the host to establish the nascent inclusion. It should be noted that Omsland and al. showed that G6P needs to be added to the axenic medium to detect a significant protein synthesis activity over a 6 h incubation period, suggesting that autonomous metabolic capacity of EBs might be limited, at least in these experimental conditions (Omsland et al., 2012).

IV. Reliance on glycolysis and OxPhos for intracellular replication

The next question we investigated was the requirement for glycolysis and OxPhos for a successful infection in epithelial cells.

In A2EN cells, we had no other mean of intervention on glycolysis than the use of the chemical inhibitor GNE-140, as other “glycolysis inhibitors” have pleiotropic effects, and gene silencing or disruption did not work in this cell line. We showed that 10 μ M GNE-140 induced a rapid and significant drop in ATP levels in A2EN without affecting OxPhos, implicating that it blocks glycolysis-driven ATP production. We need to keep in mind that GNE-140 affects a

step downstream of glycolysis, meaning that glycolytic intermediates may still be present and even increased in GNE-140 treated cells, as was shown in a pancreatic cell line (Boudreau et al., 2016). Our data indicate that glycolysis is required not only to enable the formation of nascent inclusions, as discussed above, but also to sustain the proliferative stage of the development. Indeed, inhibition LDH A/B, either from the beginning or during mid-stages of infection, severely reduced bacterial progeny measured 48 hpi. Importantly, treatments with 10 μ M GNE-140 had no effect on bacterial progeny in HeLa cells, ruling out the possibility that the drug is acting directly on the bacteria. Considering the strong effect of GNE-140 on ATP levels in primary cells, it is likely that GNE-140 delays bacterial replication by limiting bacterial access to host ATP.

Nevertheless, we cannot exclude the possibility that the effect of GNE-140 treatment is linked to other metabolic changes. Indeed, on one hand, GNE-140 treatment induces an accumulation of some PPP intermediates which could be utilized for bacterial nucleotides synthesis and higher ROS levels which has been described as beneficial for the bacteria, through HIF-1 α activation (Prusty et al., 2012). On the other hand, GNE-140 treatment also decreases NAD⁺/NADH ratio, with both a decrease in NAD⁺ and an increase of NADH, which could be detrimental to bacterial development, as discussed below. Furthermore, a recent study demonstrated that three glycolytic enzymes, aldolase A, pyruvate kinase (PK) and lactate dehydrogenase (PDH), were enriched at the inclusion membrane, and the former was proven to be important for inclusion formation and bacterial development. The authors suggested that recruitment of host glycolytic enzymes at the inclusion membrane could be a way by which the bacteria have an easier access to ATP or small metabolites produced through the glycolytic pathways or to nucleotides produced via the PPP (Ende and Derré, 2020). GNE-140 treatment might affect the localization of these enzymes, so that even if the intermediates of glycolysis are still being made in the presence of the drug, they might have lost in accessibility for the bacteria.

Our data show that OxPhos is also required for bacterial growth in primary epithelial cells, as two distinct OxPhos inhibitors decreased IFU production in a drug dependent manner. Early studies by Gill and Stewart (1970) and Becker and Asher (1972) had demonstrated that inhibiting mitochondrial function reduces bacterial load in L-cells (Becker and Asher, 1972). However, the debate was still open since Tipples and McClarty (1993) showed that *C. trachomatis* grew normally in a cell line deficient of mitochondrial function, concluding that mitochondrial ATP was dispensable (Tipples and McClarty, 1993). A more recent work in

HeLa cells showed that infection preserves the mitochondrial network by upregulating the microRNA, miR-30c leading to a p53-mediated downregulation of the mitochondrial fission regulator Drp1, and that mitochondrial ATP is required for bacterial development (Chowdhury et al., 2017). Reduction of inclusion size upon oligomycin treatment in HeLa cells was also reported by Liang et al. (2018).

Together with our own observations made in primary and A2EN cells we can conclude that OxPhos needs to function at full capacity in the host for optimal *C. trachomatis* growth. The requirement for both OxPhos and glycolysis for the replication phase of the *C. trachomatis* supports the hypothesis that they are indeed partly metabolically dependent on their host, especially for this step of their development. Of course, the bacterial need for host ATP might again be the reason for the effect of the drugs on bacterial proliferation. However, the comparison of the effect of GNE-140 and oligomycin on progeny and on ATP level call for additional explanations. Indeed, when applied 12 hpi, 0.5 μ M oligomycin reduced IFUs by 95% while 5 μ M GNE did so by 90%. However, 0.5 μ M oligomycin reduced ATP levels in 24 h by only 20%, when 5 μ M GNE did so by 50%. One metabolic imbalance caused by blocking OxPhos that is likely to affect bacterial growth is the decrease in NAD⁺ regeneration. Indeed, NAD is essential in bacterial development, and a wide variety of pathogens have developed ways to steal it or its precursors from their host (Mesquita et al., 2016). *C. trachomatis* uses its ATP/ADP transporter, Ntp1, for NAD transport (Fisher et al., 2013) and increasing presence of NADH and NAD(P)H in the inclusion has been demonstrated by fluorescence lifetime imaging (Szászák et al., 2011). Reduction in NAD import from the host is expected to limit oxidative phosphorylation in the bacteria, thereby affecting their growth. Imbalance of other metabolites in the host as a consequence of OxPhos inhibition might also contribute to the strong decrease in IFUs observed.

A crucial observation we made during this project was the importance of using either primary cells, or cells with a background close to those, in our case A2EN cells, in order to perform metabolic investigations. In fact, inhibition of the glycolytic pathway in two cell lines, HeLa cells and LS174T cells, using either gene silencing or gene disruption, had no impact on CTDm progenies. Inhibition of LDH A/B had also no effect in HeLa cells, while it had a strong effect on progenies in A2EN cells. There are advantages to using cell lines compared to primary cells, especially an easier access to them, which is one major difficulty we faced during this project. However primary cells reflect better physiological conditions as they retain cell physiology and important *in vivo* function and markers (Alge et al., 2006; Pan et al., 2009).

HeLa cells are cancer cells with upregulated glycolysis. Still, OxPhos inhibitors had a strong effect on ATP levels. Thus, OxPhos is the major contributor to their ATP levels a conclusion already documented for multiple cancer cell lines, including HeLa cells (Guppy et al., 2002; Zu and Guppy, 2004; Rodriguez-Enriquez et al., 2006; Moreno-Sánchez et al., 2007).

V. What about other intracellular bacteria?

While we concluded here that *C. trachomatis* has little effect on glycolysis and OxPhos in primary epithelial cells, what was observed in the case of other intracellular bacteria, and are these pathways important for bacterial growth? These questions were essentially addressed in macrophages, which are the targets of many intracellular pathogens. A common theme that emerges is that infection commonly upregulates glycolysis, a phenomenon which is required to mount the host inflammatory response to infection (Pearce and Pearce, 2013). Many pathogens have evolved strategies to dampen this shift to glycolysis in the host, thereby limiting the inflammatory response. One recent report shows that *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* infection of macrophages limits metabolic reprogramming over time through sustained induction of anti-inflammatory microRNA-21 (miR-21). This microRNA represses the expression of the phosphofructokinase muscle (PFK-M) isoform, thereby slowing down glycolysis and the production of pro-inflammatory mediators (Hackett et al., 2020). The enhancement of the inflammatory response to infection through the metabolic reprogramming of macrophages is also observed in the case of infection by *Salmonella enterica* serovar Typhimurium. To adapt to that shift to aerobic glycolysis, *Salmonella typhimurium* developed a strategy to promote its survival by sensing shift in levels of the TCA cycle intermediate succinate, which activates its virulence (Rosenberg et al., 2021). Another recent report described that decreased glucose levels in the macrophages, upon increase in glycolysis, lead to upregulated bacterial uptake of 2- and 3-phosphoglycerate and phosphoenolpyruvate (carbon sources), while increased pyruvate and lactate levels induce upregulation of a pathogenicity island known to encode virulence factors (Jiang et al., 2021). The facultative intracellular bacteria *Francisella tularensis* mainly rely on host amino acid as major gluconeogenic substrates (Ziveri et al., 2017). Inhibition of glycolysis in the macrophage is also important for the bacteria to counteract host defense, a process that requires the capsule. Interestingly, inhibition of glycolysis is also required for early replication of virulent *Francisella* (Wyatt et al., 2016).

Thus, in these cases, the shift to glycolysis is part of the host response to limit infection but can in some cases be exploited by the bacteria to increase its virulence. A favorable consequence of the increase in glycolysis has also been described for the facultative intracellular pathogen *Legionella (L.) pneumophila*. Its effector protein MitF was shown to induce mitochondrial fission in human monocyte-derived macrophages. This leads to a reduction in OxPhos, while glycolysis is upregulated (Escoll et al., 2017). The authors concluded to a Warburg effect in the host cells, that would be necessary to sustain bacterial growth. Up-regulation of glycolysis was also reported in bone marrow-derived macrophages infected with *L. pneumophila*, as well as a sensitivity of the bacteria to the glucose derivative 2-DeoxyGlucose (2-DG) which cannot enter glycolysis (Price et al., 2018). However, it was shown that bacterial sensitivity to 2-DG is only due to its hexose-phosphate transporter UhpC sensitivity to the drug. Indeed, pathogens deficient for UhpC grew normally in bone marrow-derived macrophages in the presence of 2-DG. Further investigation showed that inhibition of macrophage glycolysis had only a marginal effect on intracellular *L. pneumophila* replication, bringing the authors to the conclusion that *L. pneumophila* can employ diverse metabolic strategies to exploit its host cells.

The difficulty to obtain primary epithelial cells might explain why only few studies have tried to address the metabolic changes occurring upon infection in this cell type. One precursor study was conducted by the Bumann lab, and although it mostly used HeLa cells, several of the conclusions were validated in human umbilical vein endothelial cells (Kentner et al., 2014). Using metabolomics, proteomics, and genetic experiments to examine the metabolism of the facultative intracellular bacterium *Shigella flexneri* and that of epithelial host cells, the authors came to the conclusions that “infected host cells maintain largely normal fluxes through glycolytic pathways, but the entire output of these pathways is captured by *Shigella*, most likely in the form of pyruvate. This striking strategy provides *Shigella* with an abundant favorable energy source, while preserving host cell ATP generation, energy charge maintenance, and survival, despite ongoing vigorous exploitation”. These conclusions are very similar to our own regarding *C. trachomatis* infection in epithelial cells. More studies on infection in epithelial cells are necessary to generalize this picture. However, coming back to the case of *C. trachomatis*, that engage in long-term relationship with their epithelial host cells, and capture a lot of glucose as glycogen in the inclusion lumen as a carbon source, there might simply not be sufficient glucose to also shift the host metabolism towards glycolysis.

