



## 22    **Abstract**

23    Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is caused by severe acute respiratory  
24    syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The Spike protein that mediates  
25    coronavirus entry into host cells is a major target for COVID-19 vaccines and  
26    antibody therapeutics. However, multiple variants of SARS-CoV-2 have  
27    emerged, which may potentially compromise vaccine effectiveness. Using a  
28    pseudovirus-based assay, we evaluated SARS-CoV-2 cell entry mediated by  
29    the viral Spike B.1.617 and B.1.1.7 variants. We also compared the  
30    neutralization ability of monoclonal antibodies from convalescent sera and  
31    neutralizing antibodies (NAbs) elicited by CoronaVac (inactivated vaccine) and  
32    ZF2001 (RBD-subunit vaccine) against B.1.617 and B.1.1.7 variants. Our  
33    results showed that, compared to D614G and B.1.1.7 variants, B.1.617 shows  
34    enhanced viral entry and membrane fusion, as well as more resistant to  
35    antibody neutralization. These findings have important implications for  
36    understanding viral infectivity and for immunization policy against  
37    SARS-CoV-2 variants.

38    **Keywords:** SARS-CoV-2, coronavirus, mutation, viral entry, neutralizing  
39    antibodies, vaccine, immune escape

40

## 41     **Introduction**

42     The novel coronavirus reported in 2019 (2019-nCoV), officially named severe  
 43     acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), is a new type of  
 44     coronavirus belonging to the genus *Betacoronavirus*. It is a single-stranded  
 45     RNA virus with a genome of approximately 29 Kb and with a high pathogenicity  
 46     and high infectivity. As of July 8, 2021, there were more than 185 million  
 47     confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) globally, including  
 48     more than 4 million confirmed deaths (<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/>). As  
 49     SARS-CoV-2 continues to circulate in the human population, multiple  
 50     mutations accumulate over time despite its proofreading capacity<sup>1</sup>. The Spike  
 51     glycoprotein mutation D614G became dominant in SARS-CoV-2 during the  
 52     early pandemic, which displayed increased infectivity and transmission<sup>2</sup>.

53  
 54     Spike-specific antibodies elicited by natural infection or vaccination contribute  
 55     the majority of the neutralizing activity in human sera<sup>3</sup>. The receptor binding  
 56     domain (RBD) in the S1 subunit of Spike protein binds to its cellular receptor  
 57     angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) during viral entry, while the S2  
 58     subunit is required for the subsequent fusion of viral and cellular membranes<sup>1</sup>.  
 59     Therefore, RBD is believed to be a major target of neutralizing antibodies  
 60     (NAbs) and has been a focus of COVID-19 vaccine design<sup>4,5</sup>. Our previously  
 61     studies showed that mutations in SARS-CoV-2 Spike protein could affect viral  
 62     properties such as infectivity and neutralization resistance<sup>6,7</sup>. The newly

emerged SARS-CoV-2 variant, B.1.617, first reported from India, which carries two mutations (L452R and E484Q) in its RBD is of particular concern. The AstraZeneca ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 vaccine appeared less effective than the Pfizer–BioNTech (BNT162b2) mRNA vaccine in preventing infection of SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617 variant<sup>8</sup>. Although mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccines provide above 90% efficacy against original SARS-CoV-2 strain, breakthrough infections with SARS-CoV-2 variants occur<sup>9,10</sup>. However, the efficacy of inactivated and RBD-subunit vaccines against B.1.617 variant is still unknown.

In this study, we used SARS-CoV-2 pseudovirus system to compare the viral entry efficiency *in vitro*, as well as the neutralization activities of convalescent sera, monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) and COVID-19 vaccine-elicited sera against these newly emerging SARS-CoV-2 variants, including the highly transmissible variants B.1.1.7, and B.1.617.

## Materials and Methods

### Cell culture

HEK 293T (ATCC CRL-3216) and A549 cells (ATCC CCL-185) were purchased from the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC, Manassas, VA, USA). Cells were maintained in Dulbecco's modified Eagle medium (DMEM; Hyclone, Waltham, MA, USA) supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS; Gibco, Rockville, MD, USA), and 1% penicillin–streptomycin at 37 °C in

85 5% CO<sub>2</sub>. HEK 293T cells or A549 cells transfected with human ACE2  
86 (293T-ACE2 or A549-ACE2) were cultured under the same conditions with the  
87 addition of G418 (0.5 mg/mL) to the medium.

88

## 89 **Sera samples**

90 Convalescent sera samples from 20 patients with COVID-19 obtained in  
91 February and October 2020 at Yongchuan Hospital of Chongqing Medical  
92 University were previously reported.<sup>11</sup> All sera were tested positive using  
93 magnetic chemiluminescence enzyme immunoassay (MCLIA) kits supplied by  
94 BioScience Co. (Tianjin, China)<sup>12</sup>. Patient sera were incubated at 56 °C for 30  
95 min to inactivate the complement prior to experiments. Twenty CoronaVac  
96 vaccinee sera were obtained 7-14 days following the second dose of vaccine.  
97 Eight ZF2001 (RBD-subunit) vaccinee sera were obtained 26-30 days after  
98 booster immunization (second dose), and two ZF2001 vaccinee sera were  
99 obtained 14 days following the third dose of vaccine. The study was approved  
100 by the Ethics Commission of Chongqing Medical University (ref. no. 2020003).  
101 Written informed consent was waived by the Ethics Commission of the  
102 designated hospital for emerging infectious diseases.

