

1 **A novel oral GyrB/ParE dual binding inhibitor effective against multidrug resistant**
2 ***Neisseria gonorrhoeae* and other high-threat pathogens**

3

4

5 ***Running Title:*** A novel oral GyrB/ParE dual Inhibitor

6

7

8 Steven Park¹, Riccardo Russo², Landon Westfall³, Riju Shrestha², Matthew Zimmerman¹,
9 Veronique Dartois¹, Natalia Kurepina¹, Barry Kreiswirth¹, Eric Singleton², Shao-Gang Li²,
10 Nisha Mittal², Yong-Mo Ahn², Joseph Bilotta², Kristie L. Connolly⁴, Ann E. Jerse⁴, Joel S.
11 Freundlich^{2,5} and David S. Perlin^{1*}

12

13 ¹Center for Discovery and Innovation, Hackensack Meridian Health, Nutley, New Jersey,
14 07110, USA

15 ²Division of Infectious Disease, Department of Medicine, and the Ruy V. Lourenco Center
16 for the Study of Emerging and Reemerging Pathogens, New Jersey Medical School,
17 Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Newark, NJ, USA.

18 ³Southern Research, Infectious Disease Research, 2000 Ninth Avenue South,
19 Birmingham, AL 35205

20 ⁴Department of Microbiology and Immunology, Uniformed Services University of the
21 Health Sciences, Bethesda, Maryland, USA.

22 ⁵Department of Pharmacology & Physiology, Rutgers University-New Jersey Medical
23 School, Medical Sciences Building, I-503, 185 South Orange Ave., Newark, New
24 Jersey, 07103, USA.

25

26 ***Corresponding author: DAVID S PERLIN, PhD, CENTER FOR DISCOVERY AND**
27 **INNOVATION, 111 Ideation Way, Nutley, New Jersey 07110; T: 201.880.3100 | M:**
28 **914.260.2473; Email: david.perlin@hmh-CDI.org**

29

30

31

32

33 **ABSTRACT**

34

35 Drug resistant *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* is a serious global health concern. New drugs are
36 needed that can overcome existing drug resistance, as well as limit development of new
37 resistance. We describe the small molecule tricyclic pyrimidoindole JSF-2414 [8-(6-
38 fluoro-8-(methylamino)-2-((2-methylpyrimidin-5-yl)oxy)-9H-pyrimido[4,5-b]indol-4-yl)-2-
39 oxa-8-azaspiro[4.5]decan-3-yl)methanol], which simultaneously binds to ATP binding
40 regions of DNA gyrase (GyrB) and topoisomerase (ParE). JSF-2414 displays potent
41 activity against *N. gonorrhoeae* including drug-resistant strains. A phosphate prodrug
42 JSF-2659 was developed to facilitate oral dosing. In two different animal models of
43 *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* vaginal infection, JSF-2659 was highly efficacious in reducing
44 microbial burdens to the limit of detection. The parent molecule also showed potent *in*
45 *vitro* activity against high-threat Gram positive organisms, and JSF-2659 was shown in a
46 deep tissue model of VRSA and a model of *C. difficile*-induced colitis to be highly
47 efficacious and protective. JSF-2659 is a novel drug candidate against high-threat
48 multidrug resistant organisms with low potential to develop new resistance.

49

50 **BACKGROUND**

51

52 Sexually transmitted infections due to *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* remain a significant global
53 public health concern. Complications of gonorrhea affect women and men, and in women
54 include pelvic inflammatory disease, ectopic pregnancy, and infertility, as well as
55 increased transmission and acquisition of HIV ¹. In 2012, the World Health Organization
56 (WHO) estimated that there were 78 million cases among adults worldwide
57 (<https://www.paho.org/en/topics/sexually-transmitted-infections/gonorrhea>.) In 2018, the
58 U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported a total of 583,405 cases of
59 gonorrhea with a national infection rate of 179.1 cases per 100,000 population, which
60 reflects an increase of 63% since 2014 and the highest number since 1991 ². For
61 decades, gonorrhea was treated successfully using antimicrobials. Yet, there is now a
62 high prevalence of *N. gonorrhoeae* strains that are resistant to common antimicrobial
63 classes used for treatment including sulfonamides, penicillins, cephalosporins,
64 tetracyclines, macrolides, and fluoroquinolones ³. Therapeutic failures with the extended-

65 spectrum cephalosporins, such as cefixime and ceftriaxone, have created a major health
66 crisis. In many countries, ceftriaxone is the only remaining empiric monotherapy for
67 gonorrhea ^{4,5}. Given the high burden of gonococcal disease with resistance and the rapid
68 emergence of resistant strains to monotherapy, antimicrobial therapy involving high dose
69 ceftriaxone is recommended ⁶. Although, as anticipated, resistance to this regimen has
70 also occurred ⁷. It is recognized that *N. gonorrhoeae* has evolved as a multidrug resistant
71 superbug representing a major global public health concern ^{7,8}. The WHO has proposed
72 a 90% reduction in gonorrhea globally ⁹, although achieving this goal will require
73 overcoming the issue of antimicrobial resistance.

74

75 In recent years, new gonorrhea treatment regimens and drug candidates have been
76 introduced to overcome and prevent resistance ⁴. The most promising class of new drug
77 candidates interfere with DNA biosynthesis by inhibiting bacterial DNA gyrase (GyrB) and
78 topoisomerase IV (ParE) via a unique mechanism ⁴. DNA gyrase and topoisomerase IV
79 are closely related DNA topoisomerase type II enzymes that are essential for DNA
80 synthesis. These enzymes function in tandem to catalyze topological changes in DNA
81 during replication through supercoil unwinding and subsequent introduction of transient
82 double-stranded DNA breaks and religation, and serve as the target for fluoroquinolone
83 therapeutics ¹⁰. This dual targeting paradigm confers high susceptibility of new drug
84 candidates against both fluoroquinolone-susceptible and resistant isolates, and further
85 carries a very low probability for development of new resistance.

86

87 Zolifludacin, a first-in class spiropyrimidinetrione ^{11,12}, and Gepotidacin, a
88 triazaacenaphthylene inhibitor ¹³ leverage this dual-targeting approach and are novel,
89 clinical-stage drug candidates that are completing phase 2 trials for the treatment of
90 uncomplicated gonorrhea. These compounds inhibit bacterial DNA gyrase and
91 topoisomerase IV by a novel mode of action that involves a binding site close to, but
92 distinct from that of quinolones. Given their mechanism of action, these agents are
93 broadly active against Gram-negative and Gram-positive bacteria including other
94 biothreat agents such as *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Haemophilus influenzae*,
95 *Clostridium perfringens*, and various *Shigella* species ¹²⁻¹⁵.

96 The tricyclic pyrimidoindoles are a new class of highly potent molecules that inhibit both
97 GyrB and ParE (TriBE inhibitors) by binding at the highly conserved ATP-binding domain
98 ¹⁶. As the ATP-binding region is separate and apart from the fluoroquinolone binding
99 domain, it would not be subject to common resistance-associated target site mutations.
100 The TriBE inhibitors demonstrate potent broad-spectrum Gram-negative and Gram-
101 positive *in vitro* activity including against drug-resistant strains ¹⁶.

102
103 In this report, we describe the potent *in vitro* and *in vivo* properties of the tricyclic
104 pyrimidoindole JSF-2414 and its oral pro-drug conjugate JSF-2659 against drug-sensitive
105 and drug-resistant strains of *N. gonorrhoeae*, and drug-resistant Gram-positive
106 pathogens including Methicillin and Vancomycin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*
107 (MRSA & VRSA) and *Clostridioides difficile*.

108
109 **RESULTS**

110
111 **Chemical and pharmacological properties of JSF-2414 and JSF-2659.** The small
112 molecule compound 8-(6-fluoro-8-(methylamino)-2-((2-methylpyrimidin-5-yl)oxy)-9H-
113 pyrimido[4,5-b]indol-4-yl)-2-oxa-8-azaspiro[4.5]decan-3-yl)methanol (JSF-2414) (**Fig. 1**)
114 was selected from a series of tricyclic pyrimidoindoles with potent activity (MIC <0.05
115 µg/ml) against the fastidious Gram-negative organism *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* and the
116 Gram-positive organism *Staphylococcus aureus*. JSF-2414 has a molecular weight of
117 493.54 g/mol. Its solubility, metabolic stability, and *in vitro* intrinsic clearance (CL_{int}) in
118 mouse and human liver microsomes are summarized in **Fig. 1**. The *in vitro* metabolic
119 stability of the compound in the presence of mouse or human liver microsomes was in an
120 acceptable dosing range (i.e., t_{1/2} ≥ 60 min [PMID: 29311070]). The relatively low kinetic
121 solubility of JSF-2414 (0.576 µM) was addressed by synthesizing a phosphate prodrug
122 candidate JSF-2659 (**Fig. 1** and synthetic scheme in Supplement), which increased the
123 solubility of the parent drug candidate 764-fold to 440 µM. The PK of JSF-2659
124 administered orally at 25 mg/kg showed a T_{1/2} = 2.03 ± 0.25 h and a C_{max} ~ 3500 ng/mL,
125 while administration of JSF-2659 intramuscularly (IM) increased the T_{1/2} to 12.5 ± 0.25 h
126 while the C_{max} decreased slightly to ~2400 ng/mL.

127

128 **Antimicrobial activity against *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* and other high-threat drug-
129 resistant pathogens.** The antimicrobial properties of JSF-2414 (parent drug candidate)
130 were evaluated by the Southern Research Institute against a collection of 96 *N.*
131 *gonorrhoeae* clinical isolates including drug-resistant strains provided by the Centers for
132 Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) under contract with the National Institutes of
133 Health (See Methods.) An agar dilution method was used according to guidelines
134 established by the Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute, along with six control
135 antibacterial agents (azithromycin, cefixime, ceftriaxone, ciprofloxacin, penicillin, and
136 tetracycline) which served as reference controls. JSF-2414 was highly activity against all
137 drug-susceptible and drug-resistant strains with an $\text{MIC}_{90} = 0.006 \mu\text{g/ml}$ (range: 0.0005 –
138 0.003 $\mu\text{g/ml}$.) Individual MIC values for each strain are listed in **Supplement Table 1**.