Finally, it is intriguing to note that the fine metabolic equilibrium reached by *C. trachomatis* and epithelial cells of the genital tract might be achieved by different means with

other *Chlamydia* species, even among the same family of *Chlamydiaceae*. Indeed, we have demonstrated that CT295 plays the role of chlamydial phosphoglucomutase, and that its secretion in the lumen of the inclusion accounts for conversion of G1P to G6P, that can be taken up by the bacteria through UhpC. Surprisingly, we found that this ability to convert G1P to G6P in the lumen of the inclusion is limited to a few *Chlamydiaceae* (*C. trachomatis*, *C. muridarum*, *C. suis*), which are also the only known chlamydiae to accumulate glycogen in the inclusion lumen. This probably reflects different metabolic strategies between these species. Interestingly, among *Chlamydiaceae*, some species like *C. psittaci* display inclusions surrounded by mitochondria, while others like *C. pneumoniae* or *C. trachomatis* do not (Matsumoto et al., 1991). Another indication that *Chlamydiaceae* species have adopted different metabolic strategies is that *C. pneumoniae* growth is promoted in hypoxic conditions, i.e. when mitochondrial functions are impaired, while hypoxia had no effect on *C. trachomatis* progeny in primary cells derived from Fallopian tubes (Käding et al., 2017; Roth et al., 2010). Furthermore, silencing the ATP synthase promoted *C. pneumoniae* growth in both normoxia and hypoxia (Käding et al., 2017), while we observed here that OxPhos is essential for optimal growth of *C. trachomatis*. Thus, we anticipate that the fine metabolic equilibrium reached by *C. trachomatis* and epithelial cells of the genital tract might not hold true for other *Chlamydia* species, and might play a role in the tissue tropism of this species.

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Annexe

Table 1: Statistical analyses

Figure #	Comparison	Alternative hypothesis	Sample size	Test	p-value	Adjusted p-value
23. B	CTD and CTDm	mean difference	n = 76, n = 76	Welch test	0,02	<i>nr</i>
23. C	CTD and CTDm	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0,03	<i>nr</i>
24. A	CTD and CTDm	effect difference	n = 9, n =9 df = 13	Contrast test in linear model	2e-5	<i>nr</i>
24. B	CTD and CTDm	effect difference	n = 9, n =9 df = 14	Contrast test in linear model	1e-6	<i>nr</i>
25. A	No Glucose and Glucose	effect difference	n = 11, n =11 df = 18	Contrast test in linear model	2e-11	<i>nr</i>
26. A	Infected 24 h and Not infected	effect difference	n = 14, n =14 df = 78	Contrast test in linear model	0.29	0.57
	Infected 30 h and Not infected	effect difference	n = 14, n =14 df = 78	Contrast test in linear model	0.65	0.65
	Infected 48 h and Not infected	effect difference	n = 14, n =14 df = 78	Contrast test in linear model	0.39	0.58
26. B	Infected 8 h and Not infected	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 42	Contrast test in linear model	0.51	0,51
	Infected 30 h and Not infected	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 42	Contrast test in linear model	1e-5	2e-5
27. A	0 and 5	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 53	Contrast test in linear model	4e-4	5e-4
	0 and 10	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 53	Contrast test in linear model	3e-3	3e-3
	0 and 25	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 53	Contrast test in linear model	4e-9	9e-9
	0 and 50	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 53	Contrast test in linear model	4e-9	9e-9
27. B	0 and 1	mean difference	n = 6, n = 3	Welch test	0.51	0.51
	0 and 2.5	mean difference	n = 6, n = 3	Welch test	0.09	0.12
	0 and 5	mean difference	n = 6, n = 3	Welch test	0.02	0.03
	0 and 10	mean difference	n = 6, n = 3	Welch test	0.01	0.04

28. A	0 and 2.5	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 49	Contrast test in linear model	1e-13	3e-13
	0 and 5	effect difference	n = 12, n =11 df = 49	Contrast test in linear model	6e-12	8e-12
	0 and 10	effect difference	n = 12, n =11 df = 49	Contrast test in linear model	4e-8	4e-8
	0 and 25	effect difference	n = 12, n =10 df = 49	Contrast test in linear model	1e-14	5e-14
28.B	0 and 5	effect difference	n = 12, n =11 df = 41	Contrast test in linear model	1e-9	1e-9
	0 and 10	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 41	Contrast test in linear model	2e-14	3e-14
	0 and 25	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 41	Contrast test in linear model	4e-16	1e-15
28. D	0 and 10	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.45	<i>nr</i>
28. E	0 and 5	effect difference	n = 11, n =10 df = 36	Contrast test in linear model	8e-3	8e-3
	0 and 10	effect difference	n = 11, n =10 df = 36	Contrast test in linear model	9e-6	1e-5
	0 and 25	effect difference	n = 11, n =11 df = 36	Contrast test in linear model	6e-8	2e-7
28. F	0 and 2.5	effect difference	n = 11, n =10 df = 36	Contrast test in linear model	0.02	0.06
	0 and 5	effect difference	n = 11, n =10 df = 36	Contrast test in linear model	0.48	0.48
	0 and 10	effect difference	n = 11, n =11 df = 36	Contrast test in linear model	0.31	0.46
28. G A2EN cells	Not treated and Oligomycin	mean difference	n = 5, n = 5	Welch test	7e-4	<i>nr</i>
28. G Primary cells	Not treated and Oligomycin	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	9e-5	<i>nr</i>
28. H	0 and 0.5	effect difference	n = 12, n =9 df = 35	Contrast test in linear model	2e-3	2e-3
	0 and 1	effect difference	n = 12, n =10 df = 35	Contrast test in linear model	1e-7	2e-7
	0 and 2	effect difference	n = 12, n =10 df = 35	Contrast test in linear model	4e-11	1e-10

28. I	0 and 5	effect difference	n = 5, n =5 df = 16	Contrast test in linear model	0.55	0.73
	0 and 10	effect difference	n = 5, n =5 df = 16	Contrast test in linear model	0.83	0.83
	0 and 20	effect difference	n = 5, n =5 df = 16	Contrast test in linear model	0.24	0.48
	0 and 40	effect difference	n = 5, n =5 df = 16	Contrast test in linear model	0.11	0.14
28. J	0 and 2.5	effect difference	n = 11, n =12 df = 40	Contrast test in linear model	2e-3	2e-3
	0 and 5	effect difference	n = 11, n =11 df = 40	Contrast test in linear model	1e-7	2e-7
	0 and 10	effect difference	n = 11, n =12 df = 40	Contrast test in linear model	4e-11	1e-10
28. K	0 and 20	effect difference	n = 10, n =10 df = 32	Contrast test in linear model	3e-7	3e-7
	0 and 40	effect difference	n = 10, n =9 df = 32	Contrast test in linear model	1e-9	2e-9
	0 and 80	effect difference	n = 10, n =9 df = 32	Contrast test in linear model	4e-11	1e-10
29. A	Not treated and 24h	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.02	0.06
	Not treated and 30h	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.08	0.08
	Not treated and 48h	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.04	0.06
29. B	Infected 24 h and Not infected	effect difference	n = 11, n =13 df = 74	Contrast test in linear model	0.60	0.79
	Infected 30 h and Not infected	effect difference	n = 16, n =13 df = 74	Contrast test in linear model	0.12	0.35
	Infected 48 h and Not infected	effect difference	n = 13, n =13 df = 74	Contrast test in linear model	0.79	0.79
29. C	Infected 24 h and Not infected	effect difference	n = 10, n =10 df = 53	Contrast test in linear model	0.30	0.45
	Infected 30 h and Not infected	effect difference	n = 11, n =10 df = 53	Contrast test in linear model	0.06	0.18
	Infected 48 h and Not infected	effect difference	n = 11, n =10 df = 53	Contrast test in linear model	0.62	0.62

30. A	Infected 24 h and Not infected	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.77	0.77
	Infected 30 h and Not infected	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.76	0.77
	Infected 48 h and Not infected	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.65	0.77
30. B	Not treated and 24h	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.90	0.91
	Not treated and 30h	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.80	0.91
	Not treated and 48h	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.85	0.91
30. C	Not treated and 24h	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.35	0.60
	Not treated and 30h	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.40	0.60
	Not treated and 48h	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.98	0.98
30. D	Not treated and 24h	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.94	0.98
	Not treated and 30h	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.98	0.98
	Not treated and 48h	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.93	0.98
31. A	0 and 5	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.24	0.26
	0 and 10	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	4e-3	0.01
	0 and 25	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	2e-7	1e-6
31. B	0 and 5	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.62	0.62
	0 and 10	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.46	0.62
	0 and 25	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.10	0.32
31. C	0 and 5	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.01	0.02
	0 and 10	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	5e-3	0.01
	0 and 25	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.04	0.04
31. D	0 and 5	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.23	0.23
	0 and 10	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.02	0.03
	0 and 25	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.01	0.03
31. E	0 and 5	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.02	0.02
	0 and 10	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	5e-3	8e-3
	0 and 25	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	1e-3	3e-3
32. B	0 and 5	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	2e-3	2e-3
	0 and 10	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	8e-5	2e-4
33. A	0 and 5	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.69	0.92
	0 and 10	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.54	0.92
	0 and 25	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.92	0.92

33. C	Not.treated - siGPI1	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.49	0.77
	Not.treated - siGPI2	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.52	0.77
	siGPI1 - siGPI2	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.93	0.93
33. E	GPI.KO26 - GPI.KO8	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.93	0.93
	GPI.KO26 - WT	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.67	0.93
	GPI.KO8 - WT	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	0.76	0.93
34. A	0 and 0.5	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	3e-3	3e-3
	0 and 1	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	1e-3	2e-3
	0 and 2	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	5e-4	2e-3
34. B	0 and 10	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	1e-3	1e-3
	0 and 20	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	9e-4	1e-3
	0 and 40	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	4e-3	1e-3
34. C	0 and 0.5	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 52	Contrast test in linear model	1e-13	3e-13
	0 and 2	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 52	Contrast test in linear model	6e-12	8e-12
	0 and 10	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 52	Contrast test in linear model	4e-8	4e-8
	0 and 40	effect difference	n = 12, n =12 df = 52	Contrast test in linear model	1e-14	5e-14
35. A	Not treated and 0.5	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.70	0.91
	Not treated and 1	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.86	0.91
	Not treated and 2	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.10	0.59
	Not treated and 10	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.67	0.91
	Not treated and 20	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.78	0.91
	Not treated and 40	mean difference	n = 4, n = 4	Welch test	0.91	0.91
35. B	0 and 0.5	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	3e-3	3e-3
	0 and 1	mean difference	n = 3, n = 3	Welch test	3e-4	6e-4
^a n, sample size for each class tested, respectively; df, degree of freedom; nr, not relevant; adjusted p values from the same panel, according to Benjamini & Hochberg						

1
2 **Acquisition of a type 3 secretion signal in an housekeeping enzyme**
3 **shaped glycogen metabolism in *Chlamydia***
4