103

## 104 **Plasmids and antibodies**

105 The codon-optimized gene encoding reference strain (GenBank: QHD43416)  
106 SARS-CoV-2 Spike protein with C-terminal 19-amino acid deletion was

107 synthesized by Sino Biological Inc (Beijing, China), and cloned into pCMV3  
108 vector. D614G mutation was introduced using site-directed mutagenesis  
109 (denoted as pCMV3-S-D614G). SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617 and B.1.1.7 variant  
110 Spikes were codon-optimized and synthesized by GenScript Inc (Nanjing,  
111 China) and cloned into pCMV3 vector. The HIV-1 NL4-3 ΔEnv Vpr luciferase  
112 reporter vector (pNL4-3.Luc.R-E-) constructed by N. Landau<sup>13</sup> was provided by  
113 Prof. Cheguo Cai from Wuhan University (Wuhan, China). The expression  
114 plasmid for human ACE2 was obtained from GeneCopoeia (Guangzhou,  
115 China). Anti-RBD monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) against the SARS-CoV-2  
116 Spike protein were obtained from the blood samples of COVID-19  
117 convalescent patients as described previously.<sup>14</sup>

118

# **119 Production and titration of SARS-CoV-2 pseudoviruses**

120 SARS-CoV-2 Spike pseudotyped viruses were produced as previously  
121 described with some modifications<sup>15,16</sup>. In brief,  $5 \times 10^6$  HEK 293T cells were  
122 co-transfected with pNL4-3.Luc.R-E- and recombinant SARS-CoV-2 Spike  
123 (D614G) plasmid or its derivatives (B.1.1.7 and B.1.617) using Lipofectamine  
124 3000 (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA, USA). Supernatants containing pseudotyped  
125 viruses were harvested 48 h post-transfection, centrifuged, filtered through a  
126 0.45-μm filter, and stored at -80°C. The titers of pseudoviruses were calculated  
127 by determining the number of viral RNA genomes per mL of viral stock solution  
128 using RT-qPCR with primers targeted the LTR<sup>17</sup>. Briefly, viral RNAs were

129 extracted using TRIzol (Invitrogen, Rockville, MD, USA) and treated with  
130 RNase-free DNase (Promega, Madison, WI, USA) and re-purified using mini  
131 columns. Then, the RNA was amplified using the TaqMan One-Step RT-PCR  
132 Master Mix Reagents (Applied Biosystems, Thermo Fisher). A known quantity  
133 of pNL4-3.Luc.R-E- vector was used to generate standard curves. The  
134 prepared pseudoviruses were adjusted to the same titer (copies/mL) for the  
135 following experiments.

136

### 137 **SARS-CoV-2 Spike-mediated pseudoviral entry assay**

138 To detect Spike variant-mediated viral entry, 293T-ACE2 and A549-ACE2 cells  
139 ( $1.5 \times 10^4$ ) grown on 96-well plates were infected with 50  $\mu$ L pseudoviruses ( $1 \times$   
140  $10^4$  copies). The cells were transferred to fresh DMEM medium 8 h  
141 post-infection, and RLU was measured 72 h post-infection using Luciferase  
142 Assay Reagent (Promega, Madison, WI, USA) according to the manufacturer's  
143 protocol<sup>18(p2)</sup>.

144

### 145 **Cell-cell fusion assays**

146 Syncytia formation assays were carried out as previously described with some  
147 modifications<sup>19</sup>. Briefly, plasmid pAdTrack-TO4-S, encoding SARS-CoV-2  
148 Spike protein and enhanced green fluorescent protein (eGFP), was  
149 transfected into HEK 293T cells using Lipofectamine 3000 (Invitrogen). In  
150 parallel, another group of HEK 293T cells was transfected with hACE2

151 expressing plasmids. Two groups of cells were resuspended 24 h  
152 post-transfection, mixed a 1:1 ratio, and co-cultured in DMEM medium  
153 containing 10% FBS, 37 °C with 5% CO<sub>2</sub>, for 24 h, then observed the fusion  
154 under the fluorescence microscope.

155

## 156 **Western blot**

157 To analyze Spike protein expression in cells, D614G, B.1.1.7, and B.1.617  
158 variant Spike expressing plasmids were transfected into HEK 293T cells. Total  
159 protein was extracted from cells using radio immunoprecipitation assay Lysis  
160 Buffer (Beyotime, Shanghai, China) containing 1 mM phenylmethylsulfonyl  
161 fluoride (Beyotime). Equal amounts of protein samples were  
162 electrophoretically separated by 10% sodium dodecyl sulfate polyacrylamide  
163 gel electrophoresis, and then transferred to polyvinylidene difluoride  
164 membrane (Millipore, Billerica, MA, USA). The immunoblots were probed with  
165 the indicated antibodies. Protein bands were visualized using SuperSignal  
166 West Pico Chemiluminescent Substrate kits (Bio-Rad, Hercules, CA, USA)  
167 and quantified by densitometry using ImageJ software (NCBI, Bethesda, MD,  
168 USA).

169

## 170 **Pseudovirus-based neutralization assay**

171 The 293T-ACE2 cells ( $1.5 \times 10^4$  cells/well) were seeded on 96-well plates. For  
172 the neutralization assay, equivalent pseudoviruses ( $1 \times 10^4$  copies in 50  $\mu$ L)



173 were incubated with serial dilutions of sera samples or mAbs for 1 h at 37 °C,  
174 then added to the 293T-ACE2 cells (with three replicates for each dilution).  
175 Luciferase activity was measured 72 h after infection. The titers of neutralizing  
176 antibodies were calculated as 50% inhibitory dose (ID<sub>50</sub>), the half-maximal  
177 inhibitory concentrations (IC<sub>50</sub>) of monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) against  
178 pseudoviruses was calculated using GraphPad Prism 8.0 software (GraphPad  
179 Software, San Diego, CA, USA).

180

## 181 **Statistical analyses**

182 Statistical analyses of the data were performed using GraphPad Prism version  
183 8.0 software. Quantitative data in histograms are shown as means ± SD.  
184 Statistical significance was determined using ANOVA for multiple comparisons.  
185 Student's *t*-tests were applied to compare the two groups. Differences with *P*  
186 values < 0.05 were deemed statistically significant.