139
140 *In vitro* susceptibility testing was further performed against a highly diverse panel of
141 Gram-positive and negative bacterial species. JSF-2414 showed prominent growth
142 inhibition against 51 clinical MRSA strains with a modal MIC = 0.031 $\mu\text{g/ml}$ (range 0.002
143 – 0.125 $\mu\text{g/ml}$). As JSF-2414 binds apart from the region of gyrase that confers resistance
144 to fluoroquinolones, all ciprofloxacin-resistant strains with an MIC >4 $\mu\text{g/ml}$ were fully
145 sensitive (MIC = 0.043 $\mu\text{g/ml}$; range: 0.002 – 0.125 $\mu\text{g/ml}$; n=30). JSF-2414 also showed
146 potent activity against VISA (MIC range 0.0156 – 0.156; n=8) and VRSA (MIC range
147 0.0156 – 0.063; n=7) strains (**Table 1**.)

148
149 JSF-2414 was also highly active against *Staphylococcus epidermidis* (MIC range 0.002
150 – 0.004 $\mu\text{g/ml}$; n=4), *Enterococcus faecium* (MIC range 0.004 – 0.008; n=3), vancomycin-
151 resistant enterococci (VRE) (MIC range 0.002 – >0.5 $\mu\text{g/ml}$; n=8), and *E. faecalis* (MIC
152 range 0.002 – 0.008; n=3), *B. anthracis* (MIC range 0.049 – 0.098 $\mu\text{g/ml}$; n=2). JSF-2414
153 was assessed for activity against a toxigenic *C. difficile* panel that included the common
154 ribotypes 001, 002, 012, 014, 020, 038, 078, and 087 as well as the highly virulent ribotype
155 027. All *C. difficile* strains tested were highly susceptible to JSF-2414 with a MIC <0.125
156 $\mu\text{g/ml}$. In general, there was weak activity (MIC >0.5 $\mu\text{g/ml}$) against Gram negative
157 pathogens *Escherichia coli*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, and
158 *Acinetobacter baumannii* and select agents *F. tularensis* and *Y. pestis* (data not shown.)

160 In studies of *N. gonorrhoeae* and *S. aureus*, spontaneous resistance was not observed
161 suggesting resistance frequencies below 5×10^{-9} .

162

163 **Efficacy of JSF-2659 in *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* vaginal colonization models.** JSF-
164 2659 is rapidly and completely (>99%) converted by host phosphatases to its highly active
165 form JSF-2414 following oral administration in mice (data not shown). The *in vivo* efficacy
166 of JSF-2659 was initially assessed in a well-characterized estradiol-treated mouse model
167 of cervico-vaginal infection at the Uniformed Services University (USU)¹⁷ against multi-
168 drug-resistant strain H041¹⁸, which carries resistance to extended-spectrum
169 cephalosporins, tetracycline, macrolides, and several fluoroquinolones including
170 ciprofloxacin,¹⁷. The detailed experimental design of the model is show in **Supplement**
171 **Fig. 1.** JSF-2659 administered at doses of 75 mg/kg TID (q6h), 250 mg/kg QD (once
172 daily) or 250 mg/kg TID (q6h) showed a significant reduction in the percentage of mice
173 infected colonized with strain H041 over 8 culture days after treatment (**Fig. 2 A,B**), as
174 well as a reduction in tissue burden (CFU/ml recovered.) (**Fig. 2C**). The three dosing
175 regimens showed a comparable reduction in the percentage of infected mice relative to
176 the Gentamicin (GEN) positive control group. However, the average CFU/mL recovered
177 was significantly reduced compared to the vehicle control only after 250 mg/kg TID
178 treatment (**Fig. 2 B**). After Day 5 post-treatment, a significant reduction in bacterial burden
179 was observed between all treatment groups and the vehicle control (**Fig 2 C**). All JSF-
180 2659 treatment groups had a comparable or greater reduction in bacterial burden relative
181 to the untreated control or the GEN-treated control. It was observed that microbial
182 burdens in some animals rebounded following treatment (**Fig. 2B**). However, in follow-up
183 studies, there was no indication of resistance development or change in susceptibility (not
184 shown).

185

186 The promising efficacy of JSF-2659 was independently assessed via PO and
187 intramuscular administration (IM) in a different *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* vaginal
188 colonization model using the antibiotic-susceptible strain ATCC 700825. In this model,
189 ovariectomized female BALB/c mice were used and mice were given subcutaneous (SC)
190 injections of 17 β -estradiol. The influence of vaginal bacteria was minimized by treating
191 animals BID 2 days prior to infection with streptomycin and vancomycin, along with

192 trimethoprim sulfate at 0.4 mg/mL (see Methods). PO dosing and an alternative treatment
193 route IM were tested with JSF-2659 at 75 and 250 mg/kg QD at 2 h after vaginal
194 inoculation with bacteria. A single dose IM route was evaluated because of the long PK
195 ($T_{1/2} = 12.5$ h) observed for JSF-2659 following IM administration. At 26 h post infection
196 and 2 h post-therapy, a significant dose-dependent reduction in the bacterial counts was
197 observed resulting in a $3.51 \log_{10}$ killing effect to the limit of detection (LOD) following PO
198 administrations of JSF-2659 at 75 and 250 mg/kg TID and JSF-2659 at 250 mg/kg QD,
199 as well as 3.51 and $3.39 \log_{10}$ killing effect following the IM administrations of JSF-2659
200 at 75 and 250 mg/kg QD, respectively, relative to control ($p < 0.05$). A $1 \log_{10}$ killing effect
201 was observed with the PO administration of JSF-2659 at 75 mg/kg QD relative to the
202 baseline group ($p < 0.05$). A $3.17 \log_{10}$ killing effect was observed with the PO
203 administration of reference ciprofloxacin (CIP) at 12.5 mg/kg QD relative to the baseline
204 group ($p < 0.05$). No significant reduction in the bacterial counts was observed with the
205 IP administration of GEN at 48 mg/kg QD relative to the vehicle control group or the
206 baseline group at 26 h (**Fig. 3 A,B**). Similar reductions in bacterial burdens were observed
207 at 72 h (**Fig. 3 C,D**) and 170 h (**Fig. 3 E,F**) following initiation of treatment. In summary,
208 $>3 \log_{10}$ killing effects relative to the baseline group were observed in animals sacrificed
209 at 26, 76 and 170 h after infection with (1) PO administrations of JSF-2659 at 75 and 250
210 mg/kg TID; (2) PO administrations of JSF-2659 at 250 mg/kg QD; (3) IM administrations
211 of JSF-2659 at 75 and 250 mg/kg QD; and (4) PO administration of reference CIP at 12.5
212 mg/kg QD.

213

214 **Efficacy of JSF-2659 against VRSA in a deep soft tissue infection model.** JSF-2414
215 displayed potent *in vitro* activity against strains of MRSA, VRSA and VISA (**Table 1**). The
216 oral efficacy of JSF-2659 against Vancomycin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (VRSA)
217 was assessed in a neutropenic murine thigh infection model. Female ICR mice were
218 rendered neutropenic with cyclophosphamide treatment and then inoculated
219 intramuscularly with VRSA (VRS-2) at 1.03×10^5 CFU/mouse. JSF-2659 at 100 and 250
220 mg/kg was administered orally (PO) with two dosing schedules, including QD at 2 h after
221 infection, and TID with a 6 h interval at 2, 8, and 14 h after infection. Linezolid and
222 vancomycin served as reference standards. JSF-2659 PO administrations at 250 mg/kg
223 QD and 100 and 250 mg/kg, resulted in significant bacterial count reductions 0.95 and

224 4.42 log₁₀, respectively, relative to the vehicle control group (**Fig. 4**). When administered
225 PO TID at 100 and 250 mg/kg, JSF-2659 yielded further bacterial burden reductions of
226 4.84 and 6.26 log₁₀, respectively (**Fig. 4B**). The PO and SC administrations of respective
227 reference agents, linezolid at 50 mg/kg BID and vancomycin at 100 mg/kg TID, yielded a
228 reduction in bacterial counts of 3.41 and 2.09 log₁₀, respectively.

229

230 **Efficacy of JSF-2659 against *C. difficile* in a colitis model.** The protective efficacy of
231 JSF-2659 in a hamster *C. difficile* colitis model was evaluated. The study was performed
232 with a lethal dose (LD90-100) of strain *C. difficile* BAA-1805 (ribotype 027/NAP1/BI.) Test
233 animals were pretreated with a single subcutaneous (SC) administration of clindamycin
234 at 10 mg/kg on Day -1 to render the animals vulnerable to *C. difficile* infection. On Day 0,
235 animals were inoculated orally with *C. difficile* BAA-1805 at 5.8 x 10⁵ spores/animal. JSF-
236 2659 at 20, 100, and 250 mg/kg, and reference agent, vancomycin at 20 mg/kg, were
237 administered PO twice daily (BID) with an 8 h interval starting at 16 h after infection for
238 five consecutive days. Animal mortality and body weight changes were monitored for 14
239 days. Infection with *C. difficile* resulted in 100% mortality during the 14-day observation
240 period (**Fig. 5A**). All test animals survived the complete study period after treatment with
241 JSF-2659 at 20, 100, and 250 mg/kg PO BID for five days (100% survival for all groups,
242 $p < 0.05$) (**Fig. 5A**). The PO administration of vancomycin at 20 mg/kg resulted in 100%
243 survival over the treatment period ($p < 0.05$). A loss of significant body weight for test
244 animals relative to positive control was not observed during the 14-day observation period
245 and was consistent with compound efficacy (**Fig. 5B**).

