

1 Reduced neutralization of SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617 variant by inactivated and

2 RBD-subunit vaccine

3 Running Title: SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617 variant exhibits neutralization resistant

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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 capacity¹. The Spike
51 glycoprotein mutation D614G became dominant in SARS-CoV-2 during the
52 early pandemic, which displayed increased infectivity and transmission².

53

54 Spike-specific antibodies elicited by natural infection or vaccination contribute
55 the majority of the neutralizing activity in human sera³. 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 membranes¹.
59 Therefore, RBD is believed to be a major target of neutralizing antibodies
60 (NAb) and has been a focus of COVID-19 vaccine design^{4,5}. Our previously
61 studies showed that mutations in SARS-CoV-2 Spike protein could affect viral
62 properties such as infectivity and neutralization resistance^{6,7}. The newly

63 emerged SARS-CoV-2 variant, B.1.617, first reported from India, which carries
64 two mutations (L452R and E484Q) in its RBD is of particular concern. The
65 AstraZeneca ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 vaccine appeared less effective than the
66 Pfizer–BioNTech (BNT162b2) mRNA vaccine in preventing infection of
67 SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617 variant⁸. Although mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccines
68 provide above 90% efficacy against original SARS-CoV-2 strain, breakthrough
69 infections with SARS-CoV-2 variants occur^{9,10}. However, the efficacy of
70 inactivated and RBD-subunit vaccines against B.1.617 variant is still unknown.

71

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

77

78 **Materials and Methods**

79 **Cell culture**

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

85 5% CO₂. 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.¹¹ All sera were tested positive using
93 magnetic chemiluminescence enzyme immunoassay (MCLIA) kits supplied by
94 BioScience Co. (Tianjin, China)¹². 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. Landau¹³ 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.¹⁴

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^{15,16}. In brief, 5×10^6 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 LTR¹⁷. 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 (1.5×10^4) grown on 96-well plates were infected with 50 μ 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^{18(p2)}.

144

145 **Cell-cell fusion assays**

146 Syncytia formation assays were carried out as previously described with some
147 modifications¹⁹. 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% CO₂, 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 (1.5×10^4 cells/well) were seeded on 96-well plates. For
172 the neutralization assay, equivalent pseudoviruses (1×10^4 copies in 50 μ 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_{50}), the half-maximal
177 inhibitory concentrations (IC_{50}) 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 \pm 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

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

203

204 The virus infectivity was determined by a Luc assay as previously described.¹⁶
205 As shown in Fig. 1B, to compare the viral entry efficiency mediated by Spike
206 variants, we detected the Luc activity, the B.1.1.7 variant showed a slight
207 increase in viral transduction over the D614G variant was 1.22-fold and
208 1.17-fold, while the B.1.617 variant over the D614G variant was 1.45-fold and
209 1.4-fold at 72 h post-infection in 293T-ACE2 and A549-ACE2 cells,
210 respectively. These data suggest that the B.1.617 variant Spike protein
211 significantly promotes viral entry into ACE2-expressing cells.

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

217 line, the codon-optimized Spike-expressing plasmids (D614G, B.1.1.7 and
218 B.1.617) were transfected into HEK 293T cells. The immunoblot analysis of
219 whole cell lysates revealed that D614G, B.1.1.7 and B.1.617 Spike proteins
220 showed two major protein bands (unprocessed S and cleaved S1 subunit),
221 when allowed to react with the monoclonal antibody targeting the RBD on the
222 SARS-CoV-2 Spike protein (Fig. 1D). However, the B.1.617-transfected cells
223 showed a stronger S1 signal than D614G-transfected cells, indicating that the
224 B.1.617 variant altered the cleavability of the Spike protein by cellular
225 proteases. Collectedly, our data suggest that Spike protein of B.1.617 variant
226 enhanced viral entry into ACE2-expressing cells and membrane fusion
227 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.¹¹ 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 ID₅₀ >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.¹⁴ 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 IC₈₀ 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, ID₅₀ 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