187

## 188 **Results**

### 189 **B.1.617 variant Spike promotes viral entry and membrane fusion**

190 Phylogenetic analysis showed that the newly emerged SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617  
191 variant bearing common signature mutations G142D, L452R, E484Q, D614G  
192 and P681R, in its Spike glycoprotein (Fig. 1A). To assess the impact of these  
193 mutations on viral entry, synthetic codon-optimized B.1.617 and B.1.1.7 variant  
194 Spikes were cloned into mammalian expression vector respectively. Next, we

generated pseudotyped SARS-CoV-2 using a lentiviral system, which introduced a Luc (luciferase) reporter gene for quantification of Spike-mediated viral entry. Thereafter, pNL4-3.Luc.R-E- was co-transfected with pS-D614G, pS-B.1.1.7 and pS-B.1.617 to package the Spike pseudotyped single-round Luc virus in HEK 293T cells. The titers of pseudoviruses were determined by reverse transcriptase quantitative polymerase chain reaction (RT-qPCR) expressed as the number of viral RNA genomes per mL, and then adjusted to the same concentration ( $1 \times 10^4$  copies in 50  $\mu$ L) for the following experiments.

The virus infectivity was determined by a Luc assay as previously described.<sup>16</sup> As shown in Fig. 1B, to compare the viral entry efficiency mediated by Spike variants, we detected the Luc activity, the B.1.1.7 variant showed a slight increase in viral transduction over the D614G variant was 1.22-fold and 1.17-fold, while the B.1.617 variant over the D614G variant was 1.45-fold and 1.4-fold at 72 h post-infection in 293T-ACE2 and A549-ACE2 cells, respectively. These data suggest that the B.1.617 variant Spike protein significantly promotes viral entry into ACE2-expressing cells.

Next, we investigated Spike protein mediated cell-cell fusion. Coronavirus Spike protein on plasma membrane of effector cells can triggered its fusion of target cells (ACE2-expressing cells). B.1.617 variant Spike protein significantly increased fusion efficacy compared to D614G variant (Fig. 1C). To evaluate the expression and cleavage of SARS-CoV-2 Spike protein in a human cell

line, the codon-optimized Spike-expressing plasmids (D614G, B.1.1.7 and B.1.617) were transfected into HEK 293T cells. The immunoblot analysis of whole cell lysates revealed that D614G, B.1.1.7 and B.1.617 Spike proteins showed two major protein bands (unprocessed S and cleaved S1 subunit), when allowed to react with the monoclonal antibody targeting the RBD on the SARS-CoV-2 Spike protein (Fig. 1D). However, the B.1.617-transfected cells showed a stronger S1 signal than D614G-transfected cells, indicating that the B.1.617 variant altered the cleavability of the Spike protein by cellular proteases. Collectively, our data suggest that Spike protein of B.1.617 variant enhanced viral entry into ACE2-expressing cells and membrane fusion process, which may contribute to SARS-CoV-2 infectivity.

228

### 229 **Reduced neutralization by COVID-19 convalescent plasma**

230 The plasma samples of 20 patients with COVID-19 obtained in February and  
231 October 2020 in Chongqing were previously reported.<sup>11</sup> Using a  
232 luciferase-expressing lentiviral pseudotyping system, geometric mean titers  
233 (GMTs) were calculated to assess the neutralizing efficacy. The neutralizing  
234 activity of 5 samples against B.1.617 variant was reduced by >3-fold compared  
235 to D614G (Fig.2A). Notably, the NAb titer of 6 samples (30%) was lower than  
236 the threshold against B.1.617 (Fig. 2A). 18 samples ID<sub>50</sub> >40 against D614G  
237 pseudovirus, whereas the NAb titers of 3 samples (15%) and 6 samples (30%)  
238 decreased below the threshold against B.1.1.7 and B.1.617, respectively. The

239 GMTs were 117 for D614G, 87 for B.1.1.7, and 50 for B.1.617 (Fig. 2B). These  
240 data indicate that B.1.1.7 and B.1.617 escape from neutralizing antibodies in  
241 some COVID-19 convalescent sera.

242

## 243 **Resistance against monoclonal antibodies targeting the RBD**

244 In addition, we assessed the impact of these variants on neutralizing activity of  
245 human monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) isolated from COVID-19 convalescent  
246 patients. Eight RBD-specific mAbs potent neutralizing SARS-CoV-2 obtained  
247 from the blood samples of COVID-19 convalescent patients were selected for  
248 this study.<sup>14</sup> Among them, three mAbs showed less effective against B.1.1.7,  
249 and five against B.1.617 by 3-folds or more (Fig. 3A). Notably, the B.1.1.7  
250 reduced the neutralization sensitivity with three mAbs (CQ012, CQ024 and  
251 CQ038) by 2 folds, and B.1.617 reduced the neutralization sensitivity with five  
252 mAbs (CQ012, CQ026, CQ038, CQ039 and CQ046) by 3 folds against D614G  
253 pseudovirus. Moreover, the B.1.617 reduced the neutralization sensitivity with  
254 the most potent mAb CQ046 by 4.6 folds, compared with that of D614G  
255 pseudovirus (Fig. 3B). The IC<sub>80</sub> of mAb CQ046 decreased from 23.1 ng/ml  
256 (D614G) to 145.8 ng/ml (B.1.617). Together, both B.1.1.7 and B.1.617 reduced  
257 neutralization sensitivity to most mAbs tested. These data show the resistance  
258 of B.1.617 variant Spike proteins against monoclonal antibodies targeting the  
259 RBD.