246

247 DISCUSSION

248

249 Despite the high worldwide burden of gonorrhea infections, the number of effective
250 treatment options for gonorrhea infections is limited and further diminished by the
251 emergence of multidrug resistance. This has prompted the WHO to place *N.*
252 *gonorrhoeae* on a global priority list of antibiotic-resistant pathogens for which there is an
253 urgent need to develop novel antimicrobial therapeutics¹⁹. In this report, we describe the
254 potent *in vitro* and *in vivo* antimicrobial properties of JSF-2414, a novel tricyclic
255 pyrimidoindole that binds to the ATP binding domains of both DNA gyrase (GyrE) and

256 topoisomerase IV (ParE). This tricyclic pyrimidoindole (**Fig. 1**) emerged from a study to
257 identify a low molecular weight fragment scaffold with suitable hydrogen-bond
258 donor/acceptor moieties that could engage the ATP adenine-binding aspartate and
259 structural water in the active site pocket of *Enterococcus faecalis* GyrB¹⁶. As gyrase and
260 topoisomerase are well-established pharmacologic targets, targeting the ATP binding site
261 is important because it is separate from the drug binding site of fluoroquinolones and
262 resistance mediated mutations within the site^{20,21}. It is not surprising that JSF-2414 was
263 highly active, MIC range: 0.0005 – 0.003 µg/ml against a CDC panel (n=100) of clinical
264 isolates of *N. gonorrhoeae* displaying a wide variety of drug resistance including
265 fluoroquinolone resistance (Supplement, Table 1). This potent level of activity likely
266 reflects the nature of its target and binding properties, which were originally optimized
267 from structure-based studies¹⁶.

268
269 The development of drugs targeting the ATP-binding domain is not new, as discovery
270 programs for decades have focused on inhibitors (e.g., benzothiazole,
271 tetrahydrobenzothiazole, etc.) that target the ATP-binding/hydrolysis sites on GyrB and
272 ParE²²⁻²⁷. Indeed, in the 1950s, the natural product novobiocin was reported as potently
273 bactericidal to Gram-positive bacteria via inhibition of the ATP-binding domain of GyrB. It
274 was licensed for clinical use under the tradename Albamycin (Pharmacia and Upjohn) in
275 the 1960s but was withdrawn due to poor efficacy. Furthermore, its weak binding to ParE
276 resulted in enhanced development of resistance. Newer efforts have also not been
277 successful in generating an inhibitor series with broad spectrum antibacterial activity or
278 advancing a molecule into the clinic. Most recently, the tetrahydroquinazoline and 4,5,6,7-
279 tetrahydrobenzo[1,2-d] thiazole scaffolds were originally identified as low micromolar
280 inhibitors of the DNA gyrase ATP-binding domain²⁵. But the compounds showed modest
281 antibacterial activity, appeared to be substrates for efflux transporters and poorly
282 penetrated the cell wall²⁵. In contrast to these efforts, JSF-2414, the tricyclic
283 pyrimidoindole in this study, was highly active against a broad range of clinical isolates
284 displaying a variety of resistance mechanisms (**Supplement Table 1**).

285
286 Potent but more modest MICs have also been reported for later stage clinical candidates
287 that target more classical regions of gyrase. The spiropyrimidinetrione zoliflodacin, based

288 on mapping of resistance associated mutations in GyrB, is presumed to bind to the same
289 pocket in gyrase as fluoroquinolones ¹². However, it inhibits gyrase through a separate
290 mechanism ²⁸, which enables it to be effective against most fluoroquinolone resistant
291 strains ¹². In a multi-laboratory quality study of zoliflodacin against standardized ATCC
292 strains by eight independent laboratories using CLSI document M23, the agar dilution
293 MIC QC range for zoliflodacin against the *N. gonorrhoeae* QC strain ATCC 49226 was
294 defined as 0.06 – 0.5 µg/ml ²⁹. In a separate study, zoliflodacin showed potent
295 antibacterial activity against multi-drug-resistant strains of *N. gonorrhoeae* with MICs
296 ranging from ≤0.002 – 0.25 µg/mL ¹². The triazaacenaphthylene inhibitor Gepotidacin has
297 been shown to form an antibacterial complex with *S. aureus* DNA gyrase and DNA,
298 demonstrating a novel mechanism of inhibition that overcomes fluoroquinolone
299 resistance. The inhibitor was demonstrated to bind close to the active site for
300 fluoroquinolone binding where it appears to span DNA and a transient non-catalytic
301 pocket on the GyrA dimer ³⁰. A multi-laboratory quality assurance study demonstrated a
302 modal MIC of 0.5 µg/ml ³¹.

303
304 A hallmark of DNA gyrase inhibitors is their broad-spectrum activity especially against
305 Gram-positive organisms. JSF-2414 showed potent cross-activity against MRSA with an
306 MIC = 0.031 mg/ml (range 0.002 – 0.125 µg/ml) including VISA and VRSA strains (Table
307 1) with comparable activity against 30 clinical isolates with fluoroquinolone resistance
308 MIC>4 µg/ml. It showed comparable high activity (low MICs) against *S. epidermidis*, *E.*
309 *faecium*, VRE, *E. faecalis*, *B. anthracis*, MDR-TB, and *C. difficile*. Gepotidacin showed *in*
310 *vitro* activity with an MIC₉₀ of 0.5 µg/ml and equivalent activity against *S. pneumoniae* ¹³.
311 Similarly, zoliflodacin in studies involving thousands of clinical isolates showed MIC
312 values of 0.12 - 0.5 µg/ml for *S. aureus* ATCC 29213, 0.25 - 2 µg/ml for *E. faecalis* ATCC
313 29212, 0.12 – 0.5 µg/ml for *S. pneumoniae*, and 0.12 – 1 µg/ml for *Haemophilus*
314 *influenzae* ^{29,32}. For all of the inhibitors, activity was less against prominent Gram-
315 negative organisms like *E. coli* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. For JSF-2414, gepotidacin
316 and zoliflodacin, MIC values were 0.5, 4 and 4 µg/ml versus *E. coli*, respectively ^{13,29}.
317
318 To investigate the *in vivo* potential of JSF-2414 against *N. gonorrhoeae* infection, a
319 phosphate prodrug candidate JSF-2659 (**Fig. 1**) was developed (Supplement) for oral

320 dosing and *in vivo* efficacy of JSF-24214 was demonstrated in two different *N.*
321 *gonorrhoeae* genital tract infection models. In one model, dosing of JSF-2659 at 75 mg/kg
322 TID (q6h), 250 mg/kg QD or 250 mg/kg TID (q6h) showed a significant reduction in the
323 percentage of mice infected with MDR strain H041 over 8 culture days after treatment (p
324 ≤ 0.04 for 75 TID, 250 TID.) (**Fig. 2**). In another model dose-dependent oral administration
325 of JSF-2659 profoundly reduced the burden of *N. gonorrhoeae* (ATCC 700825) by ~ 4.5
326 \log_{10} to the limit of detection (LOD.) Again, a PO dose-dependent response was observed
327 with maximal reduction at 250 mg/kg QD, 75 mg/kg TID or 250 mg/kg TID at 26, 74 or
328 170 h post-administration (**Fig. 3**). A single IM administration at 75 or 250 mg/kg was
329 effective in eliminating viable burdens (LOD) ($p < 0.05$ compared to vehicle control.) These
330 promising data suggest that high exposures of the drug candidate are critical for the
331 strong pharmacodynamic response. This may imply a C_{max} component to this compound,
332 although this will need to await more detailed PK-PD studies. The potential for a single
333 IM injection to control *N. gonorrhoeae* is appealing, especially in clinical settings where
334 repeated drug dosing and compliance may not be easy to achieve.

335
336 Finally, given the potent inhibitory activity of JSF-2414 against a range of high-threat
337 Gram-positive organisms, a preliminary study was initiated to examine to explore the *in*
338 *vivo* potential of JSF-2659 against MRSA and *C. difficile*. A murine deep-tissue thigh
339 model was used to demonstrate a dose-dependent reduction of VRSA and maximum
340 $>6.2 \log_{10}$ reduction to the near LOD when administered PO at 250 mg/kg TID (**Fig. 4**).
341 Linezolid at 50 mg/kg PO BID and vancomycin at 100 mg/kg SC TID resulted in reductions
342 of 3.41 and $2.09 \log_{10}$, respectively. In a hamster colitis model, JSF-2659 administered
343 PO at 20, 100 or 250 mg/kg BID for 5 days was fully efficacious in preventing *C. difficile*
344 induced mortality over 14 days (max) relative to the untreated control which showed 100%
345 mortality at day 4 (**Fig. 5**). Vancomycin at 20 mg/kg PO BID for 5 days was equally
346 effective at preventing mortality.

347
348 In summary, the small molecule 8-(6-fluoro-8-(methylamino)-2-((2-methylpyrimidin-5-
349 yl)oxy)-9H-pyrimido[4,5-b]indol-4-yl)-2-oxa-8-azaspiro[4.5]decan-3-yl)methanol
350 developed as JSF-2414 is a tricyclic pyrimidoindole that was designed as a potent
351 inhibitor of the ATP binding/hydrolysis region of DNA gyrase (GyrB) and topoisomerase

352 (ParE). JSF- 2414 displays highly potent activity against the fastidious Gram-negative
353 organism *N. gonorrhoeae* including fluoroquinolone-resistant and other drug-resistant
354 strains To improve its oral bioavailability, a phosphate prodrug JSF-2659 was developed.
355 Oral administration of JSF-2659 was highly efficacious against *N. gonorrhoeae* in
356 reducing microbial burdens to the limit of detection.in two different animal models of
357 vaginal infection, Furthermore, IM administration increased its PK T_{1/2} 6-fold resulting in
358 reduction in microbial burden to the LOD following a single dose. Lastly, due to its potent
359 activity against Gram-positive organisms in vitro, JSF-2659 was shown in a preliminary
360 preclinical deep tissue model of MRSA and model of *C. difficile*-induced colitis to be highly
361 efficacious and protective. This new preclinical development candidate has strong
362 potential to be used against high-threat multidrug resistant organisms. Its mechanism of
363 action as a dual ATP-binder ensures that the development resistance will be extremely
364 low.