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

286

287 **Discussion**

288 Due to the highly pathogenic nature of SARS-CoV-2, infectious SARS-CoV-2
289 must be handled in a biosafety level 3 (BSL-3) facility. Here, using
290 luciferase-expressing lentiviral pseudotype system, we compared viral entry
291 mediated by three SARS-CoV-2 Spike variants: the original D614G variant
292 (identified during the first wave), B.1.1.7 variant (first detected in United
293 Kingdom during the second wave), and B.1.617 variant first reported in India.
294 Our data indicated that B.1.617 variant Spike promotes virus infectivity through
295 enhanced viral entry and membrane fusion, which may play an important role
296 in increased transmissibility of this variant. These findings are highly consistent
297 with previous studies²⁰. L452R mutation in the RBD was reported to increase
298 SARS-CoV-2 infectivity and fusogenicity²¹. P681R, a highly conserved
299 mutation in the B.1.617 lineages, also enhanced SARS-CoV-2 Spike-mediated
300 cell-cell fusion²². At the time of preparing this manuscript, the B.1.617.2 variant
301 has displaced B.1.1.7 variant as the dominant SARS-CoV-2 strain in UK and
302 other countries^{23,24}.

303

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

305 the enhanced ability for the virus to evade immune system. In this study, we
306 compared NAb titres of sera collected from previously SARS-CoV-2 infected
307 individuals, CoronaVac (inactivated vaccine) and ZF2001 (RBD-subunit
308 vaccine) vaccinated persons against three SARS-CoV-2 Spike variants. We
309 found that B.1.617 variant Spike showed more resistant to antibody
310 neutralization. B.1.617 reduced the neutralization of CoronaVac vaccine by 2.5
311 times, and ZF2001 vaccine by 3.1 times. Consistently, Liu et al reported that
312 B.1.617 reduced the neutralization of convalescent plasma by 3.9 times,
313 Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine by 2.7 times, and Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine by 2.6
314 times²⁵.
315 The RBD of the B.1.617 Spike contains two mutations, L452R and E484Q,
316 which were thought to confer to immune evasion. Several studies have
317 demonstrated that the E484K mutation in the RBD significantly reduced
318 susceptibility to neutralization, as seen in B.1.351 (South Africa) and P.1
319 (Brazil) variants.²⁶⁻²⁹ E484Q mutation occurring in the same position as E484K,
320 was also demonstrated to be associated with immune escape^{25,30}. Another key
321 mutation in the RBD of B.1.617 is L452R. Recent studies suggested that the
322 L452R mutation of B.1.427/B.1.429 variant Spike also contributes to its escape
323 from NAb^{31,32}.
324
325 The limitation of this study include its small sample size, only focus on
326 pseudovirus-basded 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**