260

## 261 **B.1.617 variant reduces sensitivity to vaccine-elicited antibodies**

262 To evaluate the impact of the mutations present in Spike glycoprotein of  
 263 SARS-CoV-2 variants on antibody neutralization, we compared the  
 264 neutralization potency of COVID-19 vaccine-elicited antibodies against D614G,  
 265 B.1.1.7 and B.1.617 Spike pseudotyped viruses. We collected serum from  
 266 twenty individuals who received two doses of CoronaVac (inactivated vaccine)  
 267 and eight individuals who received two doses of ZF2001 (RBD-subunit vaccine)  
 268 vaccine, and two individuals who received three doses of ZF2001. Of the  
 269 individuals who received three doses of ZF2001 (>14 days out from third dose)  
 270 had robust neutralization of SARS-CoV-2 spike D614G, while those who  
 271 received only two doses had lower but detectable neutralization (Fig.4A-B).  
 272 The GMT of ZF2001-elicited serum against the D614G, B.1.1.7 and B.1.617  
 273 were 151, 84, 49, respectively (Fig. 4C). Notably, ID<sub>50</sub> of five samples against  
 274 B.1.617 below the threshold were seen in two doses of ZF2001 sera. Together,  
 275 B.1.617 showed more resistance to the neutralization of vaccinee serum than  
 276 the D614G. These results indicate that it is of great importance to achieve three  
 277 doses of ZF2001 vaccination.

278 Nineteen CoronaVac-elicited vaccinees had substantial serum neutralizing  
 279 activity against D614G Spike pseudotyped viruses (Fig.5A). Compared with  
 280 activity against the D614G, 35% (7/20) post-vaccination sera were decreased  
 281 below the threshold against B.1.1.7, and 65% (13/20) were decreased below  
 282 the threshold against B.1.617 (Fig.5A). The average neutralization potency of

the CoronaVac-elicited serum was reduced 2.5-fold for B.1.617 variant (GMT: 36) compared to D614G (GMT: 89) and reduced 1.6-fold for B.1.1.7 variant (GMT: 55) compared to D614G (GMT: 89) (Fig.5B).

## Discussion

Due to the highly pathogenic nature of SARS-CoV-2, infectious SARS-CoV-2 must be handled in a biosafety level 3 (BSL-3) facility. Here, using luciferase-expressing lentiviral pseudotype system, we compared viral entry mediated by three SARS-CoV-2 Spike variants: the original D614G variant (identified during the first wave), B.1.1.7 variant (first detected in United Kingdom during the second wave), and B.1.617 variant first reported in India. Our data indicated that B.1.617 variant Spike promotes virus infectivity through enhanced viral entry and membrane fusion, which may play an important role in increased transmissibility of this variant. These findings are highly consistent with previous studies<sup>20</sup>. L452R mutation in the RBD was reported to increase SARS-CoV-2 infectivity and fusogenicity<sup>21</sup>. P681R, a highly conserved mutation in the B.1.617 lineages, also enhanced SARS-CoV-2 Spike-mediated cell-cell fusion<sup>22</sup>. At the time of preparing this manuscript, the B.1.617.2 variant has displaced B.1.1.7 variant as the dominant SARS-CoV-2 strain in UK and other countries<sup>23,24</sup>.

Another explanation for the increased transmission of B.1.617 variant might be

the enhanced ability for the virus to evade immune system. In this study, we compared NAb titres of sera collected from previously SARS-CoV-2 infected individuals, CoronaVac (inactivated vaccine) and ZF2001 (RBD-subunit vaccine) vaccinated persons against three SARS-CoV-2 Spike variants. We found that B.1.617 variant Spike showed more resistant to antibody neutralization. B.1.617 reduced the neutralization of CoronaVac vaccine by 2.5 times, and ZF2001 vaccine by 3.1 times. Consistently, Liu et al reported that B.1.617 reduced the neutralization of convalescent plasma by 3.9 times, Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine by 2.7 times, and Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine by 2.6 times<sup>25</sup>.

The RBD of the B.1.617 Spike contains two mutations, L452R and E484Q, which were thought to confer to immune evasion. Several studies have demonstrated that the E484K mutation in the RBD significantly reduced susceptibility to neutralization, as seen in B.1.351 (South Africa) and P.1 (Brazil) variants.<sup>26–29</sup> E484Q mutation occurring in the same position as E484K, was also demonstrated to be associated with immune escape<sup>25,30</sup>. Another key mutation in the RBD of B.1.617 is L452R. Recent studies suggested that the L452R mutation of B.1.427/B.1.429 variant Spike also contributes to its escape from NAbs<sup>31,32</sup>.

The limitation of this study include its small sample size, only focus on pseudovirus-based antibody neutralization in cell culture, and the possibility

327 that mutations may alter neutralization by modulating Spike function rather  
328 than its antigenicity. To fully characterize the features of B.1.617 variant, *in vivo*  
329 study with authentic virus and the role of memory T or B cells in protection  
330 against this variant will be required. Conclusions about vaccine-mediated  
331 protection must be validated by real-world data collected in regions where  
332 B.1.617 variant is circulating.

333

334 Collectively, this study will be helpful for understanding the increased spread of  
335 B.1.617 variant and highlight the need to in depth survey of this variant. Given  
336 the evolving nature of the SARS-CoV-2 RNA genome, new variant of concern  
337 will continue to arise, which may threaten vaccine efficacy. Therefore, antibody  
338 therapeutics and vaccine evaluations against new variants are worthy of  
339 further investigation.