365
366
367

FUNDING

368
369
370
371
372

This work was funded by NIH grant 1U19AI109713 to D.S.P as part of a Center of
Excellence in Translational Research (CETR). The *in vivo* efficacy studies performed at
the Uniformed Services University (USU) were supported by an Interagency Agreement
(IAA) AAI14024-001-05000 established between USU and NIH/NIAID.

373
374

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

375
376
377
378
379

Thomas Hiltke, Ph.D. Basic Research Program Officer Sexually Transmitted Infections
Branch DMID/NIAID/NIH/DHHS and Kimberly Murphy, MS, Product Development
Program Manager, STDB NIAID. This work is dedicated to the memory of Professor
Roger Spanswick whose inspiration and courage helped move this program forward.

380
381

DISCLAIMER

382
383
384

The opinions and assertions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not
necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Uniformed Services University or
the Department of Defense. This work was prepared by a civilian employee (AEJ) of the

385 US Government as part of the individual's official duties and therefore is in the public
386 domain and does not possess copyright protection.

387

388

389 METHODS

390 **Bacterial strains.** *N. gonorrhoeae* clinical isolates (n=100) were obtained as frozen
391 stocks from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) ³³. The strains were
392 inventoried using the original designations and stored in a freezer set at -70°C; simple ID
393 numbers (CDC 1-100) were assigned for internal use. The isolates were plated onto
394 Chocolate II Agar (BD BBL™ # 221267) to assess purity and growth on solid medium at
395 36 ± 1°C in an atmosphere of 5% CO₂. Plates were visually inspected for colony growth
396 and morphology after 24 hours incubation. All isolates formed smooth, nonpigmented,
397 small colonies characteristic for *N. gonorrhoeae*. *Staphylococcus epidermidis*,
398 *Enterococcus faecium*, vancomycin-resistant enterococci (VRE), *E. faecalis*, *B. anthracis*,
399 and a toxigenic *C. difficile* panel that included the common ribotypes 001, 002, 012, 014,
400 020, 038, 078, 087 and the highly virulent ribotype 027. Gram-negative pathogens
401 included *Escherichia coli*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and
402 *Acinetobacter baumannii* and select agents *F. tularensis* and *Y. pestis*.

403 Susceptibility testing

404

405 ***Neisseria gonorrhoeae*** - Susceptibility testing was performed by the Southern Research
406 Institute (Birmingham, AL) under NIH testing contract No: HHSN272201100012I. Six
407 control antibacterials, azithromycin (Azi), cefixime (Cfx), ceftriaxone (Cro), ciprofloxacin
408 (Cip), penicillin (Pen), and tetracycline (Tet), were purchased from commercial sources.
409 Hundred-fold concentrated stock solutions of test compounds and control antibacterials
410 were prepared in the appropriate solvent. DMSO was used for the test compound and
411 for Azi, Cfx, Pen, Tet. The Cro stock solution was made with sterile water, and the Cip
412 stock was made with 0.1 N HCl_(aq). Potency values provided by the manufacturers of the
413 drugs were used to calculate the amounts of powder needed to prepare stock solutions
414 with a final concentration of 3.2 mg•ml⁻¹ (Cip), 1.6 mg•ml⁻¹ (Azi, Pen, Tet), and 0.4 mg•ml⁻¹
415 (Cfx, Cro). The potency of the test compound powders was assumed to be 100% for
416 the purpose of this study. The stock solutions of 50 µg•ml⁻¹ compound were prepared in

417 DMSO. The stock solutions were used as starting material for 2-fold serial dilutions in
418 corresponding solvents to obtain compound solutions that could be directly added at a
419 ratio of 1:100 (v/v %) to molten Gonococci agar (GC agar) before pouring rectangular
420 assay plates with the same dimensions as the standard 96-well microplates (Thermo
421 Scientific Nunc # 267060). The GC agar recommended for *N. gonorrhoeae* testing
422 contains 3.6% GC agar base (Oxoid™ GC agar # CM0367) and 1% defined growth
423 supplement (BD BBL™ IsoVitaleX # 211876). Compound solutions described above were
424 incorporated into GC agar medium to pour rectangular plates that represent 2-fold serial
425 dilutions consisting of 12 compound dilution steps of test or control article. The serial
426 dilutions in agar medium were prepared in triplicate. JSF-2414 was tested in the range
427 between 0.500 and .00024 $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{ml}^{-1}$. For Azi, Pen, and Tet, the test range was from 16.00
428 to 0.008 $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{ml}^{-1}$; Cfx and Cro were tested in the range between 4.00 and 0.002 $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{ml}^{-1}$;
429 Cip was assayed in the range between 32.00 and 0.016 $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{ml}^{-1}$. Strains were grown on
430 drug-free agar plates (BD BBL™ Chocolate II Agar plates) for 24 hours at $36 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ in 5%
431 CO_2 . Colonies were suspended directly in 0.9% saline supplemented with 0.5x Mueller
432 Hinton medium. In preparation for the MIC assay, the inocula were standardized by
433 adjusting their turbidity to the 0.5 McFarland standard and transferred by dispensing 700-
434 μl aliquots to 96-well deep well plates. The deep well plates with the inocula were kept
435 on ice at all times. Replicators with 96 one-millimeter pins (Boekel Industries # 140500)
436 were sterilized in an autoclave before the start of the experiment and with an open flame
437 between the transfer steps. The use of multiple replicators ensured that the transfer pins
438 had cooled down to ambient temperature before every transfer performed during the
439 experiment. The 96-pin replicators were used to transfer 1 μl aliquots of bacterial
440 suspension from the inocula-containing 96-well deep well plates to the agar surface of
441 the assay plates containing test article or control antibiotic. The same method was used
442 to inoculate compound-free agar plates for growth control. Plates were incubated for up
443 to 48 hours at $36 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ in 5% CO_2 . After the incubation period, assay and growth control
444 plates were inspected visually, and the MIC was recorded as the lowest concentration of
445 compound that completely inhibited growth.

446 **Bacterial culture.** All of the strains of ESKAPE bacteria and *Burkholderia pseudomallei*
447 was purchased from the American Type Cell Culture Institute (ATCC), Manassas, VA,
448 USA. *Brucella melitensis* and *Yersinia pestis* were purchased from BEI Resources.

449 Mycobacterial strains were grown overnight in 7H9 broth (Becton, Dickinson and
450 Company 271310), plus 0.2% glycerol (Sigma G5516), 0.25% Tween 80-20% (Sigma
451 P8074) and 20% 5x ADC. The 5x ADC solution was prepared using 25 g/L Bovine Serum
452 Albumin (Sigma A9647), 10 g/L dextrose (Sigma D9434) and 4.2 g/L NaCl (Sigma
453 S5886). For the Minimum Inhibitory Concentration assay (MIC), all mycobacteria were
454 grown in 7H9 without Tween. The strains of *Bacillus anthracis* and *Francisella tularensis*
455 were obtained from the USAMRC Bacteriology Division, Ft. Detrick, MD, USA.
456 *Enterococcus faecium* and *Staphylococcus epidermidis* were grown in BBLTM Muller
457 Hilton II cation adjusted broth (Becton, Dickinson and Company 212322) with the addition
458 of 1% IsoVitaleXTM (Becton, Dickinson and Company 211875). *Brucella melitensis* was
459 grown in BBLTM Brucella Broth (Becton, Dickinson and Company D 211088). *Francisella*
460 *tularensis* was grown in Cysteine Heart Broth [10 g BBLTM Brain Heart Infusion (Becton,
461 Dickinson and Company 211059), 10 g Proteose Peptone (Sigma F29185), 10 g Dextrose
462 (Sigma D9434), 5 g sodium chloride (Sigma S3014), 1g L-Cysteine (Sigma C7352) in 1
463 L water]. All of the other bacterial strains were grown in BBLTM Muller Hilton II broth cation
464 adjusted (MH).

465
466 **Microsomal stability assay.** Liver microsome stability assays were performed by
467 BioDuro Inc. Human and mouse (CD-1 male) liver microsomes were used. Briefly, 2.5 µL
468 of control compounds and test compound (dissolved and diluted in DMSO to 100 µM
469 concentration) were added to 197.5 µL of reaction buffer (0.05 M Phosphate reaction
470 buffer, pH=7.4) and vortexed. 50 µL of reaction buffer was added to solution and mixed
471 via pipetting up and down 6 times. At each time point of 0, 30 and 60 min, an aliquot of
472 20 µL was removed from each tube. Liver microsomes (LM) working solution was
473 prepared in 0.05 M Phosphate reaction buffer (pH=7.4) for final concentration of 1.27
474 mg/ml. NADPH solution was prepared in 0.05 M Phosphate buffer to afford a 5 mM buffer
475 solution. 2.5 µL of positive control (5x mixed) and test compounds were added into 197.5
476 of LM working solution. After vortexing and incubating for 5 min (37°C), 50 µL of NADPH
477 solution was added and mixed via pipetting. At each time point of 0, 5, 15, 30 and 60 min,
478 an aliquot of 20 µL was removed from each tube. 250 µL of quenching solution was
479 aliquoted to quench the reaction, which was then vortexed for 1 min, and placed on ice
480 for 40 min. After centrifugation at 4,000 rpm for 15 min, 100 µL of supernatant was

481 transferred using a multichannel pipette to 0.65 mL tubes. Samples were diluted with
482 MeOH: H₂O (1:1) as necessary. Samples were analyzed by high-pressure liquid
483 chromatography coupled to tandem mass spectrometry (LC/MS/MS) performed on a
484 Sciex Applied Biosystems Qtrap 4000 triple-quadrupole mass spectrometer coupled to a
485 Shimadzu HPLC system to quantify the compound remaining. Data was processed using
486 Analyst software (version 1.4.2; Applied Biosystems Sciex). Calculations were performed
487 as CL_{int} (μL/min/mg protein) = ln 2*1000 /T_{1/2} / Protein Conc., where the units of T_{1/2} were
488 min, and the units of Protein Conc. were mg/mL. Metabolite identification on the
489 microsomal extracts was performed using a Q-Exactive HRMS coupled with an Ultimate
490 3000 HPLC system and a Kinetix C18 2.1x50mm 2.6um HPLC column.