5
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26 **ABSTRACT**

27 The obligate intracellular bacteria *Chlamydia trachomatis* store glycogen in the lumen
28 of the vacuoles in which they grow. Glycogen catabolism generates glucose-1-phosphate
29 (Glc1P), while the bacteria are capable of taking up only glucose-6-phosphate (Glc6P). We
30 tested whether the conversion of Glc1P into Glc6P could be catalyzed by a
31 phosphoglucomutase (PGM) of host or bacterial origin. We found no evidence for the
32 presence of the host enzyme in the vacuole. In *C. trachomatis*, two proteins are potential
33 PGMs. By reconstituting the reaction, and by complementing PGM deficient fibroblasts, we
34 demonstrated that only CT295 displayed robust PGM activity. Furthermore, we showed that
35 glycogen accumulation by a subset of *Chlamydia* species correlated with the presence of a
36 type three secretion (T3S) signal in their PGM. In conclusion, we established that the
37 conversion of Glc1P into Glc6P was accomplished by a bacterial PGM, through the acquisition
38 of a T3S signal in a “housekeeping” gene.
39

40 **INTRODUCTION**

41 Many bacteria and parasites develop inside vacuolar compartments within eukaryotic
42 cells. Such enclosed replication niches provide a shelter against extracellular and cytosolic
43 host defense. They can also be further exploited to sequester cytoplasmic components and
44 make them accessible only to the intruder. One striking example of this behavior is the vacuole
45 in which the human adapted pathogen *Chlamydia trachomatis* grows, also called the inclusion
46 (1). Glucose is the main carbon source for these obligate intracellular bacteria (2-5). Over the
47 course of their developmental cycle they hijack a considerable amount of glucose from their
48 host, and accumulate it as a polysaccharide, i.e. glycogen, in the lumen of the inclusion (6, 7).
49 The *C. trachomatis* genome encodes for all the enzymes necessary for a functional
50 glycogenesis and glycogenolysis, a surprising observation given that this pathway is absent in
51 most intracellular bacteria (8). Glycogen starts accumulating in the lumen of the inclusion
52 about 20 hours post infection (hpi), a time of intensive bacterial replication (9). Shortly later,
53 while luminal glycogen continues to accumulate, a fraction of the dividing bacteria, called
54 reticulate bodies (RB), initiate conversion into the non-dividing, infectious, form of the
55 bacterium, the elementary body (EB). Electron microscopy studies showed that, in contrast to
56 RBs, EBs contain glycogen, but in modest quantities compared to the luminal glycogen. While
57 part of the luminal glycogen is imported in bulk from the host cytoplasm, the majority is
58 synthesized *de novo* through the action of bacterial enzymes (9). Bacterial glycogen synthase
59 GlgA, and branching enzyme GlgB, have acquired type 3 secretion (T3S) signals that allow their
60 secretion in the lumen of the inclusion, where they ensure glycogen synthesis out of UDP-
61 glucose imported from the host cytosol (9). T3S of these enzymes is likely shut down once the
62 bacteria have converted into EBs. This simple mechanism might account for the appearance
63 of glycogen in EBs, once GlgA and GlgB can accumulate within the bacteria.

64 Bacterial enzymes responsible for glycogen catabolism into Glc1P, i.e. the glycogen
65 phosphorylase GlgP, the debranching enzyme GlgX, and the amylomaltase MalQ, have also
66 acquired T3S signals (9). In *C. trachomatis* infection, they are expressed as early as 3-8 hpi,
67 indicating that even if glycogen is only detected 20 hpi, there is a continuous flux of Glc1P
68 generation in the inclusion lumen earlier on (9, 10). However, Glc1P cannot sustain bacterial
69 growth directly because the glucose transporter UhpC can only import Glc6P, not free glucose
70 nor Glc1P (9, 11). Thus, while the rate of expression and distribution of *C. trachomatis*
71 glycogen enzymes and the strategy of glycogen storage in the inclusion lumen by RBs point to
72 a sophisticated pathway for hijacking host glucose, this metabolite would not be able to fuel
73 bacterial metabolism due to a lack of an import mechanism.

74 To solve this conundrum, we had hypothesized that an enzyme with PGM activity was
75 present in the inclusion lumen (9). In the present work we tested this hypothesis in depth by
76 investigating two non-mutually exclusive possibilities as to its origin: the translocation of a
77 host enzyme into the inclusion, and the secretion of a bacterial enzyme. We provide evidence
78 for the second hypothesis and identify CT295 as *C. trachomatis* PGM. In addition, we show
79 that this feature is characteristic of the glycogen-accumulating *Chlamydiaceae* as opposed to
80 the glycogen-free species.

81

82 RESULTS

83

84 Absence of evidence for the import of host phosphoglucomutase in the inclusion 85 lumen.

86

87 PGM activity in human cells is carried out by the enzyme PGM1. PGM1 deficiency leads
88 to defects in glycogen storage, and to several disorders resulting from insufficient protein
89 glycosylation (12, 13). To test for the presence of this enzyme in *C. trachomatis* inclusions we
90 expressed PGM1 with either an amino-terminal (Flag-PGM1) or a carboxy-terminal (PGM1-
91 Flag) Flag tag in HeLa cells, which were further infected with *C. trachomatis* L2. The cells were
92 fixed 24 h later and stained with a mouse antibody against the Flag tag and a rabbit antibody
93 against the inclusion protein Cap1. An irrelevant Flag-tagged protein (Flag-CymR) was included
94 as a negative control, and Flag-tagged chlamydial glycogen synthase (Flag-GlgA), as a positive
95 control (9). Flag-PGM1 and PGM1-Flag had a cytosolic distribution, as expected (Fig. 1A). In
96 infected cells, it was often abundant in the vicinity of the inclusion membrane, especially with
97 the carboxy-terminal tag. However, no signal was detected in the inclusion lumen, indicating
98 that PGM1 is not translocated in this compartment. We next tested whether silencing PGM1
99 expression had any effect on bacterial development. Cells were infected 24 h after siRNA
100 transfection with two different siRNA (*sipgm1_1* and *sipgm1_2*), and the resulting progeny
101 was measured 48 hours post infection (hpi). The efficacy of each of the siRNA against PGM1
102 was validated by western blot (Fig. 1B). Transfection of *sipgm1_2* had no effect on progeny,
103 while transfection of *sipgm1_1* reduced it by about two-fold (Fig. 1C). However, transfection
104 with *sipgm1_1* reduced cell viability, which likely accounts for the decrease in progeny.
105 Altogether, silencing PGM1 expression did not significantly affect bacterial development.

106 We concluded from this series of experiments that host PGM1 does not reach the
107 inclusion lumen, at least not in detectable amount, and is not essential for the generation of
108 infectious bacteria. Therefore, it is unlikely that the conversion of Glc1P into Glc6P in the
109 inclusion lumen relies on the host PGM activity by PGM1.

110

111 CT295 is the main PGM in *C. trachomatis*, while CT815 displays low activity towards 112 Glc1P

113 CT295 and CT815 are two *C. trachomatis* proteins that belong to the eggNOG cluster of
114 orthologous groups COG1109 (Fig. S1A, (14)). Members of this large group of bacterial,
115 archaeal and eukaryotic proteins display PGM activity and related functions such as
116 phosphomannomutase or phosphoglucosamine mutase activities. CT295 and CT815
117 homologs are found among all known chlamydiae. These proteins represent separate
118 monophyletic clades in COG1109 and are related to proteins from diverse bacterial taxa (Fig.
119 S1A). CT295 and CT815 are only distantly related with each other and thus do not originate
120 from a recent gene duplication event (Fig. S1B).

121 To test if CT295 and/or CT815 displayed PGM activity we expressed them in *Escherichia*
122 *coli* with an amino-terminal histidine tag. HIS-CT295 was not produced by *E. coli*, and after
123 testing the orthologous protein in different *Chlamydiaceae* we chose the *C. caviae* ortholog,
124 CCA00034, which displayed 59 % amino acid identity with CT295. HIS-CCA00034 and HIS-
125 CT815 were purified from *E. coli* extracts (Fig. S2A). As a positive control we also produced the
126 *E. coli* phosphomannomutase CpsG, because our initial attempts to produce the *E. coli* PGM
127 failed, and CpsG turned out to display good PGM activity *in vitro*. To test the ability of these
128 recombinant proteins to convert Glc1P into Glc6P we first incubated them with Glc1P in the
129 presence of glucose 1,6-diPhosphate (Glc1,6diP), a cofactor for the PGM reaction in *E. coli*
130 (15). The samples were incubated for 20 min at 37 °C, before stopping the reaction by boiling
131 for 5 min. Sugars present in the samples were analyzed by high performance anion exchange
132 chromatography with pulsed amperometric detection (HPAEC-PAD) (Fig. S2B). Incubation of
133 Glc1P in the presence of HIS-CCA00034 led to its full conversion into Glc6P, while only low
134 levels of Glc6P were detected in the presence of HIS-CT815 (Fig. 2A). Interestingly we noted
135 that while we confirmed that HIS-CpsG required the presence of Glc1,6diP to convert Glc1P
136 into Glc6P, HIS-CCA00034 did not, indicating that the chlamydial enzyme evolved to bypass
137 co-factor requirement (Fig. S2C). Also, HIS-CCA00034 favored the conversion of α -Glc6P into
138 β -Glc6P, a property that we did not observed in CT815 nor CpsG (Fig. 2 and Fig. S2).

139 When we monitored the reverse reaction, supplying Glc6P and following the
140 appearance of Glc1P, very low amounts of Glc1P were detected after incubation with HIS-
141 CCA00034 or HIS-CpsG, and none with HIS-CT815 (Fig. 2B and Fig. S2). This indicates that, *in*
142 *vitro*, the conversion of Glc1P into Glc6P is more favorable than the reverse reaction. To
143 confirm that CT295 was nonetheless capable of catalyzing the reverse reaction, we made use
144 of human fibroblasts deficient for PGM1. One of the phenotypes associated with PGM1
145 deficiency is a defect in protein glycosylation, due to the inability to convert Glc6P into Glc1P
146 to feed UDP-Glc synthesis and thereby protein glycosylation (13). As a consequence, several
147 glycosylated proteins like the cell-surface glycoprotein intercellular adhesion molecule 1
148 (ICAM-1) are hardly expressed at the cell surface in PGM1 deficient cells (13). ICAM-1
149 expression can thus be used as a read-out for PGM activity. As expected, ICAM-1 was hardly
150 detected at the surface of PGM1 deficient fibroblasts. Transfection of an irrelevant protein,
151 Flag-CymR, had a marginal effect on ICAM-1 expression. In contrast, as expected, transfection
152 of the wild-type human PGM1 restored ICAM1 expression in the PGM1 deficient fibroblasts.
153 Transfection of CT295 also restored ICAM-1 expression, confirming its ability to catalyze the
154 conversion of Glc6P into Glc1P. Transfection of CT815 also resulted in increased ICAM-1
155 expression, but to a lesser extent, supporting the hypothesis that while CT815 displays some
156 phosphoglucomutase activity, it is likely that it uses a different sugar than glucose as a favorite
157 substrate (Fig. 2C).

158 Altogether, these data demonstrate that CT295, and its ortholog in *C. caviae*, are bona
159 fide phosphoglucomutases.