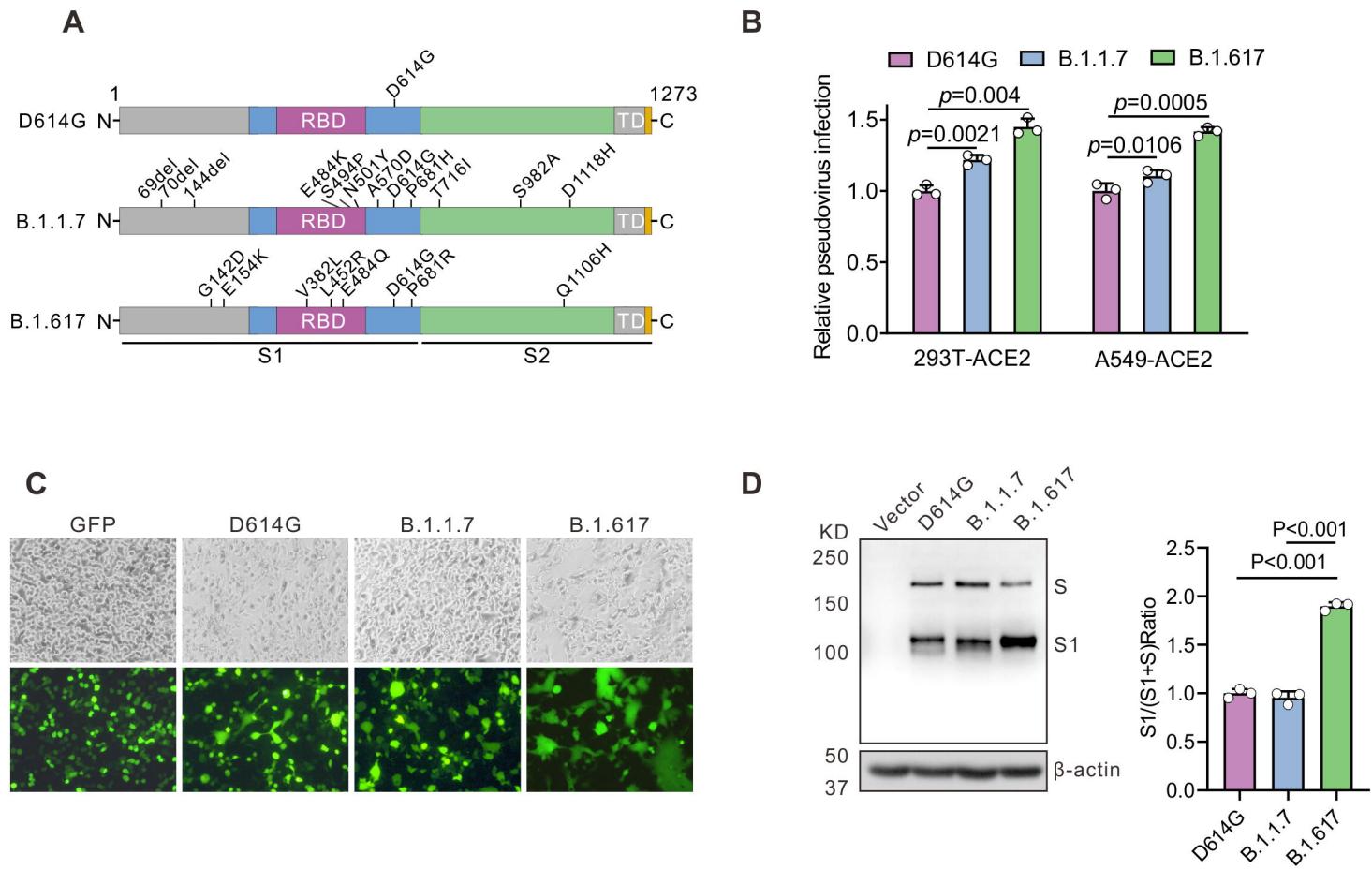
523 **B.1.617 pseudotyped viruses in CoronaVac vaccinee serum samples.**