491

492 **Animal Models**

493

494 ***N. gonorrhoeae* vaginal infection models**

495

496 Efficacy of JSF-2659 in clearing an experimental *N. gonorrhoeae* infection of MDR strain
497 H041 in female mice was performed by Dr. Ann Jerse's laboratory at the Uniformed
498 Services University (USU). Four dosing regimens of JSF-2659 were tested as described
499 in **Supplement, Fig. 1**. A total of 60 female BALB/c mice (6 groups; n = 8-10 mice/group)
500 were implanted with a 21-day slow-release, 5 mg 17-β estradiol pellet (Innovative
501 Research of America) under the skin (day -4) to induce susceptibility to *N. gonorrhoeae*.
502 Antibiotics (streptomycin [STM], trimethoprim sulfate [TMP]), were administered to
503 suppress the overgrowth of commensal flora that occurs under the influence of estradiol
504 ^{17,34}. Mice were inoculated on day -2 (two days after estradiol treatment was initiated) with
505 a dose of the challenge strain that infects 80 – 100% of mice (ID₈₀₋₁₀₀) (10⁴ CFU for strain
506 H041(STM^R), a streptomycin-resistant derivative of the ceftriaxone resistant strain H041,
507 referred to as H041 for brevity). Strain H041 was selected because of its clinical
508 significance as a multidrug resistant 'superbug' ¹⁸. Vaginal mucus was quantitatively
509 cultured for *N. gonorrhoeae* on the morning of the next two consecutive days (days -1
510 and 0) to confirm infection. On the day of treatment (day 0), JSF-2659 was solubilized in
511 0.5% Carboxymethyl Cellulose Sodium Salt (CMC; MP Bio) and 0.5% Tween 80 (Fisher)
512 in sterile endotoxin-free water; this vehicle solution was also used as the negative control.

513 On the afternoon of day 0 (and following the morning culture), JSF-2659 was
514 administered orally (PO) as either a single dose (QD) or three doses every 6 hours (TID)
515 over a 24 h period. The vehicle control was administered TID. The positive control that
516 was established for H041 was 5 doses of 48 mg/kg gentamicin (GEN) administered once
517 daily for 5 days IP (0.2 mL), with treatment beginning on day 0 ³⁵. Experimental groups
518 were designated as outlined in **Supplement, Fig. 1**. Vaginal mucus was quantitatively
519 cultured for *N. gonorrhoeae* for 8 consecutive days after treatment (days +1 through +8).
520 Vaginal material was collected by wetting a Puritan rayon swab in sterile, endotoxin-free
521 PBS, gently inserting the swab into the vagina, and suspending the swab in 1 mL of GCB.
522 Broth suspensions were diluted in GCB (1:100 for H041), and diluted and undiluted
523 samples were cultured on GC-VCNTS agar using the Autoplate automated plating
524 system (Spiral Biotech). GC-VCNTS agar contained vancomycin, colistin, nystatin,
525 trimethoprim sulfate (VCNT supplement; Difco BD, Product #202408) and 100 µg/mL
526 streptomycin sulfate. A portion of the swab was also inoculated onto heart infusion agar
527 (HIA) to monitor the presence of facultative aerobic commensal flora. The number of
528 viable *N. gonorrhoeae* bacteria recovered were determined using the Spiral Biotech Q-
529 Counter Software at 48 h of incubation at 37 °C. The percentage of mice in each test
530 group that were culture positive at each time point were plotted as Kaplan Meier
531 colonization curves and compared to the positive control and vehicle control, and the
532 other test groups. Differences were analyzed by the Log-rank (Mantel-Cox) test.
533 Colonization load, defined as the number of CFU per ml of vaginal swab suspension,
534 were also compared among groups using a repeated measures ANOVA with Bonferroni
535 multiple comparisons. *p* values < 0.05 were considered significant. Mice must have had
536 at least 3 consecutive days of negative culture to be considered cleared of infection. At
537 the study endpoint, mice were euthanized using compressed CO₂ gas in a CO₂ gas
538 chamber in the Laboratory Animal Medicine Facility. All animal experiments were
539 conducted at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, a facility fully
540 accredited by the Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal
541 Care, under a protocol that was approved by the USUHS Institutional Animal Care and
542 Use Committee in accordance with all applicable Federal regulations governing the
543 protection of animals in research.

544

545 A secondary model (Pharmacology Discovery Services Taiwan, Ltd) was performed
546 according to Song et al.³⁶. Vaginal infection model using *N. gonorrhoeae* strain F1090
547 (ATCC 700825) was performed with groups of 5 ovariectomized BALB/c mice aged 5-6
548 weeks. Ovariectomy was performed at 4 weeks of age. The period of surgical recovery
549 and acclimation was ~7 days. Animals were subcutaneously (SC) injected with 17 β -
550 estradiol solution solubilized in cotton seed oil at 0.23 mg/mouse 2 days before infection
551 (Day -2) and on the day of infection (Day 0). To minimize the commensal vaginal bacteria,
552 animals were treated twice daily (BID) with streptomycin (1.2 mg/mouse) and vancomycin
553 (0.6 mg/mouse) by IP injection along with trimethoprim sulfate at 0.4 mg/mL supplied in
554 the drinking water. Antibacterial treatments were started two days prior to infection and
555 were continued daily until the end of study. On Day 0, animals were inoculated
556 intravaginally (IVG) with *N. gonorrhoeae* under anesthesia with IP injection of
557 pentobarbital (80 mg/kg). The vagina was rinsed with 50 mM Hepes (pH 7.4, 30 μ L)
558 followed by inoculation with *N. gonorrhoeae* ATCC 700825 suspension, 0.02 mL/mouse.
559 The target inoculation density was 2.0×10^6 CFU/mouse and the actual count was 1.14
560 $\times 10^6$ CFU/mouse. A 0.05 mL aliquot was inoculated into a chocolate agar plate and
561 incubated at 35-37°C with 5% CO₂ overnight. The culture was re-suspended in 1 mL PBS
562 ($>1.0 \times 10^{10}$ CFU/mL, OD₆₂₀ 2.0 – 2.2) and diluted in PBS containing 0.5 mM CaCl₂ and
563 1 mM MgCl₂ to obtain the target inoculum of 1.0×10^8 CFU/mL. Colony counts were
564 determined by plating dilutions to chocolate agar plates followed by 20 – 24 h incubation.
565 The actual CFU count was 5.7×10^7 CFU/mL. JSF-2659 at 75 and 250 mg/kg, was
566 administered orally (PO) with two dosing schedules, including once (QD) at 2 h after
567 infection, and three times (TID) with a 6 h interval at 2, 8, and 14 h after infection. Test
568 articles were also administered intramuscularly (IM) with JSF-2659 at 75 and 250 mg/kg
569 once (QD) at 2 h after infection. Two reference compounds were applied in this study,
570 ciprofloxacin and gentamicin. Ciprofloxacin was administered orally (PO) at 12.5 mg/kg
571 once (QD) at 2 h after infection. Gentamicin was administered intraperitoneally (IP) at 48
572 mg/kg once (QD) at 2 h after infection for 1, 3 or 7 consecutive days depending on the
573 time point of animal scarification, at 26, 74 or 170 h after infection. One infected but non-
574 treated group was sacrificed at 2 h after infection for the initial bacterial counts. Each
575 animal was weighed prior to each dose and the dose volumes were 10 mL/kg for all
576 dosing groups. Test animals were euthanized by CO₂ asphyxiation and sacrificed at 26,

577 74 or 170 h after infection. Vaginal lavage was performed twice with 200 μ L GC broth
578 containing 0.05% saponin to recover vaginal bacteria and the lavage fluids were pooled
579 in a total volume of 500 μ L. The bacterial counts (CFU/mL) in lavage fluid were calculated
580 and the percentage decrease relative to the vehicle control was calculated by the
581 following formula: Decrease (%) = [(CFU/mL of vehicle – CFU/mL of treatment) /
582 (CFU/mL of vehicle)] \times 100%. Statistical significance was assessed with one-way ANOVA
583 followed by Dunnett's method using the Prism Graphpad software version 5.0. A
584 significant ($p < 0.05$) decrease in the bacterial counts of the treated animals compared to
585 the vehicle control group was considered significant difference.