160

161

162 **CT295 is a T3S substrate**

163 If CT295 is the PGM that converts Glc1P into Glc6P in the inclusion lumen it needs to be
164 secreted out of the bacteria. We have shown that *C. trachomatis* glycogen metabolism
165 enzymes were secreted by a T3S mechanism (9). To explore if this was also true for CT295, we
166 tested for the presence of a functional T3S signal within its amino-terminus using a
167 heterologous secretion assay in *Shigella flexneri* as described previously (16). Briefly, we fused
168 these amino-terminal sequences to the reporter protein calmodulin-dependent adenylate
169 cyclase (Cya). The chimeric proteins were then expressed in *S. flexneri ipaB* (constitutive T3S)
170 or *mxiD* (deficient in T3S) null strains. When we analyzed the culture supernatant versus the
171 bacterial pellet, we found the Cya reporter in the supernatant of *ipaB* cultures (Fig. 3A). The
172 same expression pattern was observed for an endogenous *Shigella* T3S substrate, IpaD.
173 Conversely, we found the cAMP receptor protein (CRP), a non-secreted protein, exclusively in
174 the bacterial pellet. This control shows that Cya detection in the supernatant was not due to
175 bacterial lysis. Finally, the Cya reporter was not recovered in the supernatants of the *mxiD*
176 strain, demonstrating that its secretion was dependent on the T3S system.

177

178 **Evidence for the direct secretion of CT295 in the inclusion lumen**

179 *C. trachomatis* GlgA is detected both in the inclusion lumen and in the cytoplasm (17).
180 When expressed ectopically by the host in the cytoplasm, this bacterial enzyme was able to
181 translocate into the inclusion lumen (9). These observations suggested that some T3S
182 substrates might be first translocated in the cytoplasm, before being transferred into the
183 inclusion lumen. To test whether this was also the case for CT295, we first transformed *C.*
184 *trachomatis* with an expression plasmid constitutively expressing the green fluorescent
185 protein (GFP), as well as CT295 with a carboxy-terminal Flag tag under the control of an
186 inducible promoter, as an initial attempt using the endogenous promoter showed no protein
187 expression. Bacteria expressing GlgA-Flag under the control of its endogenous promoter were
188 used for comparison. The cells were fixed 48 hpi, permeabilized, and stained with a mouse
189 antibody against the Flag tag and a rabbit antibody against the inclusion membrane protein
190 Cap1. As expected, a cytoplasmic staining was observed for GlgA-Flag, although only in ~ 10%
191 of the infected cells (n=150 infected cells from 2 independent experiments). A faint Flag
192 staining was detected in the inclusions upon induction of cells infected with bacteria
193 expressing CT295-Flag (Fig. 3B). No signal was detected in the host cell cytoplasm, indicating
194 that the protein is not translocated there. However, the expression level of CT295-Flag was
195 much lower than that of GlgA-Flag, whose cytoplasmic location is only visible in ~ 10% of the
196 cells. Thus, this assay might not be sensitive enough to detect CT295 in the cytoplasm.

197 As an alternative approach to test for CT295 presence in the host cytoplasm we tested
198 whether infection could restore PGM activity in the cytoplasm of PGM1 deficient fibroblasts.
199 Indeed, if CT295 reached the cytoplasm, it might lead to at least a partial recovery of ICAM-1
200 glycosylation. Cells transfected with Flag-PGM1 served as a positive control. We observed that
201 ICAM-1 expression, which was undetectable at the surface of PGM1 deficient fibroblast,
202 remained absent from the surface of cells infected for 40 h with *C. trachomatis* (Fig. 3C). One

203 pitfall of this experiment is that *C. trachomatis* L2 takes up UDP-glucose from the host
204 cytoplasm to accumulate glycogen in the inclusion lumen (9). Therefore, the presence of a
205 bacterial PGM in the cytoplasm might not be sufficient to restore ICAM-1 glycosylation. We
206 thus also used the plasmid-less L2(25667R), which is less likely to deplete the host UDP-
207 glucose stores, as it does not accumulate glycogen in the inclusion (18). Infection with
208 L2(25667R) did not restore ICAM-1 expression at the cell surface either. These experiments
209 indicate that CT295 is translocated directly into the inclusion lumen, without an intermediate
210 cytoplasmic step (Fig. 3C).

211

212 **Presence of a T3S in CT295 orthologs among *Chlamydiaceae* correlates with their** 213 **capacity to accumulate glycogen in the inclusion lumen**

214 We next asked whether the secretion of a PGM was a conserved feature among
215 *Chlamydiaceae*. Previous studies have reported glycogen accumulation in *C. suis* and *C.*
216 *muridarum* inclusions, but the polysaccharide was not observed in the inclusions of more
217 phylogenetically distant *Chlamydia* species such as *C. caviae* or *C. pneumoniae*. We verified
218 this feature by performing periodic acid-Schiff staining (PAS) on cells infected with these
219 different species. Inclusion staining was observed only on cells infected with *C. trachomatis*,
220 *C. suis* and *C. muridarum* (Fig. 4A). Two amino-terminal amino-acids (W23L24) are conserved
221 in the orthologs of CT295 in all chlamydiae, and the preceding amino acids show low levels of
222 conservation (Fig. 4B). To test whether these different peptides also function as T3S signals in
223 other species than *C. trachomatis* we constructed chimeras between the amino-terminal 22
224 amino-acids of the different CT295 orthologs and the Cya reporter gene, and tested their
225 secretion when expressed in the *S. flexneri ipaB* strain. The chimera made out of the amino-
226 terminal segment of *C. suis* and *C. muridarum* PGMs were recovered in the supernatant, but
227 not those originating from *C. caviae* or *C. pneumoniae*. Secretion was dependent on the T3S
228 system since the chimera were not recovered in the supernatant when expressed by the *S.*
229 *flexneri mxiD* strain (Fig. 4C). Thus, the accumulation of glycogen in the inclusion of
230 *Chlamydiaceae* correlates with their ability to secrete a phosphoglucomutase.

231

232

233 **DISCUSSION**

234

235 To be of metabolic use for the bacteria the glycogen stored in the inclusion lumen needs
236 to be converted into glucose moieties. Glycogen degradation in the inclusion generates Glc1P,
237 and the single glucose transporter of *C. trachomatis*, UhpC, displays transport activity
238 exclusively towards Glc6P. We show here that this conundrum is solved by the secretion of a
239 bacterial PGM, CT295, by the T3S system. Host PGM1 was not translocated into the inclusion
240 lumen, at least not at levels detectable by immunofluorescence. Silencing *pgm1* did not affect
241 the generation of infectious bacteria. Thus, while we cannot exclude that imported host PGM1
242 also contributes to Glc1P to Glc6P conversion in the inclusion lumen, our data suggest that
243 such activity would only be marginal compared to that of secreted CT295.

244 *In vitro* and *in cellulo* assays demonstrated that CT295 and its ortholog in *C. caviae*
245 displayed *bona fide* PGM activity. Interestingly, unlike what had been observed in *E. coli* (15),
246 the chlamydial activity did not require the co-factor glucose 1,6-diPhosphate (Glc1,6diP). This
247 may represent an adaptation to the inclusion environment, where this metabolite might be
248 absent. The second *C. trachomatis* enzyme with predicted PGM activity, CT815, diverged from
249 CT295 early in the evolution of the phylum, possibly even before its emergence. It displayed
250 a poor ability to interconvert Glc1P and Glc6P *in vitro* and *in vivo*, indicating that its preferred
251 substrate is different, possibly phosphoglucosamine, as shown for at least one member or the
252 same clade (19).

253 Transcriptomic studies detected transcription of *ct295* 8 hpi, a timing that coincides with
254 the start of expression of the Glc6P transporter *uhpC* (10). Interestingly, the protein CT295
255 was hardly detected by proteomics in the replicative form of the bacteria, the reticulate
256 bodies (RBs), while it was rather abundant in the infectious form, the elementary bodies (EBs)
257 that accumulate at the end of the developmental cycle (20). This difference in abundance in
258 the two bacterial forms is consistent with the observation that glycogen is detectable in EBs,
259 not in RBs (9). It might be explained by the fact that most CT295 synthesized by RBs is secreted
260 to convert Glc1P to Glc6P in the inclusion lumen, and thus absent from purified RBs. Like other
261 T3S substrates, secretion of CT295 probably stops during conversion to the EB stage, and the
262 enzymatic activity is then mostly exerted inside the bacteria. Here, it is likely used for the
263 conversion of Glc6P into Glc1P, which serves as a substrate for the ADP-Glc
264 pyrophosphorylase GlgC to initiate glycogen synthesis in the bacteria.

265 We and others have shown that several T3S substrates are detected in the inclusion
266 lumen (9, 21, 22). This observation was at first surprising considering that most T3S
267 machineries have been described to deliver proteins across a eukaryotic membrane, through
268 the translocon pore. Here, we considered the possibility that CT295 was first translocated into
269 the cytoplasm before being transported back inside the inclusion lumen. However, we found
270 no evidence of an increase in PGM activity in the host cytoplasm upon infection. It is therefore
271 likely that CT295 is secreted directly into the lumen of the inclusion. Of note, several T3S
272 substrates have been detected on the surface of different Gram-negative bacteria before
273 being translocated into a mammalian cell (23, 24). These observations support the hypothesis
274 of direct secretion of T3S substrates into the inclusion lumen rather than via the T3S
275 translocon pore into the host cell. Future work will be needed to understand how these
276 substrates are sorted from those that are translocated into the cytoplasm.

277 Finally, we made the intriguing observation that chlamydial PGMs possess functional
278 T3S signals only in species that accumulate glycogen in the inclusion lumen. These species are
279 phylogenetically apart from other *Chlamydiaceae*, and differ by several other features (25).
280 We lack sufficient information on the translocation, in the inclusion lumen or in the host
281 cytoplasm, of glycogen metabolism enzymes of *Chlamydiaceae* other than *C. trachomatis* to
282 draw solid hypotheses on the evolutionary path that led to this situation, we can however try
283 to elaborate on this observation. We have shown that T3S signals were present in glycogen
284 metabolism enzymes of several environmental chlamydiae, indicating that the ability to take

285 control of glycogen storage capacity of the host was acquired early upon evolution of the
286 phylum (26, 27). One possibility is that the acquisition of T3S signal in the PGM of the
287 *Chlamydia* lineage (as opposed to species of the formerly called *Chlamydophila* lineage, e.g.
288 *C. pneumoniae* and *C. Caviae*) opened the way to a positive selection of the capacity to store
289 glycogen in the inclusion. Indeed, once Glc1P became convertible to Glc6P, it might have
290 become advantageous to store a lot of glycogen, possibly to compete out the rest of the
291 microbiota, or to weaken host cell defense, as previously discussed (9). Of note, expression of
292 the glycogen synthase GlgA is the limiting factor for glycogen accumulation in the inclusion. In
293 *C. trachomatis*, this gene is under transcriptional control by the *C. trachomatis* plasmid (18).
294 Acquisition of this transcriptional control was likely also an important step along the path
295 towards the glycogen storage strategy.