340

#### 341 **Conflict of interest:**

342 The authors declare no competing interests.

343

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465

## 466 **Figure legends**

### 467 **Figure1 B.1.617 variant Spike protein of SARS-CoV-2 drives efficient viral** 468 **entry and cell-cell fusion.**

469 (A) The diagram of SARS-CoV-2 Spike protein from D614G, B.1.1.7 and  
470 B.1.617 variants. D614G variant pseudovirus (containing the D614D mutation  
471 in Spike); B.1.1.7 variant pseudovirus (containing the H60/V70 and Y144  
472 deletions and N501Y, A570D, D614G, P681H, T716I, S982A, and D1118H  
473 mutations in Spike); B.1.617 variant pseudovirus (containing the G142D,  
474 E154K, V382L, L452R, E484Q, D614G, P681R, and Q1106H mutations in  
475 Spike). (B) Infectivity of D614G, B.1.1.7 and B.1.617 variants pseudoviruses  
476 assessed in 293T-ACE2 and A549-ACE2 cells. Cells were inoculated with  
477 equivalent doses of each pseudotyped virus, at 6 h post inoculation, replaced  
478 the supernatants with fresh culture. Upon 72 h, cells were lysed with passive  
479 lysis buffer and analyzed the activity of firefly luciferase. (C) Quantitative  
480 cell-cell fusion assay. HEK293T cells expressing SARS-CoV-2 Spike variants  
481 D614G, B.1.1.7 and B.1.617 were mixed with ACE2-expressing target  
482 HEK293T cells (ratio 1: 1), and cell-cell fusion was analyzed by measuring the  
483 presence of syncytia by fluorescence microscopy. (D) Detection of Spike  
484 protein expression of D614G, B.1.1.7 and B.1.617 in HEK 293T cells by  
485 Western blot using the anti-RBD (receptor-binding domain) monoclonal  
486 antibody. To compare the S1 and S ratio, integrated density of S1/(S+S1) was  
487 quantitatively analyzed using ImageJ software.  $n = 3$ ,  $\pm$ SD.  $**P < 0.01$ .

488

### 489 **Figure 2 Neutralization efficiency of convalescent sera against D614G,** 490 **B.1.1.7 and B.1.617 pseudotyped viruses.**

491 (A) Neutralizing activity of convalescent plasma ( $n=20$ ) to D614G, B.1.1.7 and  
492 B.1.617 variants. Pseudotypes were incubated with different serum dilutions  
493 for 60 min at 37 °C , and then were added to the 293T-ACE2 cells. Upon 72

494 hours, cells were lysed with passive lysis buffer and analyzed the activity of  
495 firefly luciferase. The half-maximal neutralizing titer ( $ID_{50}$ ) was quantitatively  
496 analyzed using Graphpad 8.0.

497

498 **Figure 3 The RBD specific monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) against**  
499 **pseudoviruses**

500 (A) The half-maximal inhibitory concentrations ( $IC_{50}$ ) representative  
501 neutralization curves for tested anti-RBD (receptor-binding domain)  
502 monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) against D614G, B.1.1.7 and B.1.617  
503 pseudoviruses. Pseudotypes were incubated with different mAbs dilutions for  
504 60 min at 37 °C , and then were incubated onto 293T-ACE2 cells. Upon 72 h,  
505 cells were lysed with passive lysis buffer and analyzed the activity of firefly  
506 luciferase. (B) The  $IC_{50}$  and  $IC_{80}$  were quantitatively analyzed using Graphpad  
507 8.0.

508

509 **Figure 4 Detection of neutralizing antibodies against D614G, B.1.1.7 and**  
510 **B.1.617 pseudotyped viruses in ZF2001 vaccinee serum samples.**

511 (A-C) Neutralizing activity of ZF2001 (RBD-subunit vaccine) sera to D614G,  
512 B.1.1.7 and B.1.617. Two individuals who received three doses (A) and eight  
513 individuals who received two doses (B) of ZF2001. Pseudotypes were  
514 incubated with different serum dilutions for 60 min at 37 °C, and then were  
515 incubated onto 293T-ACE2 cells. Upon 72 h, cells were lysed with passive  
516 lysis buffer and analyzed the activity of firefly luciferase. The half-maximal  
517 neutralizing titer ( $ID_{50}$ ) was quantitatively analyzed using Graphpad 8.0. (C)  
518 The GMT of all ZF2001 vaccinee serum samples.