586

587 **Staphylococcus soft tissue infection model.** A deep tissue thigh model of
588 *Staphylococcus aureus* was contracted to Pharmacology Discovery Services Taiwan,
589 Ltd. All studies were performed with *S. aureus* strain VRS-2 – a VRSA strain Hershey,
590 Van-A producing SCC Mec II, st5 strain that was isolated from the foot ulcer of a 70-year-
591 old patient. It is methicillin-resistant with resistance to carbapenems, cephalosporins and
592 penicillins. VRS-2 is resistant to vancomycin (MIC >64 μ g/ml), quinolones (LVX-R, CIP-
593 R), macrolides (ERY-R, CLI-R), and trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole. Groups of 5 male or
594 female specific-pathogen-free ICR mice weighing 22 ± 2 g were used. Animals were
595 immunosuppressed by two intraperitoneal injections of cyclophosphamide, the first at 150
596 mg/kg 4 days before infection (Day –4) and the second at 100 mg/kg 1 day before
597 infection (Day –1). On day 0, animals were inoculated intramuscularly (0.1 ml/thigh) with
598 *Staphylococcus aureus*, vancomycin resistant (VRS-2) into the right thigh. Vehicle and/or
599 test substances including linezolid at 50 mg/kg BID were then administered (SC or PO) 2
600 and 14 hours later. At 24 hours after treatment, animals were humanely euthanized with
601 CO₂ asphyxiation and then the muscle of the right thigh was harvested from each test
602 animal. The removed muscle tissues were homogenized in 3 ml of PBS, pH 7.4, with a
603 polytron homogenizer. Homogenates, 0.1 ml, were used for serial 10-fold dilutions and
604 plated on nutrient agar plates for colony count

605

606 **Hamster Colitis Model.** This model contracted to Pharmacology Discovery Services
607 Taiwan, Ltd assessed test articles for protection against a lethal *C. difficile* colitis infection
608 ³⁷. Groups of 10 male or female Golden Syrian hamsters weighing 90 ± 10 g were used.

609 Each animal was pretreated with a single subcutaneous dose of clindamycin at 50 mg/kg
610 (Day -1) to induce susceptibility to *C. difficile*. Twenty-four hours after the clindamycin
611 treatment (Day 0), the animals were infected with *C. difficile* BAA-1805, a ribotype 027
612 strain. Spores were administered in a single oral lethal (LD₉₀₋₁₀₀) dose, 1 × 10⁵ spores per
613 animal. Test substance and vehicle were administered (PO, IP, IV, or SC) 16 hours after
614 inoculation then twice daily (bid) for a total of 5 consecutive days. The mortality was
615 recorded daily for 14 days following infection. Prevention of mortality in 50 percent or
616 more of the animals indicated significant activity. *C. difficile* strain BAA-1805, toxigenic,
617 NAP1, Ribotype 027 strain, was obtained from the American Type Culture Collection
618 (Rockville, MD, USA) and cryopreserved as single-use frozen working stock cultures
619 stored at -80°C. A 0.1 mL aliquot was transferred to anaerobic blood agar plates
620 (anaerobic BAP) and incubated in an anaerobic workstation (Don Whitley A35) at 35-
621 37°C anaerobic condition (80% N₂, 10% CO₂, 10% H₂) for 5 days. Growth on plates was
622 transferred to phosphate buffer saline (PBS) and heated at 70°C for 30 minutes to
623 inactivate the spores. The heated culture was pelleted by centrifugation at 3,500 × g for
624 15 minutes, and then re-suspended in cold PBS (>5 × 10⁷ spores/mL in original). The
625 culture was diluted in PBS to an estimated concentration of 0.6-1.0 × 10⁶ spores/mL. The
626 actual colony counts were determined by plating dilutions onto CCFA-HT plates followed
627 by 2 days incubation and colony counting. The actual inoculum was 1.16 × 10⁶ spores/mL.
628 Male golden Syrian hamsters 6 weeks of age were provided by National Laboratory
629 Animal Center, Taiwan. The animals were individually housed in animal cages. All
630 animals were maintained in a well-controlled temperature (20 - 24°C) and humidity (30%
631 - 70%) environment with 12 hours light/dark cycles. Free access to standard lab diet [MFG
632 (Oriental Yeast Co., Ltd., Japan)] and autoclaved tap water were granted for study period.
633 All aspects of this work including housing, experimentation, and animal disposal were
634 performed in general accordance with the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory
635 Animals (National Academies Press, Washington, D.C., 2011). The study was performed
636 in our AAALAC accredited ABSL2 laboratory under the supervision of staff veterinarians.
637 The animal care and use protocol was approved by the IACUC of Pharmacology
638 Discovery Services Taiwan Ltd.
639

640 **Quantitative Methods**

641 Levels of JSF-2414 in plasma and tissues were measured by LC-MS/MS in electrospray
642 positive-ionization mode (ESI+) on a Sciex Qtrap 4000 triple-quadrupole mass combined
643 with an Agilent 1260 HPLC using Analyst software and multiple-reaction monitoring
644 (MRM) of precursor/product transitions. The following MRM transitions were used for
645 JSF-2414 (494.28/324.80) and the internal standard Verapamil (455.4/165.2).
646 Chromatography was performed with an Agilent Zorbax SB-C8 column (2.1x30 mm;
647 particle size, 3.5 μ m) using a reverse phase gradient elution. 0.1% formic acid in Milli-Q
648 deionized water was used for the aqueous mobile phase and 0.1% formic acid in
649 acetonitrile (ACN) for the organic mobile phase. Tissues were homogenized prior to
650 extraction by combining 4 parts PBS buffer: 1 part tissue. The samples were
651 homogenized using a SPEX Sample Prep Geno/Grinder 2010 for 5 minutes at 1500 RPM.
652 1 mg/mL DMSO stock was serial diluted in 50/50 ACN/water to create standard curves
653 and quality control spiking solutions. 20 μ L of neat spiking solutions were added to 20 μ L
654 of drug free mouse K₂EDTA plasma (Bioreclamation) or drug free tissue homogenate
655 and extraction was performed by adding 200 μ L of acetonitrile/methanol 50/50 protein
656 precipitation solvent containing 10 ng/mL Verapamil (Sigma). Extracts were vortexed for
657 5 minutes and centrifuged at 4000 RPM for 5 minutes. The supernatants were analyzed
658 by LC-MS. Sample analysis was accepted if the concentrations of the quality control
659 samples were within 20% of the nominal concentration.

660

661

662 REFERENCES

663

664 1 Guvenc, F., Kaul, R. & Gray-Owen, S. D. Intimate Relations: Molecular and
665 Immunologic Interactions Between *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* and HIV-1. *Front
666 Microbiol* **11**, 1299, doi:10.3389/fmicb.2020.01299 (2020).

667 2 Prevention, C.-C. f. D. C. a. 2018 STD Surveillance Report Gonorrhea. (Division
668 of STD Prevention, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB
669 Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019).

670 3 Unemo, M. Current and future antimicrobial treatment of gonorrhoea - the rapidly
671 evolving *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* continues to challenge. *BMC Infect Dis* **15**, 364,
672 doi:10.1186/s12879-015-1029-2 (2015).

673 4 Lewis, D. A. New treatment options for *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* in the era of
674 emerging antimicrobial resistance. *Sex Health* **16**, 449-456,
675 doi:10.1071/SH19034 (2019).

676 5 Unemo, M., Golparian, D. & Eyre, D. W. Antimicrobial Resistance in *Neisseria*
677 *gonorrhoeae* and Treatment of Gonorrhea. *Methods Mol Biol* **1997**, 37-58,
678 doi:10.1007/978-1-4939-9496-0_3 (2019).

679 6 St Cyr, S. *et al.* Update to CDC's Treatment Guidelines for Gonococcal Infection,
680 2020. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* **69**, 1911-1916,
681 doi:10.15585/mmwr.mm6950a6 (2020).

682 7 Unemo, M. & Shafer, W. M. Antimicrobial resistance in *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* in
683 the 21st century: past, evolution, and future. *Clin Microbiol Rev* **27**, 587-613,
684 doi:10.1128/CMR.00010-14 (2014).

685 8 Unemo, M., Del Rio, C. & Shafer, W. M. Antimicrobial Resistance Expressed by
686 *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*: A Major Global Public Health Problem in the 21st
687 Century. *Microbiol Spectr* **4**, doi:10.1128/microbiolspec.EI10-0009-2015 (2016).

688 9 (WHO)., W. H. O. Global health sector strategy on sexually transmitted infections
689 2016–2021: Towards ending STIs. Geneva: WHO;
690 <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/rtis/ghss-stis/en/>. (2016).

691 10 Drlica, K. & Zhao, X. DNA gyrase, topoisomerase IV, and the 4-quinolones.
692 *Microbiol Mol Biol Rev* **61**, 377-392 (1997).

693 11 Jacobsson, S. *et al.* High in vitro activity of the novel spiroimidinetrione
694 AZD0914, a DNA gyrase inhibitor, against multidrug-resistant *Neisseria*
695 *gonorrhoeae* isolates suggests a new effective option for oral treatment of
696 gonorrhea. *Antimicrob Agents Chemother* **58**, 5585-5588,
697 doi:10.1128/AAC.03090-14 (2014).

698 12 Bradford, P. A., Miller, A. A., O'Donnell, J. & Mueller, J. P. Zoliflodacin: An Oral
699 Spiropyrimidinetrione Antibiotic for the Treatment of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*,
700 Including Multi-Drug-Resistant Isolates. *ACS Infect Dis* **6**, 1332-1345,
701 doi:10.1021/acsinfecdis.0c00021 (2020).

702 13 Flamm, R. K., Farrell, D. J., Rhomberg, P. R., Scangarella-Oman, N. E. & Sader,
703 H. S. Gepotidacin (GSK2140944) In Vitro Activity against Gram-Positive and

704 Gram-Negative Bacteria. *Antimicrob Agents Chemother* **61**,
705 doi:10.1128/AAC.00468-17 (2017).

706 14 Biedenbach, D. J. *et al.* In Vitro Activity of Gepotidacin, a Novel
707 Triazaacenaphthylene Bacterial Topoisomerase Inhibitor, against a Broad
708 Spectrum of Bacterial Pathogens. *Antimicrob Agents Chemother* **60**, 1918-1923,
709 doi:10.1128/AAC.02820-15 (2016).