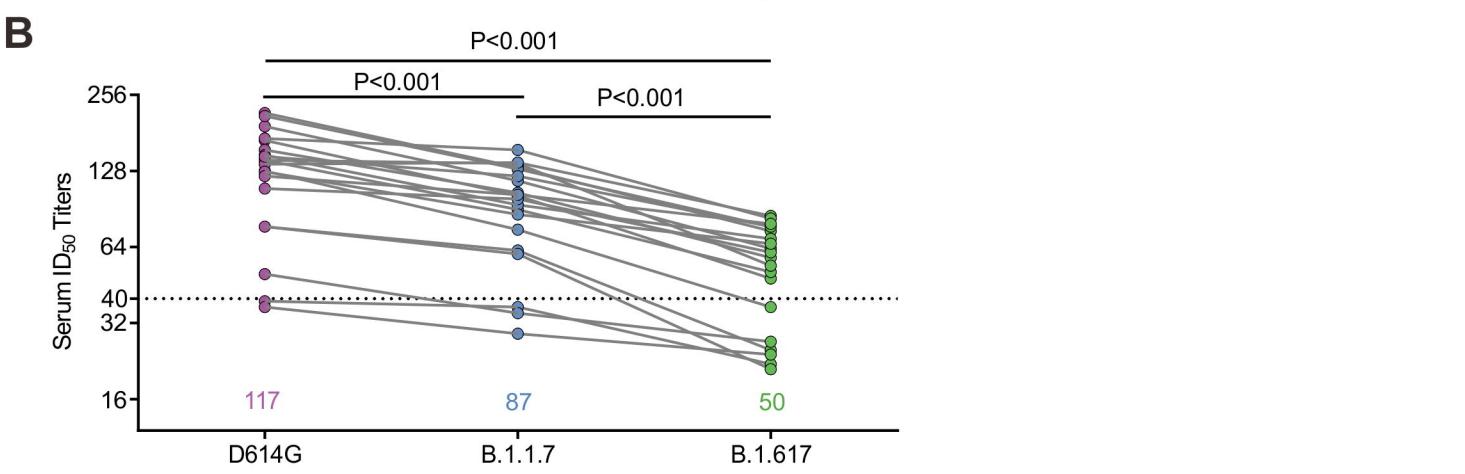
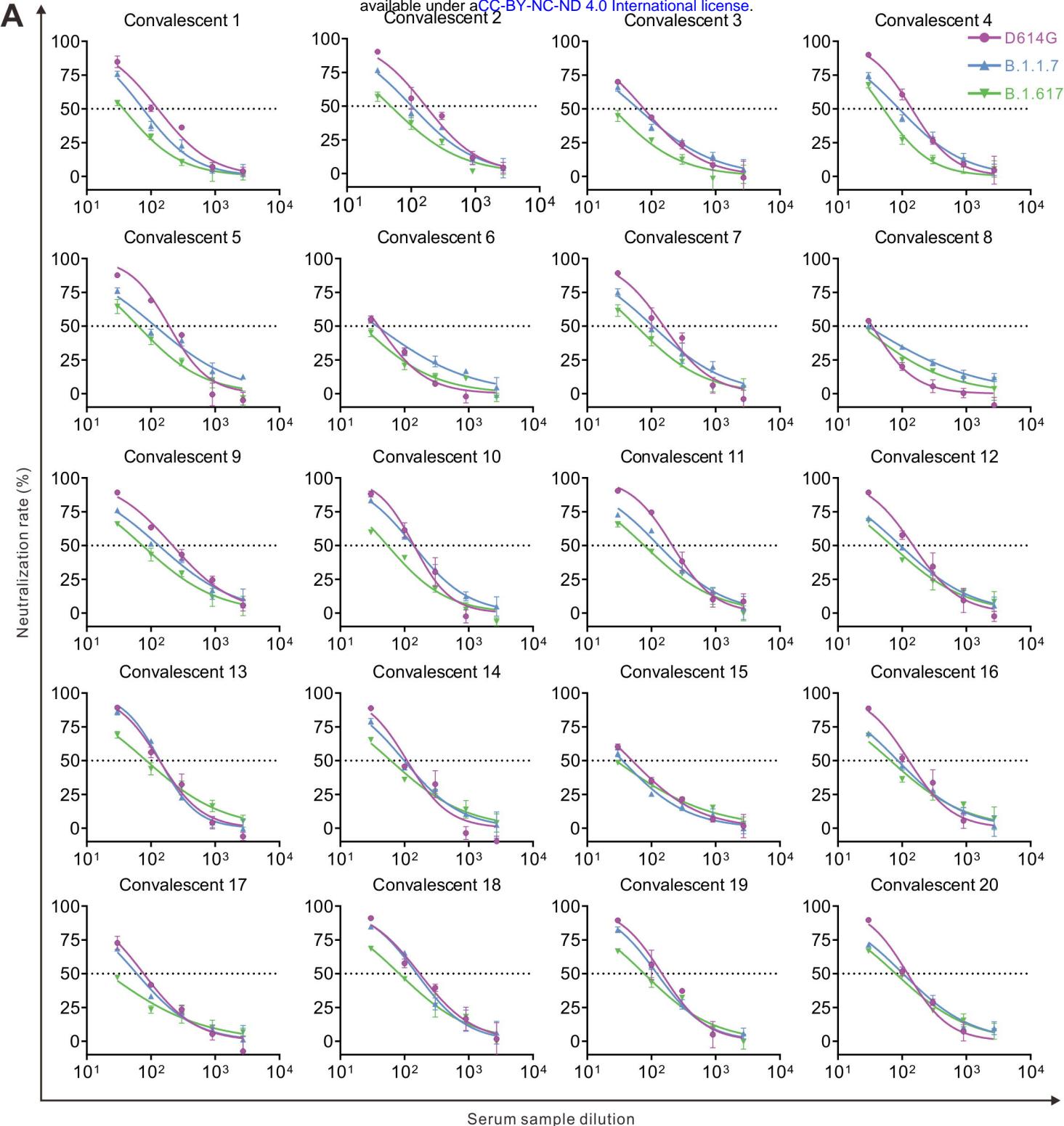
524 (A) Neutralizing activity of CoronaVac (inactivated vaccine) sera (n=20) to
525 D614G, B.1.1.7 and B.1.617. Pseudotypes were incubated with different
526 serum dilutions for 60 min at 37 °C, and then were incubated onto 293T-ACE2
527 cells. Upon 72 h, cells were lysed with passive lysis buffer and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