519

520

521

522 **Figure 5 Detection of neutralizing antibodies against D614G, B.1.1.7 and**

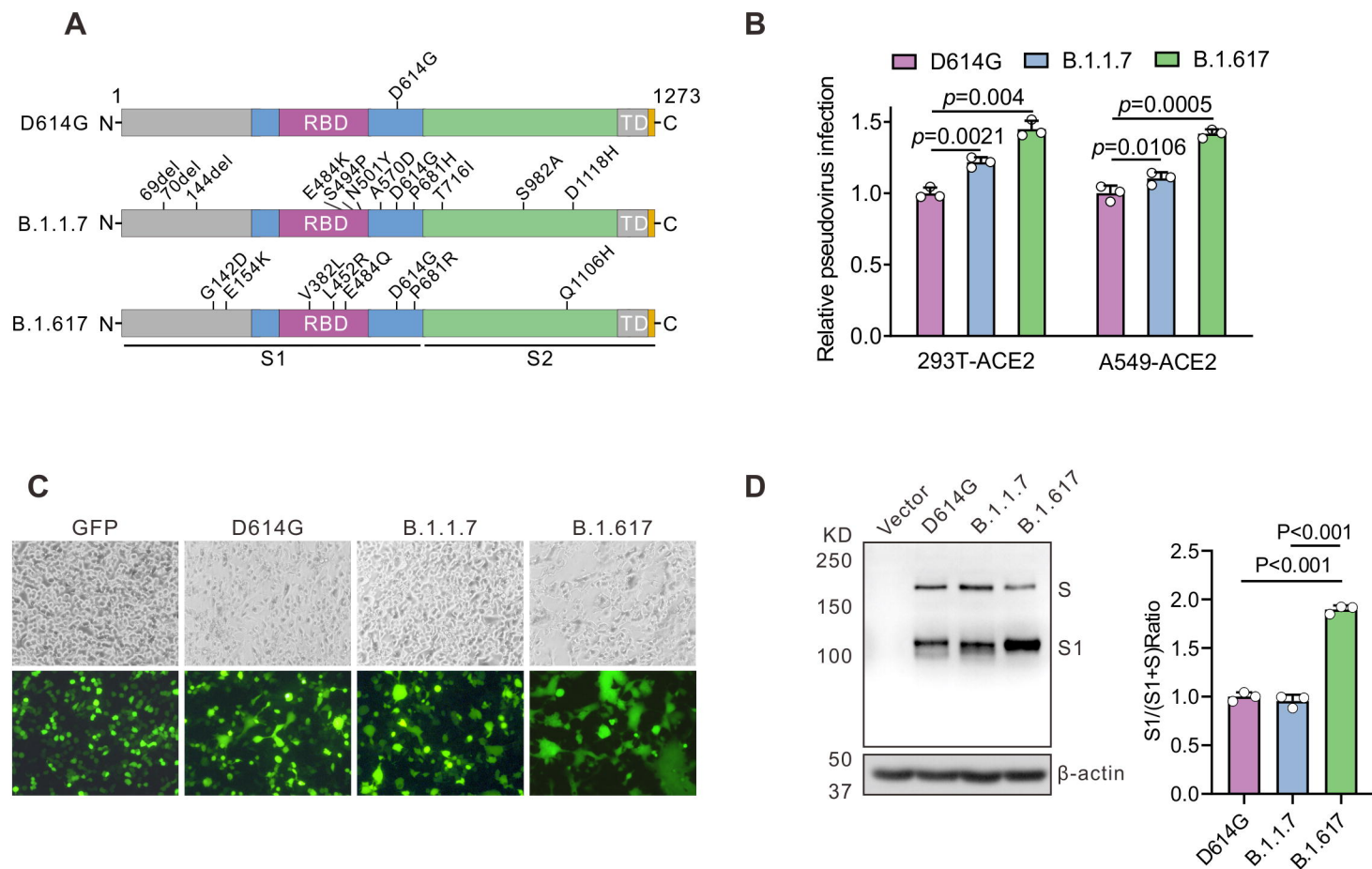
523 **B.1.617 pseudotyped viruses in CoronaVac vaccinee serum samples.**

524 (A) Neutralizing activity of CoronaVac (inactivated vaccine) sera (n=20) to  
 525 D614G, B.1.1.7 and B.1.617. Pseudotypes were incubated with different  
 526 serum dilutions for 60 min at 37 °C, and then were incubated onto 293T-ACE2  