710 15 Damiao Gouveia, A. C., Unemo, M. & Jensen, J. S. In vitro activity of zoliflodacin
711 (ETX0914) against macrolide-resistant, fluoroquinolone-resistant and
712 antimicrobial-susceptible *Mycoplasma genitalium* strains. *J Antimicrob*
713 *Chemother* **73**, 1291-1294, doi:10.1093/jac/dky022 (2018).

714 16 Tari, L. W. *et al.* Tricyclic GyrB/ParE (TriBE) inhibitors: a new class of broad-
715 spectrum dual-targeting antibacterial agents. *PLoS One* **8**, e84409,
716 doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0084409 (2013).

717 17 Jerse, A. E. *et al.* Estradiol-Treated Female Mice as Surrogate Hosts for
718 *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* Genital Tract Infections. *Front Microbiol* **2**, 107,
719 doi:10.3389/fmicb.2011.00107 (2011).

720 18 Ohnishi, M. *et al.* Is *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* initiating a future era of untreatable
721 gonorrhea?: detailed characterization of the first strain with high-level resistance
722 to ceftriaxone. *Antimicrob Agents Chemother* **55**, 3538-3545,
723 doi:10.1128/AAC.00325-11 (2011).

724 19 Tacconelli, E. *et al.* Discovery, research, and development of new antibiotics: the
725 WHO priority list of antibiotic-resistant bacteria and tuberculosis. *Lancet Infect*
726 *Dis* **18**, 318-327, doi:10.1016/S1473-3099(17)30753-3 (2018).

727 20 Belland, R. J., Morrison, S. G., Ison, C. & Huang, W. M. *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*
728 acquires mutations in analogous regions of *gyrA* and *parC* in fluoroquinolone-
729 resistant isolates. *Mol Microbiol* **14**, 371-380, doi:10.1111/j.1365-
730 2958.1994.tb01297.x (1994).

731 21 Lindback, E., Rahman, M., Jalal, S. & Wretlind, B. Mutations in *gyrA*, *gyrB*, *parC*,
732 and *parE* in quinolone-resistant strains of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*. *APMIS* **110**,
733 651-657, doi:10.1034/j.1600-0463.2002.1100909.x (2002).

734 22 Bisacchi, G. S. & Manchester, J. I. A New-Class Antibacterial-Almost. Lessons in
735 Drug Discovery and Development: A Critical Analysis of More than 50 Years of

736 Effort toward ATPase Inhibitors of DNA Gyrase and Topoisomerase IV. ACS
737 *Infect Dis* **1**, 4-41, doi:10.1021/id500013t (2015).

738 23 Oblak, M., Kotnik, M. & Solmajer, T. Discovery and development of ATPase
739 inhibitors of DNA gyrase as antibacterial agents. *Curr Med Chem* **14**, 2033-2047,
740 doi:10.2174/092986707781368414 (2007).

741 24 Charifson, P. S. *et al.* Novel dual-targeting benzimidazole urea inhibitors of DNA
742 gyrase and topoisomerase IV possessing potent antibacterial activity: intelligent
743 design and evolution through the judicious use of structure-guided design and
744 structure-activity relationships. *J Med Chem* **51**, 5243-5263,
745 doi:10.1021/jm800318d (2008).

746 25 Tomasic, T. *et al.* Discovery of 4,5,6,7-Tetrahydrobenzo[1,2-d]thiazoles as Novel
747 DNA Gyrase Inhibitors Targeting the ATP-Binding Site. *J Med Chem* **58**, 5501-
748 5521, doi:10.1021/acs.jmedchem.5b00489 (2015).

749 26 Gjorgjieva, M. *et al.* Discovery of Benzothiazole Scaffold-Based DNA Gyrase B
750 Inhibitors. *J Med Chem* **59**, 8941-8954, doi:10.1021/acs.jmedchem.6b00864
751 (2016).

752 27 Basarab, G. S. *et al.* Responding to the challenge of untreatable gonorrhea:
753 ETX0914, a first-in-class agent with a distinct mechanism-of-action against
754 bacterial Type II topoisomerases. *Sci Rep* **5**, 11827, doi:10.1038/srep11827
755 (2015).

756 28 Alm, R. A. *et al.* Characterization of the novel DNA gyrase inhibitor AZD0914: low
757 resistance potential and lack of cross-resistance in *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*.
758 *Antimicrob Agents Chemother* **59**, 1478-1486, doi:10.1128/AAC.04456-14
759 (2015).

760 29 Miller, A. A., Traczewski, M. M., Huband, M. D., Bradford, P. A. & Mueller, J. P.
761 Determination of MIC Quality Control Ranges for the Novel Gyrase Inhibitor
762 Zoliflodacin. *J Clin Microbiol* **57**, doi:10.1128/JCM.00567-19 (2019).

763 30 Bax, B. D. *et al.* Type IIA topoisomerase inhibition by a new class of antibacterial
764 agents. *Nature* **466**, 935-940, doi:10.1038/nature09197 (2010).

765 31 Jones, R. N., Fedler, K. A., Scangarella-Oman, N. E., Ross, J. E. & Flamm, R. K.
766 Multicenter Investigation of Gepotidacin (GSK2140944) Agar Dilution Quality

767 Control Determinations for *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* ATCC 49226. *Antimicrob*
768 *Agents Chemother* **60**, 4404-4406, doi:10.1128/AAC.00527-16 (2016).

769 32 Biedenbach, D. J. *et al.* In Vitro Activity of AZD0914, a Novel Bacterial DNA
770 Gyrase/Topoisomerase IV Inhibitor, against Clinically Relevant Gram-Positive
771 and Fastidious Gram-Negative Pathogens. *Antimicrob Agents Chemother* **59**,
772 6053-6063, doi:10.1128/AAC.01016-15 (2015).

773 33 Prevention, C.-C. f. D. C. a. Antibiotic resistance threats in the United States,
774 2013. Atlanta, GA, CDC. 2013.

775 <http://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/threat-report-2013/pdf/ar-threats-2013-508.pdf>.
776 (2013).

777 34 Jerse, A. E. Experimental gonococcal genital tract infection and opacity protein
778 expression in estradiol-treated mice. *Infection and immunity* **67**, 5699-5708
779 (1999).

780 35 Connolly, K. L. *et al.* Pharmacokinetic Data Are Predictive of In Vivo Efficacy for
781 Cefixime and Ceftriaxone against Susceptible and Resistant *Neisseria*
782 gonorrhoeae Strains in the Gonorrhea Mouse Model. *Antimicrob Agents
783 Chemother* **63**, doi:10.1128/AAC.01644-18 (2019).

784 36 Song, W. *et al.* Local and humoral immune responses against primary and repeat
785 *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* genital tract infections of 17beta-estradiol-treated mice.
786 *Vaccine* **26**, 5741-5751, doi:10.1016/j.vaccine.2008.08.020 (2008).

787 37 Ochsner, U. A. *et al.* Inhibitory effect of REP3123 on toxin and spore formation in
788 *Clostridium difficile*, and in vivo efficacy in a hamster gastrointestinal infection
789 model. *J Antimicrob Chemother* **63**, 964-971, doi:10.1093/jac/dkp042 (2009).

790

791

Table 1. Susceptibility VRSA and VISA clinical isolates to JSF-2414

Strains	JSF-2414 (μ g/ml)	Vancomycin (μ g/ml)	Rifampicin (μ g/ml)
MRSA ATCC 43300	0.031	3.125	<0.078
VRSA Strains			
VRSA 22522	0.031	>200	>10
VRSA 22523	0.016	100 - 200	<0.078
VRSA 22524	0.016 - 0.031	200	<0.078
VRSA 22525	0.016 - 0.031	100	<0.078
VRSA 22526	0.0156 - 0.031	<1.56	<0.078
VRSA 22527	0.031	1.56 - 3.13	<0.078
VRSA 22528	0.0156 - 0.031	>200	<0.078
VISA Strains			
VISA 21143	0.0156 - 0.031	12.5	<0.078
VISA 21156	0.063	3.13 - 6.25	>10
VISA 21157	0.031 - 0.063	12.5	<0.078
VISA 21161	0.0156 - 0.031	6.25	<0.078
VISA 21171	0.0156 - 0.031	3.125	>10
VISA 21178	0.0156 - 0.031	6.25	<0.078
VISA 21186	0.031	6.25	>10
VISA 21352	0.0156 - 0.031	6.25	>10

792
793

794

795

796

797

798

799 **FIGURE LEGENDS**

800
801 **Figure 1.** Preclinical development candidates. Chemical structures for JSF-2414 (8-(6-
802 fluoro-8-(methylamino)-2-((2-methylpyrimidin-5-yl)oxy)-9H-pyrimido[4,5-b]indol-4-yl)-2-
803 oxa-8-azaspiro[4.5]decan-3-yl)methanol and phosphate derivative JSF-2659 showing
804 kinetic aqueous solubility and metabolic stability including half-life ($t_{1/2}$) and intrinsic
805 clearance (C_{int}) parameters with isolated mouse liver microsomes (MLM) and human
806 liver microsomes (HLM).