296 One question left open is whether a more direct mechanism for Glc6P supply in the
297 inclusion lumen of *C. trachomatis* also takes place? An alternative mechanism must exist at
298 least in the *Chlamydiaceae* of the former *Chlamydophila* lineage, considering the absence of
299 glycogen and phosphoglucomutase in their inclusions, and the fact that UhpC transports only
300 Glc6P also in *C. pneumoniae* (11). The situation is different in environmental chlamydiae
301 because, unlike *Chlamydiaceae*, environmental chlamydiae express a hexokinase activity (28-
302 30), and are likely able to import glucose, as demonstrated in the case of *Protochlamydia*
303 *amoebophila* (31).

304 In conclusion, we have shown that several “housekeeping” chlamydial proteins are
305 secreted outside the bacteria. This possibility has seldom been investigated in other bacteria,
306 but was also observed for glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase in enteropathogenic
307 *E. coli* (32). In that case, the broad range type 3 secretion chaperone CesT was involved, and
308 whether such a chaperone is required for the secretion of chlamydial enzymes remains to be
309 investigated. In any case, the secretion of bacterial enzymes opens the door to a direct
310 modification of the metabolism of the host cell to the benefit of the bacteria, and might
311 therefore occur more frequently than currently known.

312

313

314 MATERIAL AND METHODS

315 Cells and bacteria

316 HeLa cells (ATCC) were cultured in Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium (DMEM) with
317 Glutamax (Gibco™ #31966), supplemented with 10 % (v/v) fetal bovine serum (FBS).
318 Fibroblast CDG_0072 deficient in PGM1, a kind gift from Pr. Hudson Freeze (La Jolla, CA), were
319 grown in DMEM (Gibco™ # A1443001) supplemented with 1 g/L glucose, 584 mg/mL L-
320 glutamine, 110 mg/mL sodium pyruvate, and 10% FBS. Cells were routinely checked for
321 absence of mycoplasma contamination by PCR. *C. trachomatis* LGV serovar L2 strain 434/Bu
322 (ATCC), the plasmid-less strain LGV L2 25667R (33) and GFP-expressing L2 (L2^{IncD}GFP) (34)
323 were purified on density gradients as previously described (35). Other *Chlamydia* strains used
324 were *C. suis* SWA107, a kind gift from Nicole Borel (Zürich, Switzerland), *C. pneumoniae*
325 CWL029, *C. muridarum* MoPn and *C. caviae* GPIC. The *Shigella flexneri ipaB* and *mxID* strains

326 are derivatives of M90T, the virulent wild-type strain, in which the respective genes (*ipaB* and
327 *mxuD*) have been inactivated (36). The *Escherichia coli* strain DH5 α was used for cloning
328 purposes and plasmid amplification. Both *S. flexneri* and *E. coli* strains were grown in Luria-
329 Bertani (LB) medium.

330

331 **Phylogenetic analysis of CT295 and CT815**

332 Protein sequences of CT295 and CT815 were analyzed with eggNOG v4.5.1 (14). They are both
333 members of COG1109 at the last universal common ancestor (LUCA) taxonomic level
334 (including all domains of life). At the bacteria-specific eggNOG clustering, CT295 and CT815
335 belong to two distinct EggNOGs, ENOG4107QSU and ENOG4107QJF. To identify closely
336 related sequences we used eggNOG-mapper v1.0.1 (37) with the bacteria optimized database
337 using the "--database bact" option and default settings on a broad selection of published
338 chlamydial genomes. We downloaded all COG1109 sequences (n=4,829;
339 http://eggnogapi45.embl.de/nog_data/text/fasta/COG1109), added all chlamydial
340 ENOG4107QSU (n=104) and ENOG4107QJF (n=69) sequences and aligned them using the
341 COG1109 hidden markov model
342 (http://eggnogapi45.embl.de/nog_data/file/hmm/COG1109). To reduce redundancy we
343 clustered the alignment with the cd-hit program (38) at 80% sequence identity over at least
344 90% of the shorter sequence ("-aS 0.9 -c 0.8"). We performed de novo multiple sequence
345 alignment of the clustered sequences (n=2,869) with MAFFT 7.222 (39) using the "--localpair"
346 and "--maxiterate 1000" parameter and trimmed the alignment with trimAl "--gappyout" (40).
347 Only sequences with a gap-rate < 50% were retained (n=2,829). We performed model testing
348 under the empirical LG model (41), and with the empirical mixture models C10 to C60 (best
349 model: C60+LG+G+F) and maximum likelihood tree reconstruction with IQ-TREE 1.6.2 (42).
350 We inferred support values from 1,000 ultrafast bootstrap replicates (43) with the "-bnni"
351 option for bootstrap tree optimization and from 1,000 replicates of the SH-like approximate
352 likelihood ratio test (44). We next extracted the sister clade of CT295 (n=93) and used it as an
353 outgroup for a more detailed analysis of CT295 related proteins. Sequence alignment,
354 trimming, and initial phylogenetic reconstruction (best model: C60+LG+G+F) was performed
355 as described above. We then used the resulting best tree as a guide tree for the posterior
356 mean site frequency (PMSF) model (45) for improved site heterogeneity modeling under
357 C60+LG+G+F and inferred 100 non-parametric bootstraps. Phylogenetic trees were visualized
358 and edited using the Interactive Tree Of Life v4 (46).

359

360 **Cloning**

361 Primer sequences and cloning methods are described in Table S1. The gene *ct815* was
362 cloned as follows: the gene was amplified with primers 1 and 4, and with primers 2 and 3. PCR
363 products were mixed, heated to 65 °C for 10 minutes, and annealed at 37 °C for 30 minutes.
364 The mix was then cloned into the pET28a previously digested by NcoI and XhoI restriction
365 enzymes. Chimeras to test for the presence of T3S signal were constructed like in (16), using
366 the first 22 codons of the gene of interest. Flag-GlgA is described in (9) and the negative

367 control, CymR, that corresponds to a bacterial repressor for gene expression from
368 *Pseudomonas putida* (47) was constructed through Gateway cloning like Flag-PGM1 and
369 PGM1-Flag. The *ctI0547* gene (CT295 in the *C. trachomatis* L2/434/Bu strain) followed by a
370 nucleotide sequence coding for a flag tag immediately upstream of the stop codon was cloned
371 using NotI and Sall restriction sites into the pBOMB4-Tet-mCherry plasmid after removing the
372 mCherry insert (48). For GlgA, cloning was performed in pBOMB4 using the endogenous
373 promoter of the *ctI0167* gene. The strain LGV L2 25667R was stably transformed with these
374 plasmid as described (49).

375

376 **Production and purification of recombinant proteins.**

377 *E. coli* BL21 (DE3) was used for the production of recombinant CCA00034, CT815, and CpsG
378 harboring a polyhistidine tag at the C-terminal part of the protein. Bacteria were grown at 37
379 °C to an optical density at 600 nm of 0.9 in 2 liters of LB with 30 µg/mL of kanamycin under
380 shaking. 0.5 mM of isopropyl-β-D-thiogalactopyranoside (IPTG) was added and incubation was
381 continued for 18 h at 16 °C. Bacteria were harvested by centrifugation, and proteins were
382 purified from clarified lysate by affinity chromatography on Ni²⁺-nitrilotriaceta-agarose
383 (Qiagen) in 20 mM Tris-HCl 500 mM NaCl pH 8.0 buffer and by size exclusion chromatography
384 on Superdex 200 HL 16/600 column (GE Healthcare) in 20 mM Tris-HCl 500 mM NaCl pH 7.0
385 buffer. All purified proteins were stored at 4 °C.

386

387 **Phosphoglucomutase activity assay.**

388 HIS-tagged CCA00034, CT815 or CpsG (0,1 mg/mL) were incubated for 20 minutes at 37 °C
389 with 0.2 mg/mL of glucose-1,6-diphosphate and either 0.66 mg/ml glucose-1-phosphate or
390 0.33 mg/ml glucose-6-phosphate in 10 mM Tris-HCl buffer (pH 8.0) and then boiled for 5
391 minutes to stop the reaction. Reaction products were analyzed by High Performance Anion
392 Exchange Chromatography with Pulse Amperometric Detection (Dionex, model ICS3000). The
393 samples were loaded on a CarboPAC-PA100 column (Dionex) pre-equilibrated for 20 minutes
394 with 98% of 50 mM NaOH (eluant A) and 2% of 50 mM NaOH 500 mM NaOAc (eluant B). After
395 injection a gradient run (flow rate of 0.350 mL.min⁻¹) was performed as follows: 0-2 min 98%
396 A + 2% B – 88.8% A + 11.2% B, 2-20 min 88.8% A + 11.2% B – 65% A + 35% B, 20-35 min 65%
397 A + 35% B – 40% A + 60% B, 35-37 min 40% A + 60% B – 100% B.

398

399 **Transfections, immunofluorescence and PAS staining.**

400 Cells were transfected with the indicated plasmids using the JetPrime kit (Polyplus
401 Transfection) according the manufacturer recommendations. Twenty-four hours post
402 transfection, cells were fixed with 2% (w/v) paraformaldehyde (PFA) 2% (w/v) sucrose in PBS
403 for 30 minutes at room temperature, then washed with PBS twice. For the panel shown in
404 Fig.1, a 4% PFA 4 % sucrose solution was used for fixation. Cells were blocked with 10 mg/mL
405 bovine serum albumin (BSA) for 30 minutes before being stained with antibodies anti-ICAM-
406 1 coupled to APC (Invitrogen 17.0549.42) at dilution 1/1000. Cells were then washed twice
407 with PBS, permeabilized with 0.5% saponin in PBS and DNA was stained with Hoechst 33342

408 (Molecular Probes). For the panel shown in Fig. 3D the cells were permeabilized after ICAM-
409 1-APC staining to probe for Flag (rabbit, Sigma F7425) or Hsp60 (rabbit, homemade) followed
410 with A488-conjugated secondary antibodies. For the panel shown in Fig.1 and 3C, the cells
411 were permeabilized in 0.5% saponin in PBS and stained with mouse anti-Flag M2 antibody
412 (Sigma) and homemade rabbit anti-Cap1 antibody, followed with species-specific secondary
413 antibodies. Images were acquired on an Axio observer Z1 microscope equipped with an
414 ApoTome module (Zeiss, Germany) and a 63× Apochromat lens. Images were taken with an
415 ORCA-flash4.OLT camera (Hamamatsu, Japan) using the software Zen.

416 For periodic-acid-Schiff (PAS) stain cells were fixed in 4 % PFA 4% sucrose in PBS for 30
417 min at room temperature and staining was performed as described (50). Briefly, cells were
418 incubated in 1 % periodic acid (Sigma) for 5 min. Thereafter coverslips were put in tap water
419 for 1 min, quickly rinsed in mQ-H₂O and then applied to Schiff reagent (Sigma) for 15 min at
420 room temperature. Afterwards the coverslips were rinsed again in mQ-H₂O, incubated in tap
421 water for 10 min followed by an incubation step in PBS for 5 min. Periodic acid oxidizes the
422 vicinal diols in sugars such as glycogen to aldehydes, which now in turn react with the Schiff
423 reagent to give a purple colour. Coverslips infected with *C. caviae* and *C. pneumoniae* were
424 further stained with home-made rabbit antibody against *C. muridarum* GroEL, that cross-
425 reacts with the orthologous proteins in these species, followed with Alexa488-conjugated
426 secondary antibodies. Images were acquired using transmission light or green fluorescence
427 excitation on an Axio Vert.A1 microscope (Zeiss, Germany) and an LD A-Plan 40x lense. Images
428 were taken with an AxioCam ICc 1 camera using the software Zen.