 527 cells. Upon 72 h, cells were lysed with passive lysis buffer and analyzed the  
 528 activity of firefly luciferase. The half-maximal neutralizing titer (ID<sub>50</sub>) was  
 529 quantitatively analyzed using Graphpad 8.0. (B) The GMT of all CoronaVac  
 530 vaccinee serum samples.

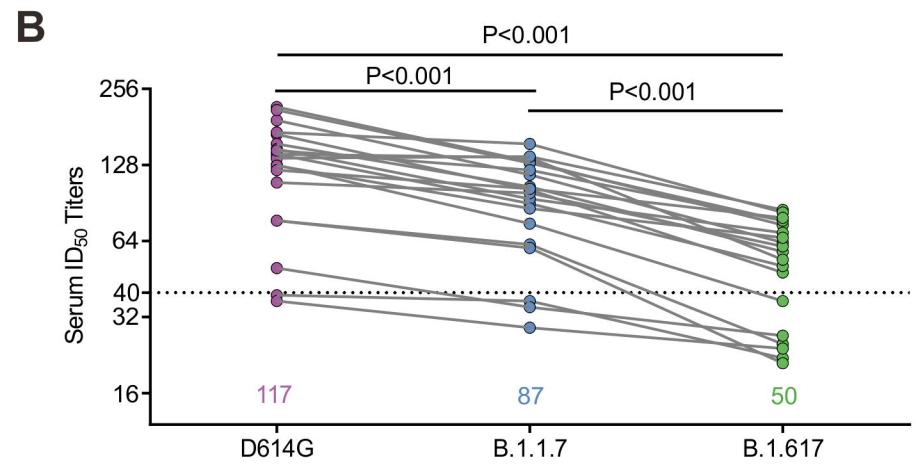
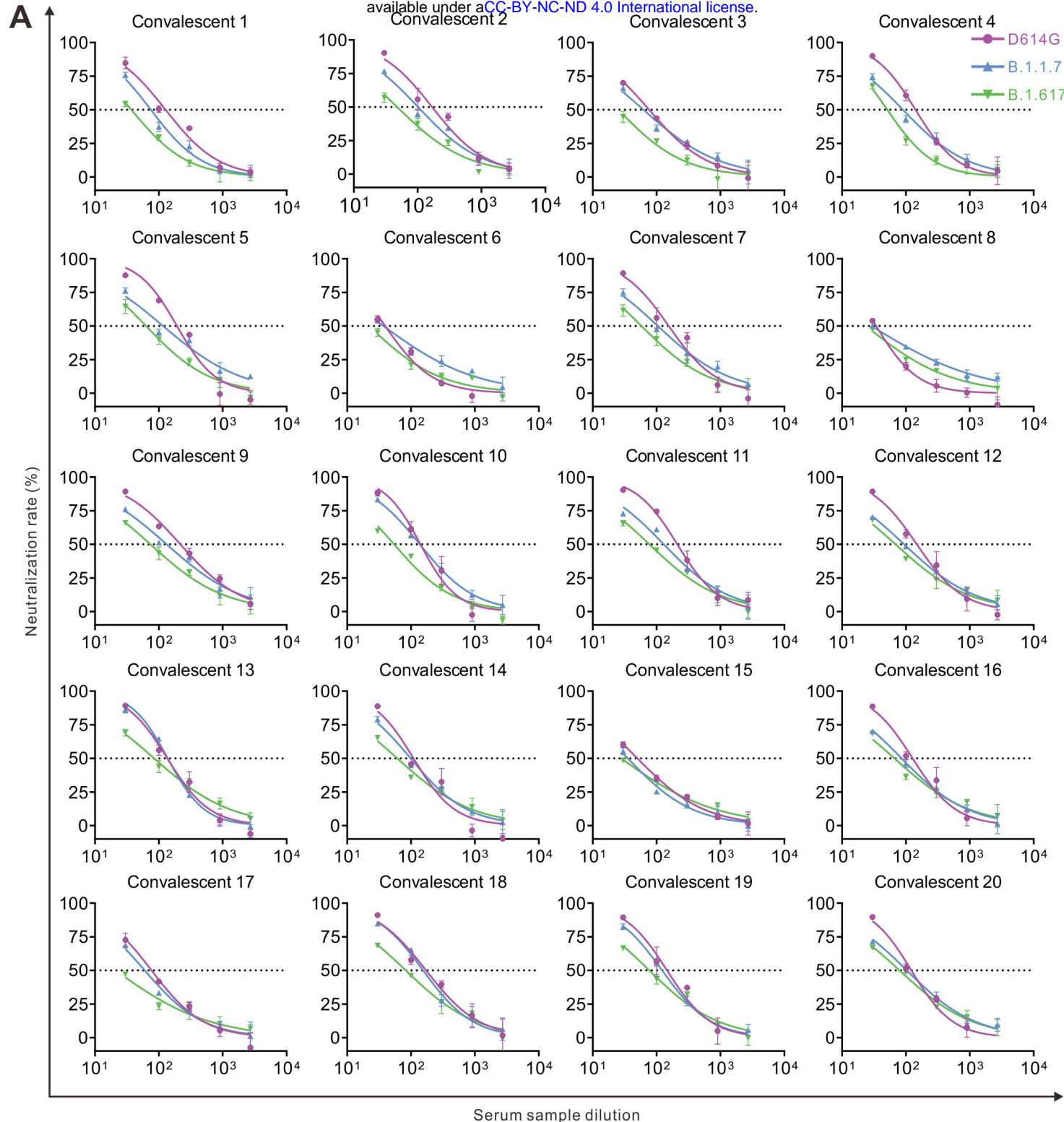
531