531

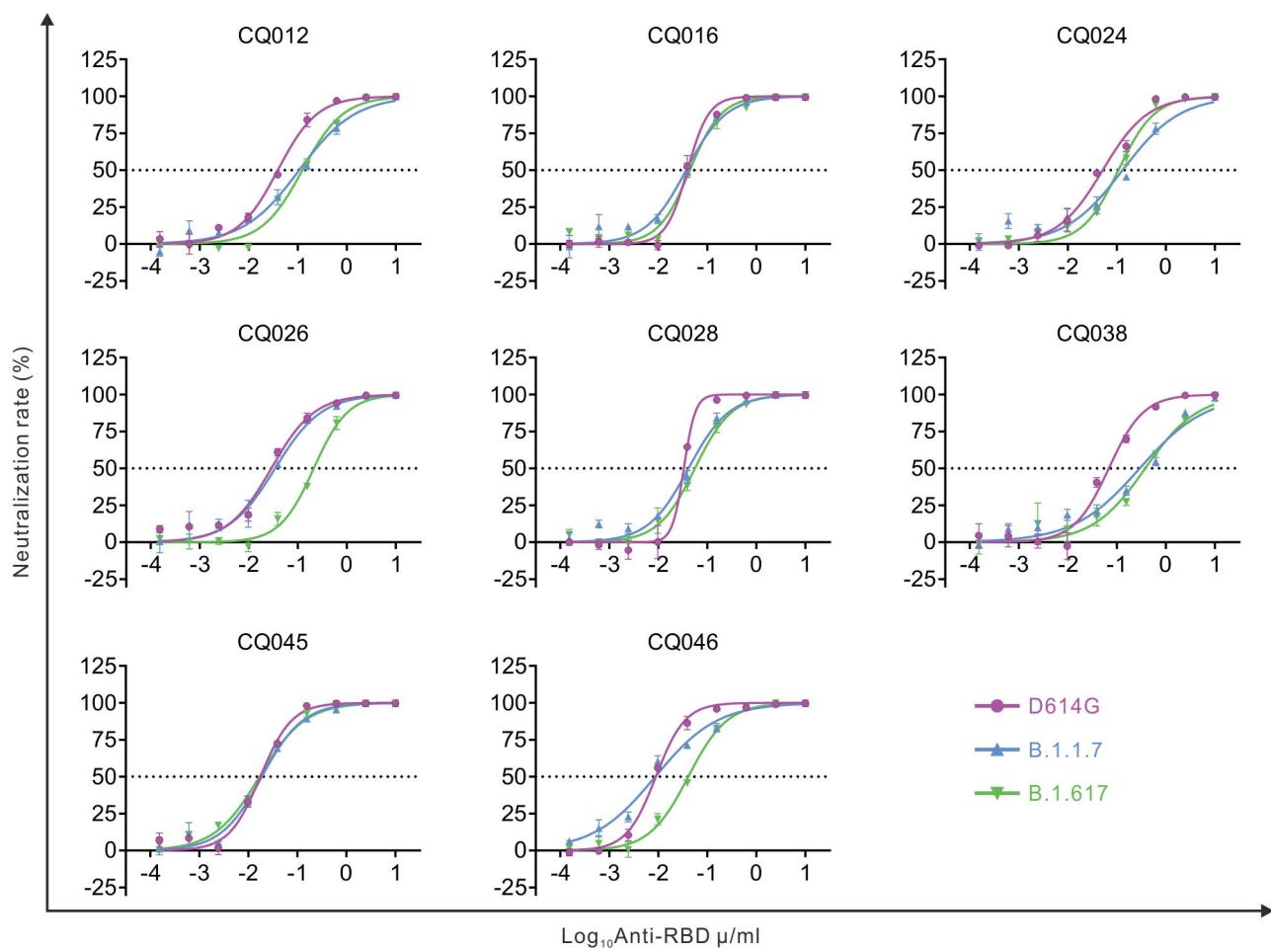
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Figure 1