429

430 **Progeny assays**

431 For siRNA transfection 50 000 cells were plated in a 24-well plate and immediately mixed with
432 Lipofectamine RNAiMAX (Invitrogen) following the manufacturer's recommendation, using 10
433 nM of siRNA (see Table S1 for sequences). Cells treated with siRNA for 24 h (J1) were infected
434 with L2^{IncD}GFP bacteria at a MOI = 0.2. Transfection of siRNAs was repeated on J2. On J3 (48
435 hpi), cells were detached, lysed using glass beads and the supernatant was used to infect new
436 untreated cells plated the day before (100 000 cells/well in a 24-well plate), in serial dilution.
437 The next day, 3 wells per condition with an infection lower than 30 % (checked by microscopy)
438 were detached, fixed and analyzed by flow cytometry to determine the bacterial titer as
439 described (34).

440

441 ***Shigella* heterologous secretion assays and immunoblots**

442 Analysis of secreted proteins was performed as described previously (16), except that
443 the *ipaB* or *mxiD* *Shigella flexneri* were co-transformed with the pMM100 plasmid that codes
444 for the *lacI* repressor (selection with tetracyclin) (51) and with the indicated Cya chimera
445 (selection with ampicillin). This was done to avoid the very strong expression of some of the
446 chimeras in the absence of *lacI* repressor. Briefly, 1 ml of a 30 °C overnight culture of *S. flexneri*
447 *ipaB* or *mxiD* transformed with different Cya chimeras was inoculated in 15 ml of LB broth and
448 incubated at 37 °C for 1 h. Expression of the Cya chimeras was induced by adding 10 μM IPTG

449 for all chimera except PGMtracho/Cya which was induced at 100 μ M IPTG. Bacteria were
450 harvested by centrifugation 3 h later and the supernatant was filtered through a Millipore
451 filter (0.2 μ m). To precipitate the proteins 1/10 (v/v) of trichloroacetic acid was added to the
452 supernatants. The pellet fraction and the supernatant fraction (concentrated 40-fold
453 compared to the pellet fraction) were resuspended in sample buffer for SDS-PAGE, transferred
454 to Immobilon-P (PVDF) membranes and immunoblotted with the proper primary antibodies
455 diluted in 1X PBS containing 5% milk and 0.01% Tween-20. Primary antibodies used were
456 mouse anti-cya, rabbit anti-CRP and rabbit anti-IpaD antibodies generously given by Drs N.
457 Guiso, A. Ullmann and C. Parsot, respectively (Institut Pasteur, Paris). Goat anti-mouse and
458 anti-rabbit IgG-HRP (GE Healthcare) were used at 1:10000 dilution. Blots were developed
459 using the Western Lightning Chemiluminescence Reagent (GE Healthcare).

460

461

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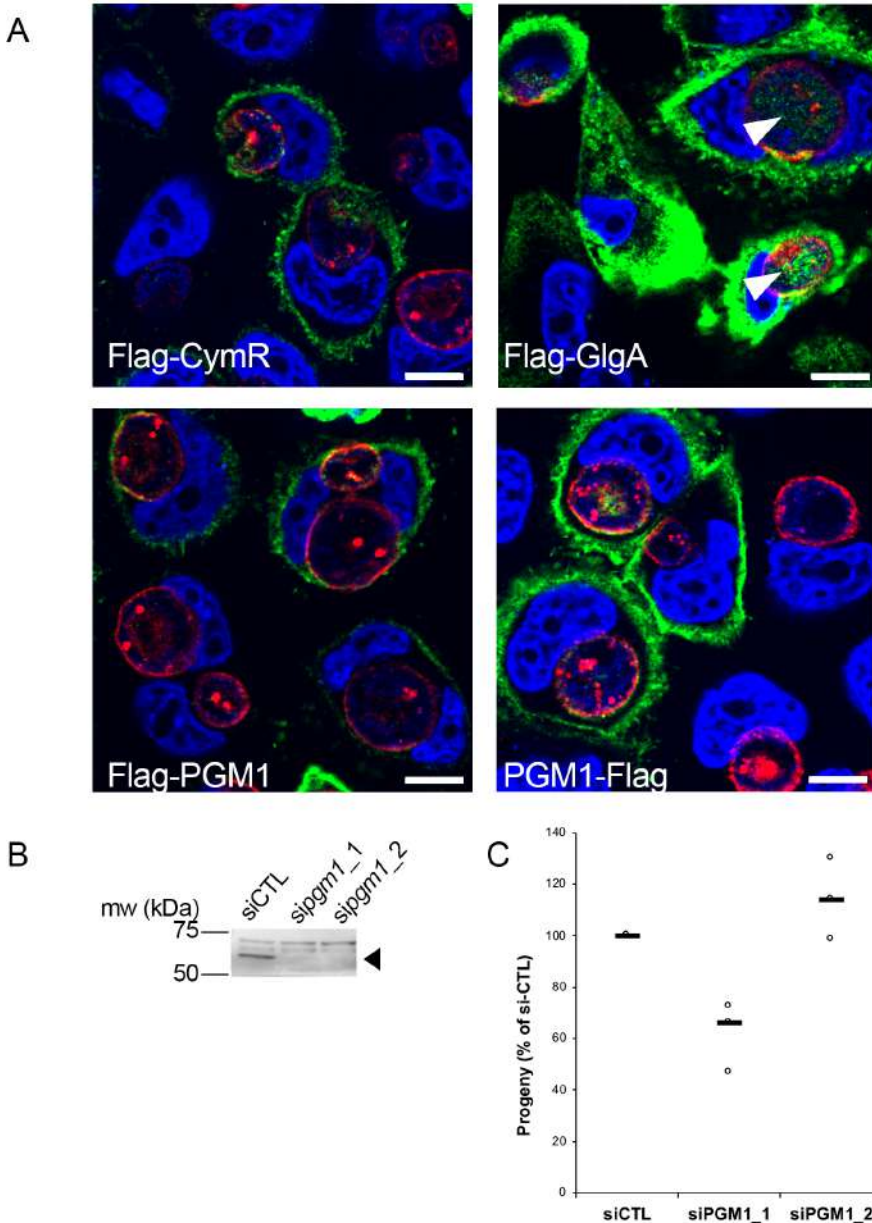
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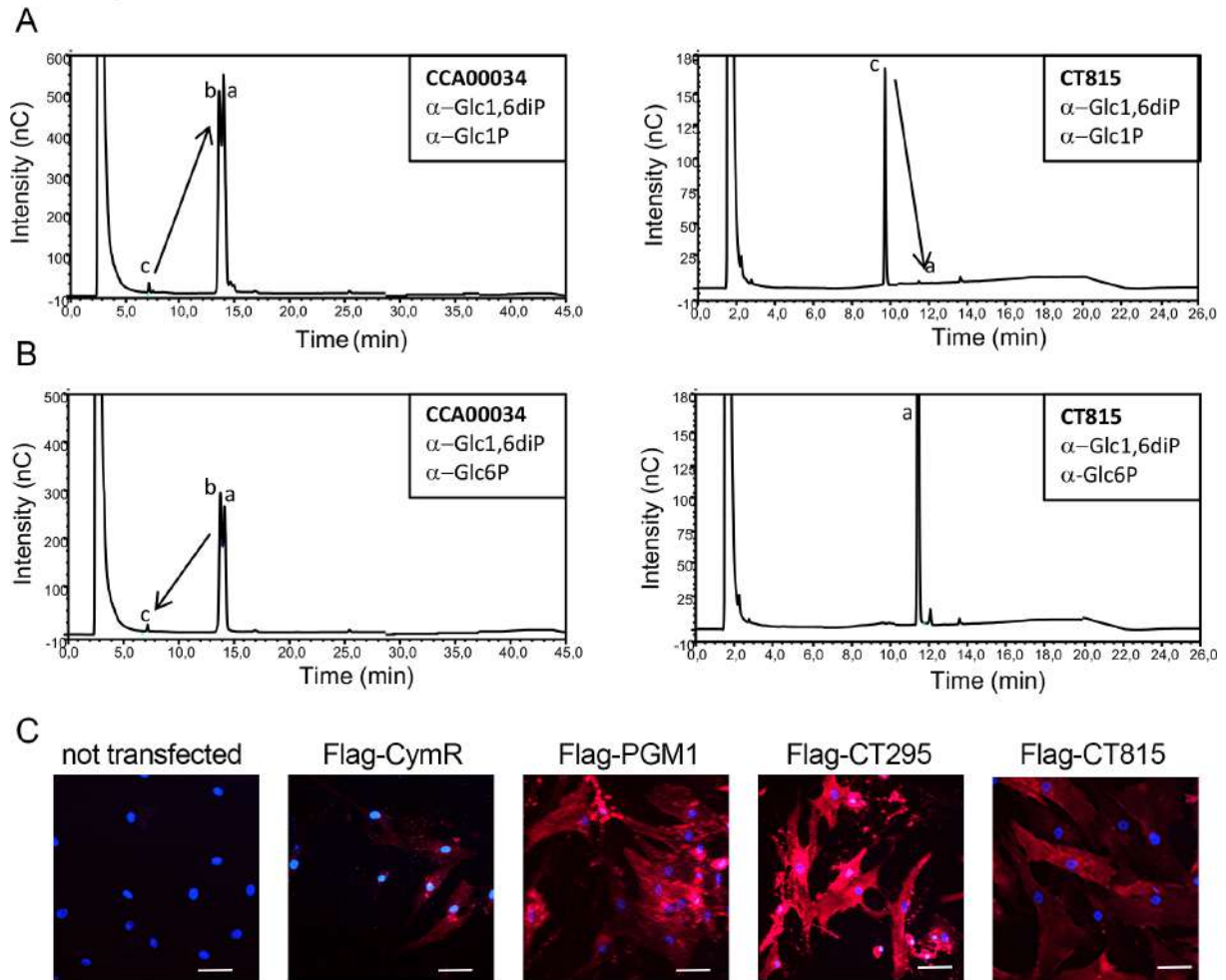
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- 589
590



624 Fig. 1. Host PGM1 does not accumulate in the inclusion lumen and is dispensable for *C.*
 625 *trachomatis* development. A – HeLa cells were transfected with the indicated Flag-tagged
 626 constructs, infected with *C. trachomatis* L2 and fixed 24 h later. Cells were permeabilized
 627 and stained for the inclusion membrane protein Cap1 (red) and Flag (green). DNA was
 628 stained with Hoechst (blue). The merge image is shown. Only Flag-GlgA was detected in the
 629 inclusion lumen (arrowheads). Bar is 10 μ m. B – Two different siRNA were used to silence
 630 *pgm1* expression and the effect on PGM1 level was measured by western blot. The
 631 arrowhead points to PGM1 (mw=61.5 kDa), higher bands are non specific. C – The effect of
 632 *pgm1* silencing on bacterial progeny was measured 48 hpi. Dot plot distribution of the
 633 progeny relative to cells treated with control siRNA, for three independent experiments, is
 634 shown. Gray bar, median.