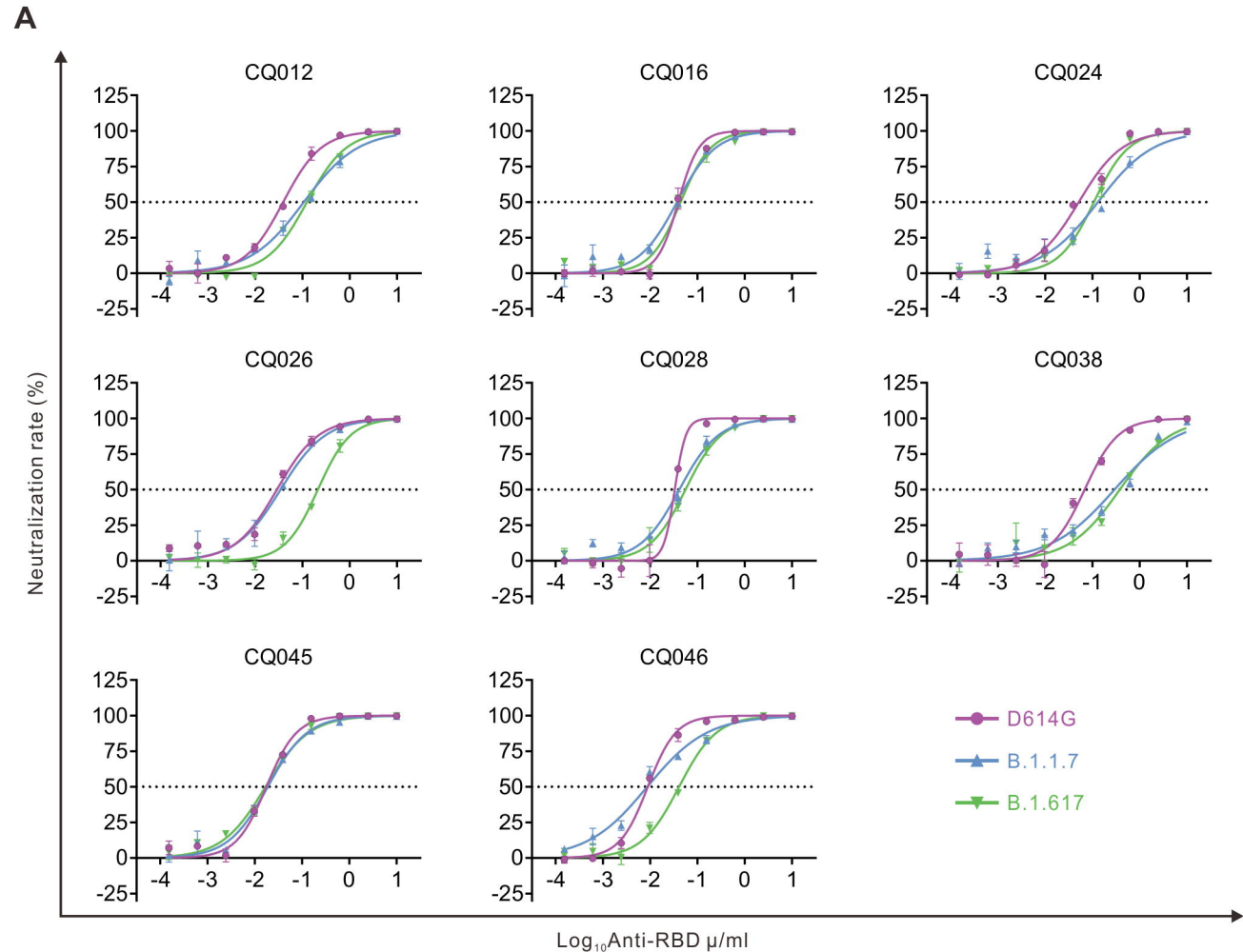
532

# Figure 1







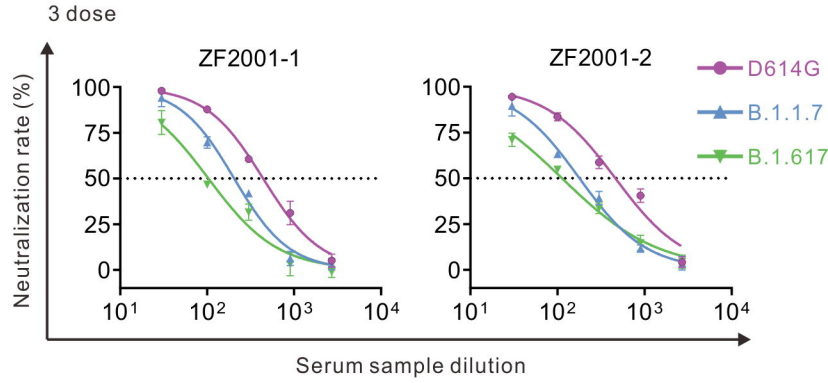


**B**

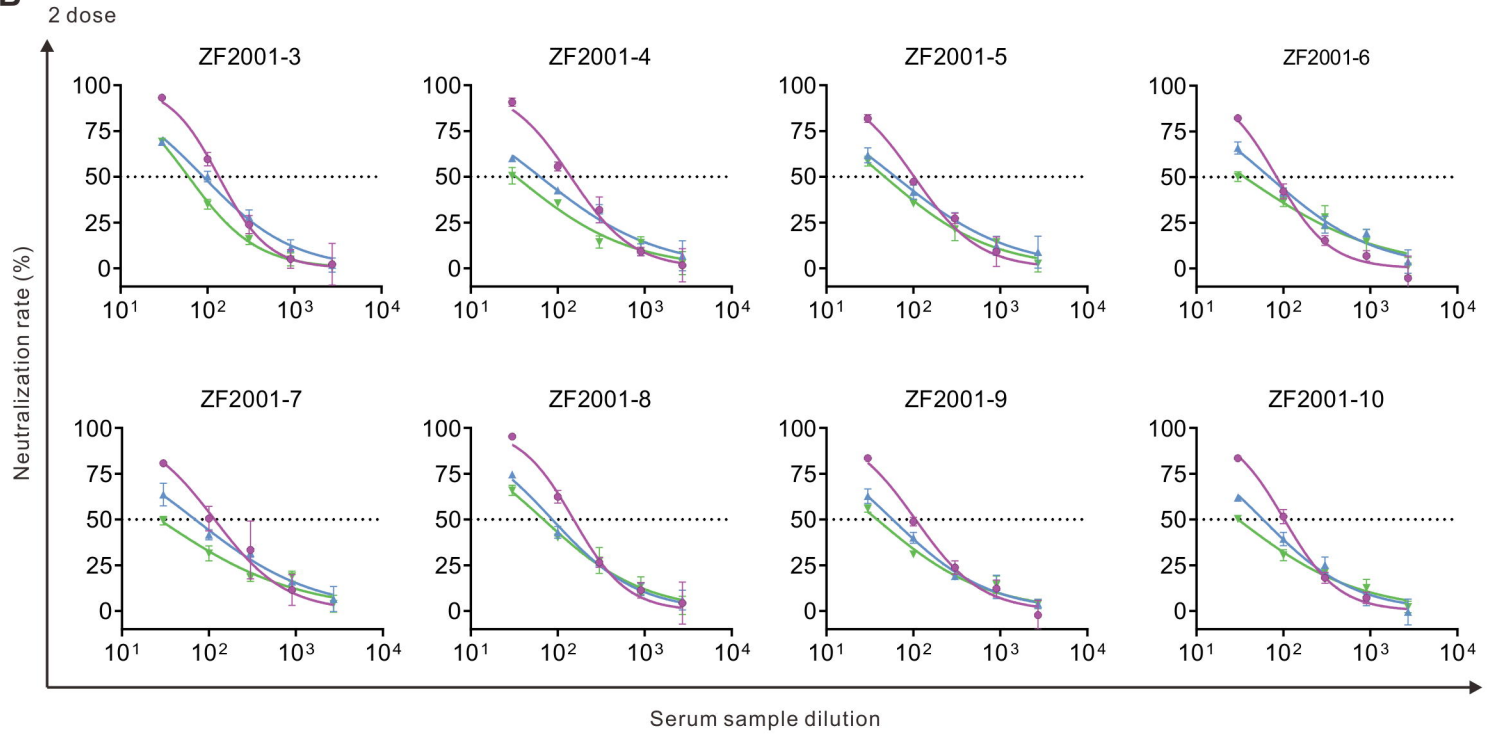
mAbs	IC50 (ng/ml)			IC80 (ng/ml)		
	D614G	B.1.1.7	B.1.617	D614G	B.1.1.7	B.1.617
CQ012	39.3	107.4	124.8	142.1	662.7	470.9
CQ016	39.4	37.1	44.2	79.2	136.5	122.8
CQ024	51.0	131.4	108	224.5	850.7	349.0
CQ026	29.0	34.6	212.7	118.0	156.6	641.9
CQ028	33.3	41.5	56.0	48.4	154.8	186.5
CQ038	68.8	294.2	380.7	213.6	2553.7	2116.5
CQ045	17.7	18.9	16.9	49.1	72.2	73.5
CQ046	8.9	8.7	41.1	23.1	65.9	145.8

## Figure 4

**A**



**B**



**C**