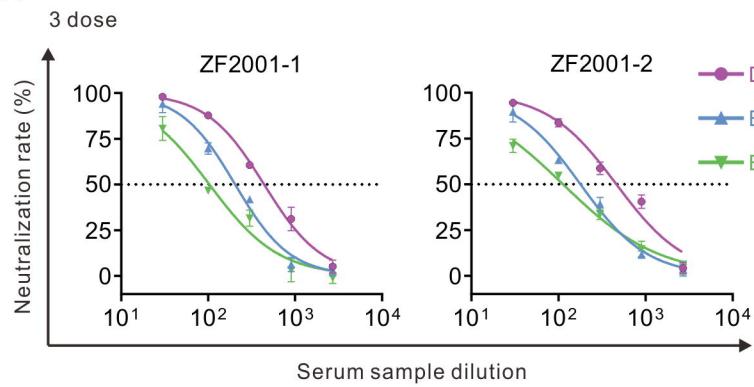
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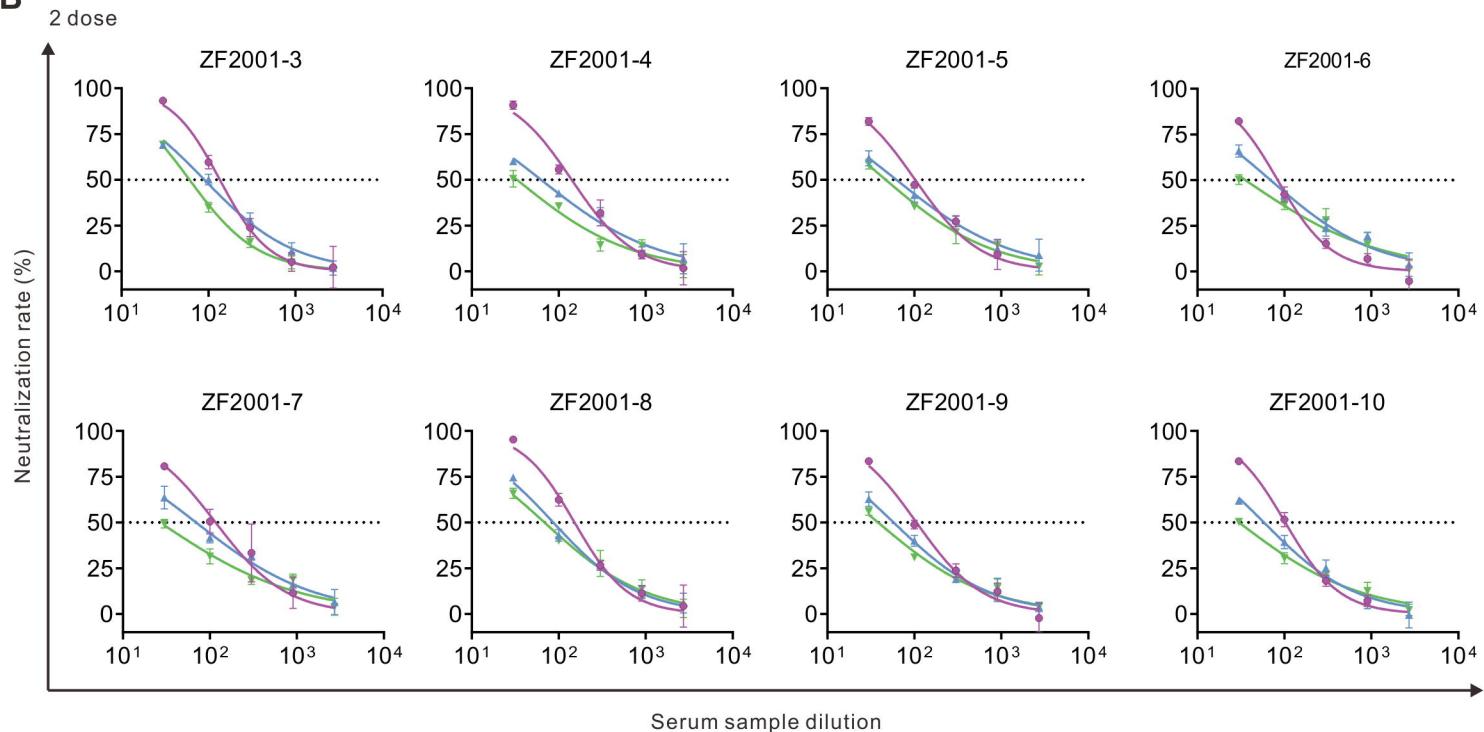
B