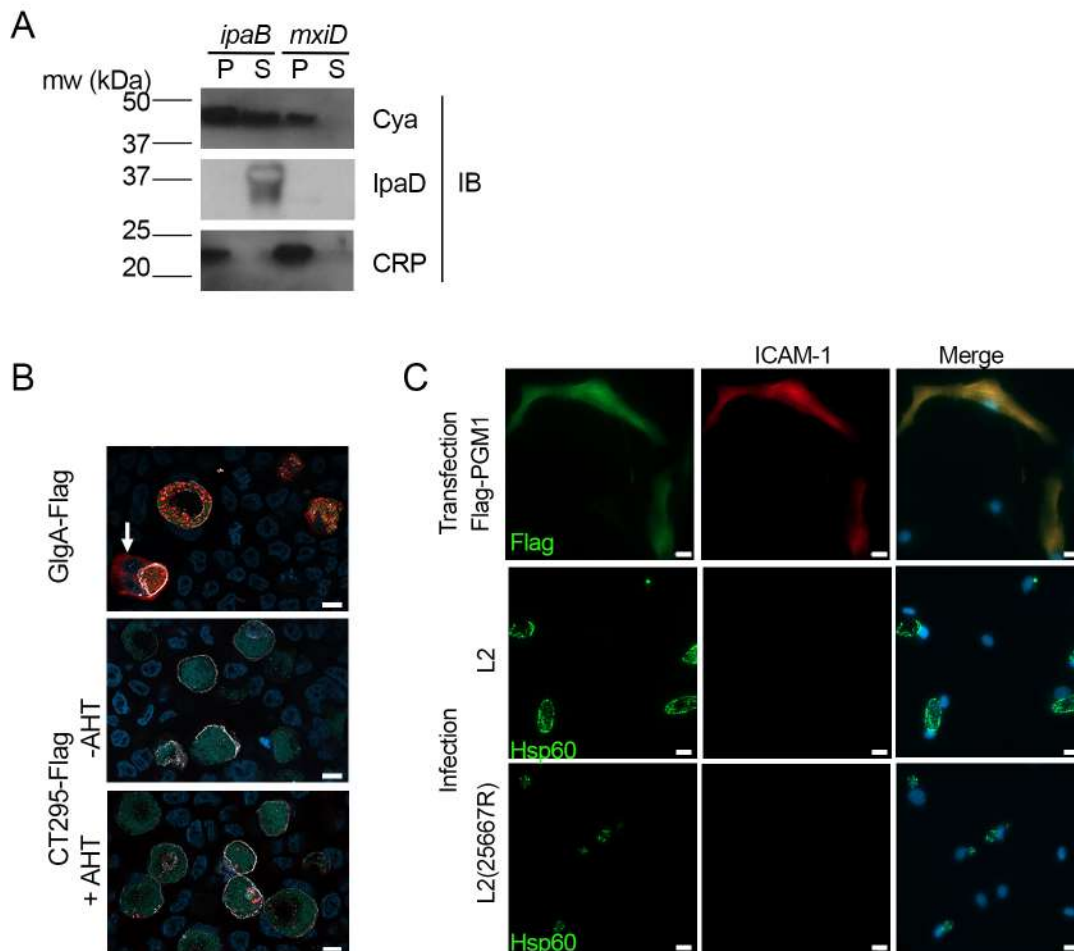
Figure 2



635
 636 Fig. 2. CT295 is a phosphoglucomutase. A – The indicated purified proteins (bold letters) were
 637 incubated with Glc1P in the presence of the co-factor Glc1,6diP. The substrates and reaction
 638 products were identified by HPAEC. Incubation of Glc1P (peak c) with CCA00034 resulted in
 639 full conversion into Glc6P (peaks a and b), while Glc6P was hardly detectable when CT815 was
 640 tested. Note that the samples were run on two different columns, resulting in different elution
 641 profiles. B – The reverse reaction was tested. A very low conversion of Glc6P into Glc1P was
 642 observed for CCA00034 and was totally absent for CT815. Of note, CCA00034 favors the
 643 conversion of α -Glc6P (peak a) into β -Glc6P (peak b) while CT815 does not. C – PGM1 deficient
 644 fibroblasts were transfected or not with the indicated constructs. One day later, ICAM1
 645 expression at the cell surface was probed with Cy5-coupled anti-ICAM1 antibody (red). Nuclei
 646 were stained with Hoechst (blue). Bar is 50 μ m.

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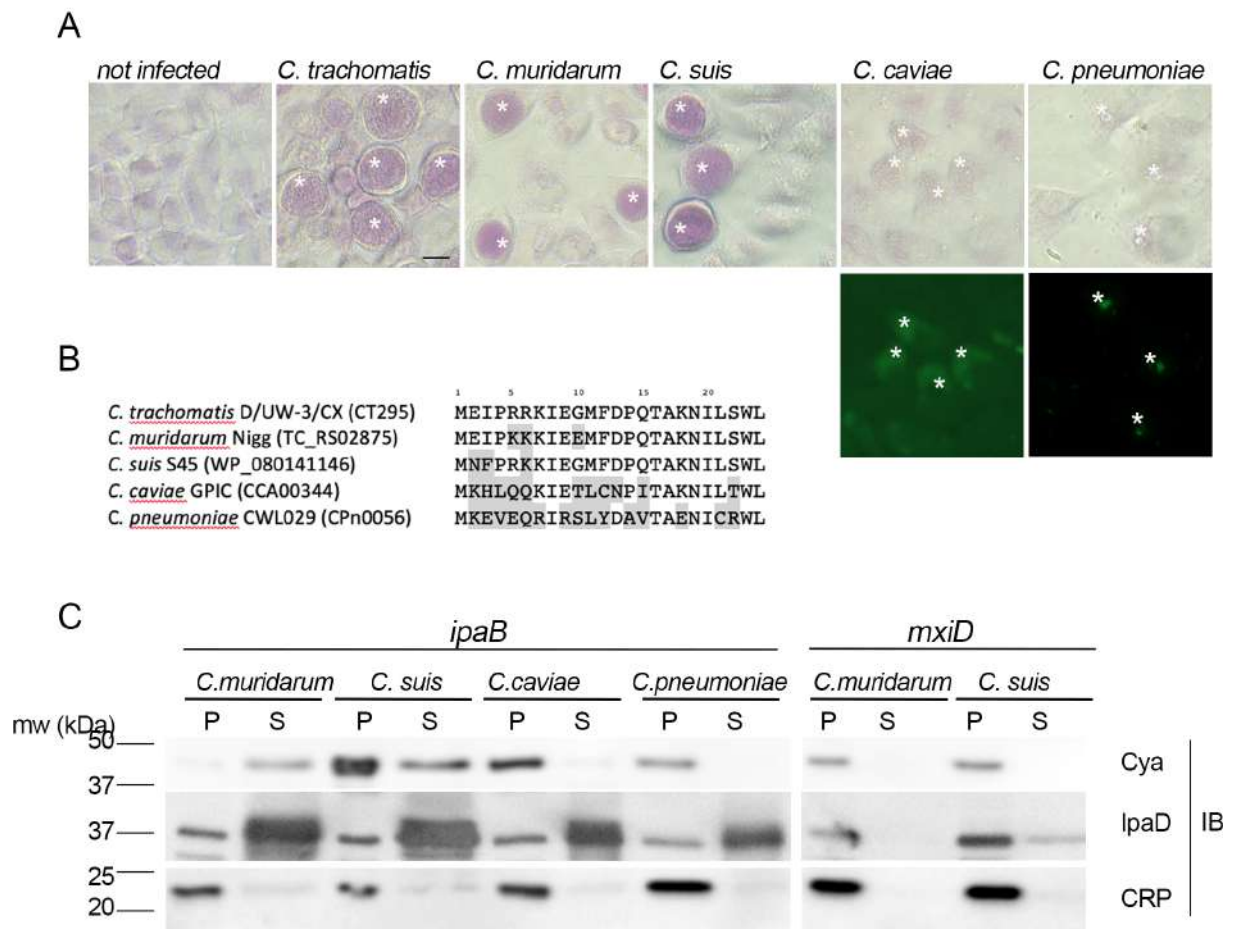
Figure 3



651

652 Fig. 3. CT295 is secreted in the inclusion lumen. A – The first 22 amino acids of CT295 were
 653 fused to the Cya reporter protein and expressed in a *S. flexneri ipaB* (constitutive T3S) or *mxlD*
 654 (defective T3S) strain. Exponential phase cultures expressing the reporter fusion protein were
 655 fractionated into supernatants (S) and pellets (P). Samples were resolved by SDS-PAGE,
 656 transferred to a PVDF membrane, and probed with anti-Cya (to detect the fusion protein),
 657 anti-IpaD (*Shigella* secreted protein), or anti-CRP (*Shigella* non-secreted protein) antibodies.
 658 B – Cells were infected with *C. trachomatis* L2 strain stably expressing GFP together with either
 659 GlgA-Flag (endogenous promoter), or CT295-Flag (Tet-inducible promoter), and incubated in
 660 the absence of presence of 5 nM anhydrotetracycline (AHT) for 48 h before fixation,
 661 permeabilization and staining. Bacteria are visible in the green channel, the inclusion
 662 membrane is labeled with antibodies against Cap1 followed with Cy3-coupled anti-rabbit
 663 antibodies (white), secondaries antibodies for the Flag-tagged were Alexa647-coupled anti-
 664 mouse antibodies (red), the DNA was stained with Hoechst (blue). The white arrow points to
 665 GlgA-Flag detected in the cytoplasm of one infected cell. Bar is 10 μ m. C – PGM1 deficient
 666 fibroblasts were transfected with Flag-PGM1 or infected with the indicated *C. trachomatis* L2
 667 strain. Forty-eight hours later the cells were fixed, permeabilized and stained with the
 668 indicated antibodies. Nuclei were stained with Hoechst (blue). Bar is 20 μ m.