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

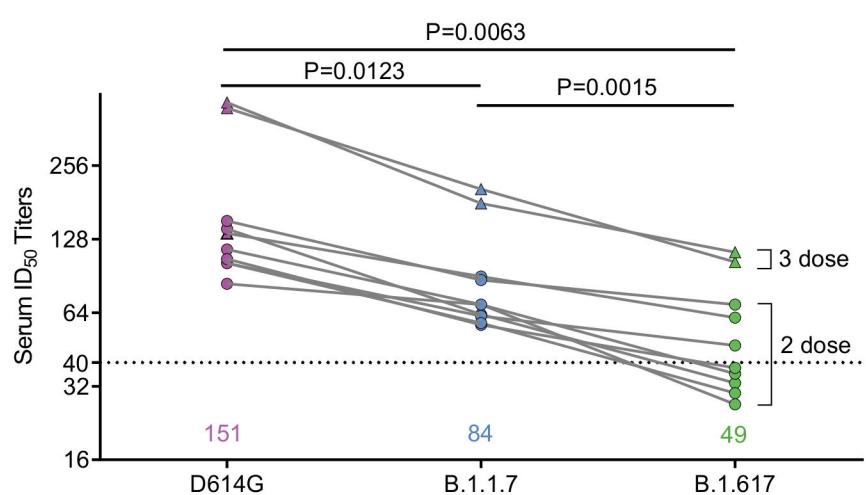
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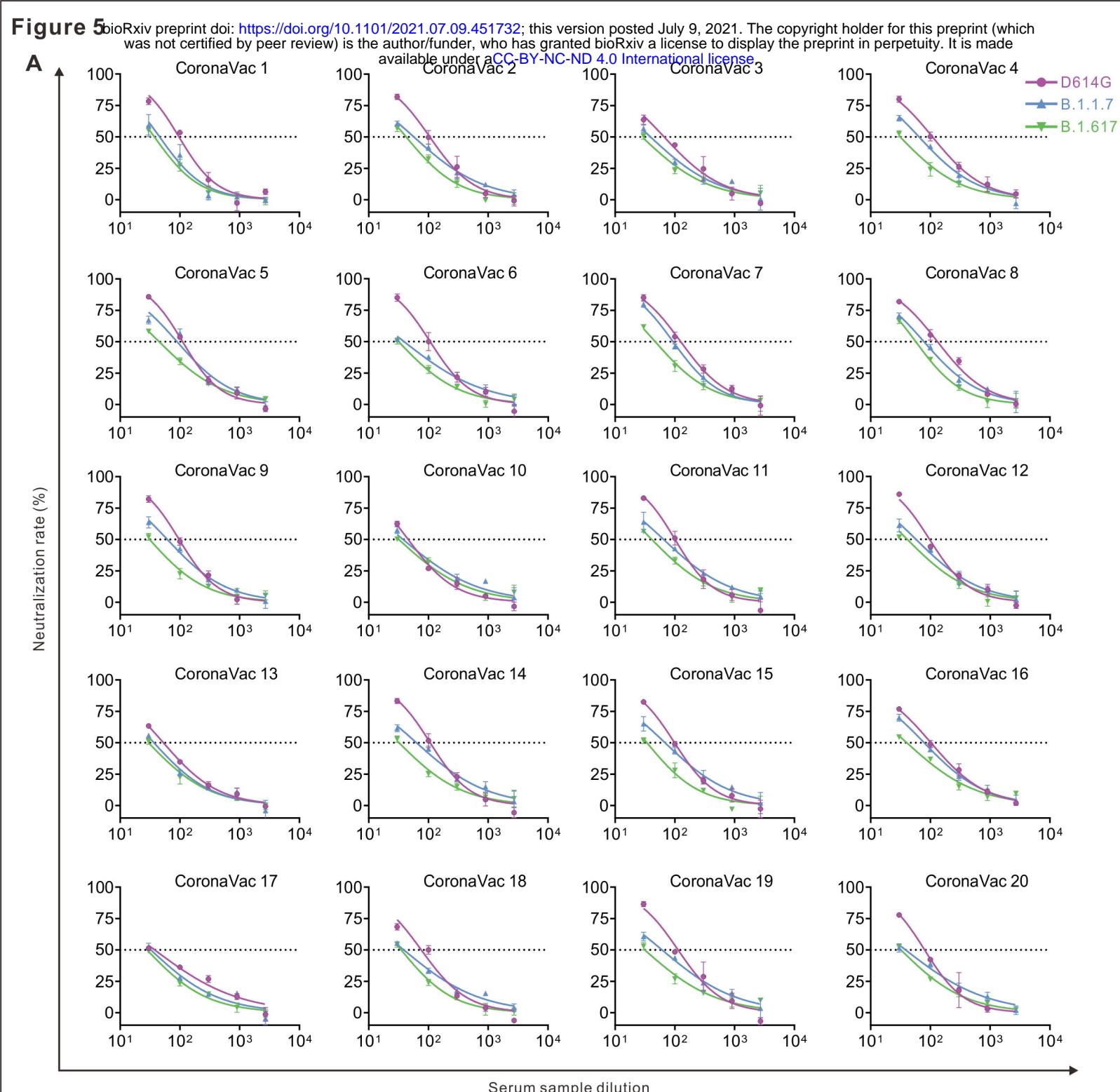


B



C





B