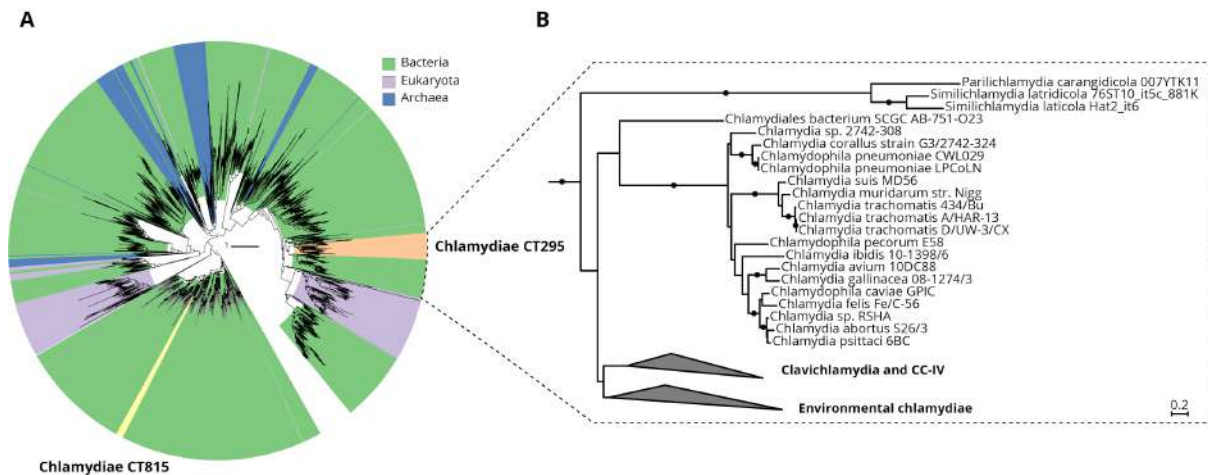
Figure 4



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Fig. 4. Secretion of a PGM activity correlates with glycogen accumulation among *Chlamydiaceae*. A – Top panels: PAS staining of cells infected with the indicated strains. Bottom panels: *C. caviae* and *C. pneumoniae* infected cells were further stained with anti-mGroEL antibody followed with Alexa488-conjugated secondary antibodies to detect the inclusions (asterisks). Bar is 20 μ m. B – Alignment of the first 24 amino acids of CT295 and its orthologs in the indicated *Chlamydiaceae* species. Amino acids that differ from the *C. trachomatis* sequence are shadowed. C – The first 22 amino acids of the indicated CT295 orthologs were fused to the Cya reporter protein and expressed in a *S. flexneri ipaB* (left) or *mxiD* (right) strains. Secretion was analyzed like in Fig. 3A.

680 Figure S1
681



682
683 **Supplementary figure 1: The chlamydial candidate PGMs CT295 and CT815 are related with**
684 **other bacterial PGMs, stem from an ancient gene duplication event and are both**
685 **monophyletic. (A)** Phylogenetic analysis of chlamydial CT295 and CT815 homologs in eggNOG
686 COG1109 (annotated as “phosphomannomutase”; 456 aligned positions;
687 http://eggnogapi45.embl.de/nog_data/text/fasta/COG1109) clustered at 80% amino acid
688 identity over 90% query coverage (n=2,829). Clades are colored by their affiliation to bacteria,
689 eukaryota, and archaea in green, violet, and blue, respectively. Orange indicates the
690 chlamydial CT295 clade (bacterial eggNOG ENOG4107QSU), and yellow indicates the
691 chlamydial CT815 clade (bacterial eggNOG ENOG4107QJF). Maximum likelihood phylogenetic
692 trees with best fit model LG+C60+G+F with 1,000 ultrafast bootstraps are shown. Bootstrap
693 support for monophyly of chlamydial clades in the tree is $\geq 95\%$, and the SH-like approximate
694 likelihood ratio is $\geq 80\%$. **(B)** Phylogenetic analysis of chlamydial CT295 homologs (bacterial
695 eggNOG ENOG4107QSU; n=104) with its sister clade from COG1109 (575 aligned positions)
696 used as outgroup (n=93). Maximum likelihood phylogenetic tree based on LG+C60+G+F best
697 tree using the posterior mean site frequency model and 100 non-parametric bootstraps.
698 Bootstraps $\geq 70\%$ are indicated by filled circles at splits in the tree. Scale bar indicates 0.2
699 substitution per position.

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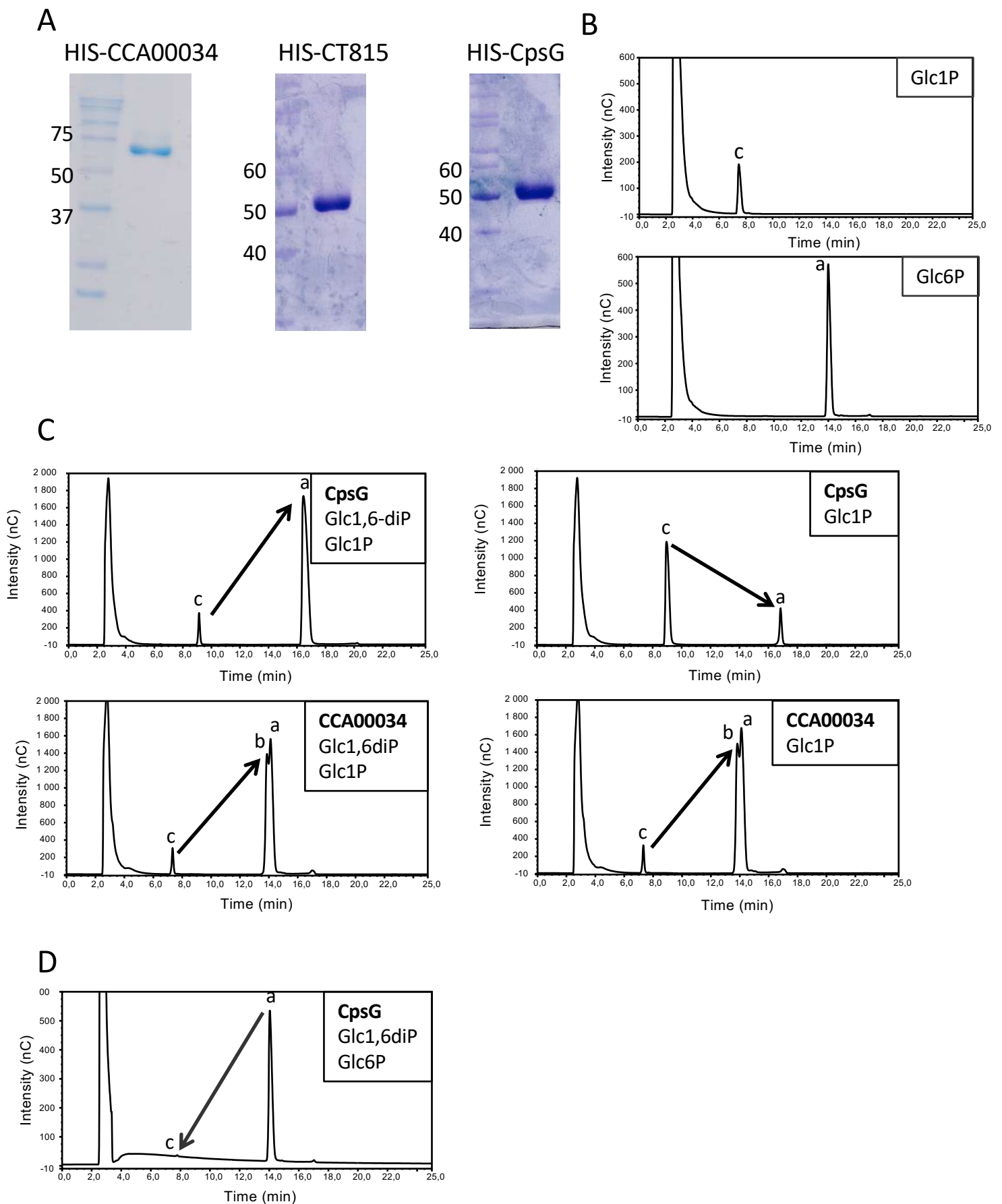


Figure S2 A – Migration profile of purified proteins. Purified His-tagged proteins were run on SDS-PAGE and stained with Coomassie blue. Molecular weights are indicated. B – Elution profiles of α -Glc1P (peak c) and α -Glc6P (peak a). C – HIS-CpsG (top) or HIS-CCA00034 (bottom) were incubated with Glc1P in the presence (left) or absence (right) of the co-factor Glc1,6diP. The substrates and reaction products were identified by HPAEC-PAD. CpsG required the presence of Glc1,6diP for optimal conversion of Glc1P into Glc6P, while CCA00034 did not. Also, CCA00034 favored the conversion of α -Glc6P (peak a) into β -Glc6P (peak b), while CpsG did not. D- HIS-CpsG was incubated with Glc6P in the presence of Glc1,6diP. Conversion of Glc6P into Glc1P was hardly detectable.

Résumé

Les microorganismes à développement intracellulaire exercent une pression importante sur le métabolisme de leur hôte, car ils obtiennent tous leurs nutriments de son cytoplasme. Les bactéries intracellulaires obligatoires *Chlamydia trachomatis* en sont une illustration extrême : elles dépendent de leur hôte non seulement pour l'apport en glucose, leur source principale de carbone, mais probablement aussi, au moins partiellement, pour l'obtention de la monnaie énergétique issue du catabolisme du glucose, l'adénosine triphosphate (ATP). Ces bactéries effectuent un cycle de développement biphasique: les bactéries infectieuses, ou corps élémentaires (EBs), adhèrent à la membrane d'une cellule hôte, typiquement une cellule épithéliale du tractus génital, et provoquent leur internalisation. Une fois à l'intérieur d'un compartiment délimité par une membrane, appelé inclusion, les bactéries expriment un nouveau jeu de gènes et se transforment en corps réticulés (RBs). Le métabolisme des RBs, qui constitue la seule forme répliquative des bactéries, est plus élevé que celui des EBs. Les bactéries se multiplient plusieurs fois dans l'inclusion jusqu'à ce que les RBs se convertissent en EBs, qui, une fois relargués de la cellule-hôte, peuvent initier un nouveau cycle infectieux. La pression métabolique exercée par les bactéries sur leur hôte évolue donc tout au cours du temps. Savoir si l'infection module le métabolisme de son hôte, et dans quelle mesure les différentes étapes du cycle de développement dépendent de ce métabolisme, demeurent des questions ouvertes. Dans ce travail, en utilisant des cellules épithéliales primaires et une lignée cellulaire d'origine non tumorale, nous avons montré que les deux voies métaboliques principales pour la production d'ATP chez l'hôte, la glycolyse et la phosphorylation oxydative, restaient largement stables durant l'infection. Ces résultats indiquent que contrairement à nos attentes, il n'y a pas de basculement significatif du métabolisme de l'hôte vers la glycolyse durant l'infection. L'inhibition de l'une ou l'autre de ces deux voies diminue fortement la capacité des bactéries à effectuer leur cycle de développement. Bien que les EBs démontrent un certain degré d'autonomie énergétique pour la synthèse des protéines exprimées dans la phase initiale de l'infection, une glycolyse fonctionnelle est requise pour accompagner la formation des inclusions, tandis que la phosphorylation oxydative est moins nécessaire à ce stade précoce du développement. L'importance relative des deux voies pour soutenir les étapes initiales de l'infection corrèle avec leur contribution respective à maintenir le niveau d'ATP dans les cellules épithéliales, la glycolyse étant le contributeur principal. En conclusion, ce travail confirme la dépendance des bactéries vis à vis de la capacité de production d'ATP de l'hôte. Cependant, la consommation d'ATP par les bactéries semble en équilibre avec la production normale des cellules épithéliales et la production autonome par les bactéries, en sorte que le métabolisme de l'hôte ne nécessite pas de remodelage profond pour répondre aux besoins des bactéries.