807

808 **Figure 2.** Dose-dependent efficacy of JSF-2659 against the multi-drug resistant *Neisseria*
809 *gonorrhoeae* strain H041 in the murine vaginal infection model. Animals were vaginally
810 inoculated with H041 bacteria and two days later, treated daily with JSF-2659 as shown
811 in Suppl. Fig 1. Mice received daily oral doses of JSF-2659 at 75 mg/kg (blue) or 250
812 mg/kg (red), either TID (solid lines) or QD (dashed lines) over 8 days. Gentamycin at 48
813 mg/kg, 5 QD was used as a positive control; the control vehicle was used as the negative-
814 control. **A.** A dose-dependent clearance rate was observed in JS-2659-treated mice as
815 assessed by the percentage of culture-positive mice on eight consecutive days following
816 treatment initiation. p values 0.02, 0.01, 0.003 and 0.0007 for the 250 mg/kg, QD, 75
817 mg/kg, TID, 75 mg/kg QD and gentamycin control group versus the vehicle control group,
818 respectively (Log-rank (Mantel-Cox test)). **B.** The average number of CFU recovered per
819 mL of vaginal swab suspension declined over time in all antibiotic treatment groups
820 compared to the vehicle control group, with the differences between the 250 mg/kg, TID
821 group and gentamycin control groups significantly different than the vehicle control group
822 (p = 0.004 and 0.007, respectively; 2-way ANOVA with repeated measures, Bonferroni
823 post-hoc analysis); **C.** Fold change in CFU/mL between Day 0 (pre-treatment) and 48h
824 post-treatment showed a trend towards a significant reduction for the 250 mg/kg, TID
825 treatment group (p = 0.058).

826
827

828 **Figure 3.** Effects of JSF2659, ciprofloxacin and gentamicin in a *N. gonorrhoeae* (ATCC
829 700825) intravaginal infection model using ovariectomized BALB/c mice. Total bacterial
830 counts (**A,C,E**) and a net change in counts (**B,D,F**) is shown for vaginal lavage fluids
831 following test article treatment relative to the initial 2 h counts at the time of dosing.
832 JSF2659 at 75 and 250 mg/kg, was administered orally (PO) with two dosing schedules,
833 including once (QD) at 2 h after infection, and three times (TID) with an 6 h interval at 2,
834 8, and 14 h after infection. In addition, JSF2659 at 75 and 250 mg/kg was administered
835 intramuscularly (IM) once (QD) at 2 h after infection. Two reference compounds were
836 applied in this study, ciprofloxacin (CIP) and gentamicin (GEN). Ciprofloxacin was
837 administered orally (PO) at 12.5 mg/kg once (QD) at 2 h after infection. Gentamicin was
838 administered intraperitoneally (IP) at 48 mg/kg once (QD) at 2 h after infection for seven
839 consecutive days. Animals were sacrificed at 26 h (**A,B**), 72 (**C,D**) and 170 h (**E,F**) after

840 infection. Vaginal lavage was performed and the bacterial suspensions were plated onto
841 chocolate agar to determine the *N. gonorrhoeae* counts. (*): Significant difference ($p <$
842 0.05) compared to the respective vehicle control was determined by one- way ANOVA
843 followed by Dunnett's test.

844
845 **Figure 4.** Effects of JSF2659, linezolid and vancomycin in the *S. aureus* (VRSA, VRS-2)
846 thigh infection model with neutropenic mice. Mice were induced neutropenic with
847 cyclophosphamide treatment and were then inoculated intramuscularly with an
848 inoculation density of 1.0×10^5 CFU/mouse. JSF-2659 at 100 and 250 mg/kg, was
849 administered orally (PO) with two dosing schedules, including once (QD) at 2 h after
850 infection, and three times (TID) with an 6 h interval at 2, 8, and 14 h after infection. Two
851 reference compounds were applied in this study, linezolid and vancomycin. Linezolid was
852 administered orally (PO) at 50 mg/kg twice (BID) at 2 and 14 h after infection. Vancomycin
853 was administered subcutaneously (SC) at 100 mg/kg three times (TID) at 2, 8 and 14 h
854 after infection. Animals were sacrificed at 2 or 26 h and the thigh tissues were harvested
855 and the total bacterial counts (CFU/g)(A) and change in counts (B) in thigh tissues were
856 compared. (*) Significant difference ($p < 0.05$) compared to the vehicle control was
857 determined by one- way ANOVA followed by Dunnett's test. Linezolid was administered
858 orally (PO) at 50 mg/kg twice (BID) at 2 and 14 h after infection and Vancomycin was
859 administered subcutaneously (SC) at 100 mg/kg TID at 2, 8 and 14 h after infection served
860 as reference controls. One infected but non-treated group was sacrificed at 2 h after
861 infection for the initial bacterial counts. Mice from the treatment of test article, reference
862 compounds, and vehicle control groups were sacrificed at 26 h after infection. The thigh
863 tissue was excised for bacterial enumeration, CFU/gram. One-way ANOVA followed by
864 Dunnett's comparison test was performed to assess statistical significance ($p < 0.05$) in
865 the bacterial counts of the treated animals compared to the vehicle control group.

866
867 **Figure 5.** Kaplan-Meier plot of 14-day survival in the *C. difficile* ATCC BAA-1805 hamster
868 colitis model. Animals were inoculated orally (PO) with *C. difficile* ATCC BAA-1805 at 5.8
869 $\times 10^5$ spores/animal. Test article JSF2659 at 20, 100, and 250 mg/kg, and reference
870 agent, vancomycin at 20 mg/kg, were administered orally (PO) twice daily (BID) with an
871 8 h interval starting at 16 h after infection for five consecutive days. Animal mortality was
872 monitored for 14 days (A). *: Indicated a significant increase ($p < 0.05$) in the survival

873 rates of the treated animals compared to the vehicle control group at day 14 time point
874 as determined by Fisher's exact test. Test article, JSF2659 at 20, 100, and 250 mg/kg,
875 and reference agent, vancomycin at 20 mg/kg, all showed significance and are indicated.
876 **B.** Body weight changes of *C. difficile* ATCC BAA-1805 infected hamsters. Animals were
877 inoculated orally (PO) with *C. difficile* ATCC BAA-1805 at 5.8×10^5 spores/animal. Test
878 article, JSF2659 at 20, 100, and 250 mg/kg, and reference agent, vancomycin at 20
879 mg/kg, were administered orally (PO) twice daily (BID) with an 8 h interval starting at 16
880 h after infection for five consecutive days. Body weight changes were monitored for 14
881 days.

882

883

884 **SUPPLEMENT**

885

886 Figure Legends

887

888 **Figure S1.** Experimental design schematic of the *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* infection model
889 with strain H041. The following test regimens were performed: JSF-2659; Group 1: 75
890 mg/kg, PO, 1 dose (QD), 10 mL/kg; Group 2: 75 mg/kg, PO, 3 doses every 6 h (TID), 10
891 mL/kg; Group 3: 250 mg/kg, PO, 1 dose (QD), 10 mL/kg; Group 4: 250 mg/kg, PO, 3
892 doses every 6 h (TID), 10 mL/kg; Positive control group Group 5: GEN, 48 mg/kg, 5 doses
893 once daily, IP, 0.2 mL and Vehicle control group Group 6: 0.5% CMC/0.5% Tween 80, 3
894 doses (TID), 10 mL/kg

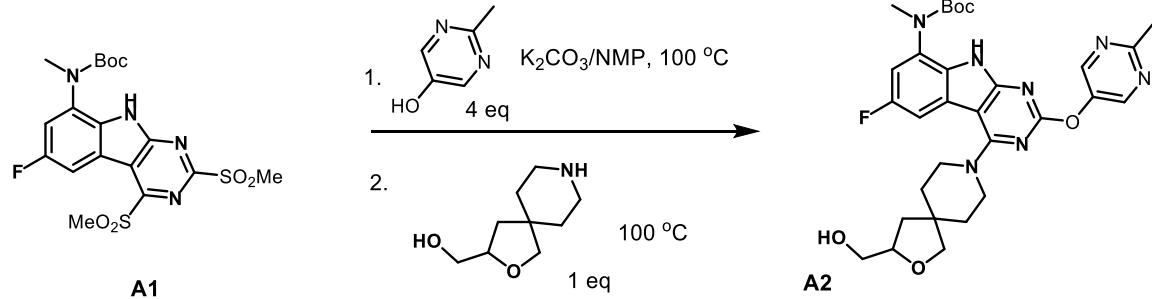
895

896

897

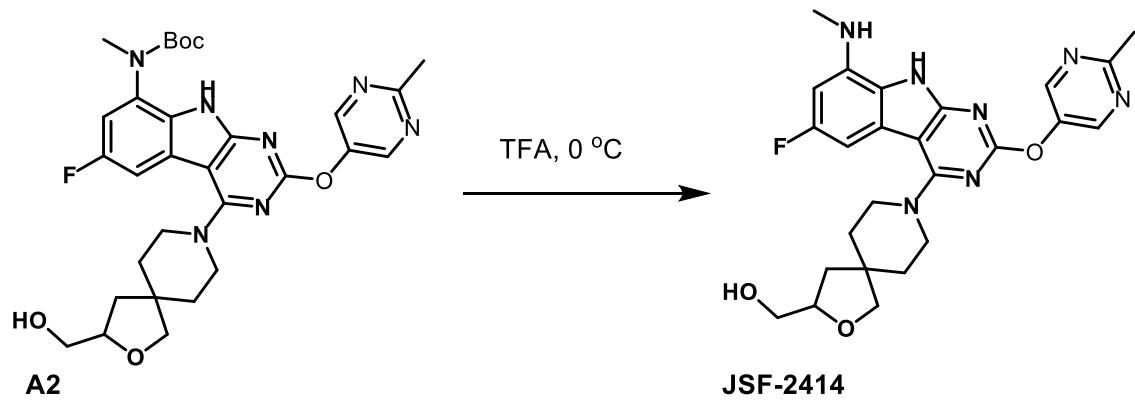
898

899 Preparation of JSF-2414 and JSF-2659



901 To *tert*-butyl (6-fluoro-2,4-bis(methylsulfonyl)-9H-pyrimido[4,5-b]indol-8-
902 yl)(methyl)carbamate (9.45 g, 20.0 mmol; Source: WuXiAppTec) in NMP (50 mL) was
903 added 2-methylpyrimidine-5-ol (8.80 g, 80.0 mmol) and potassium carbonate (11.00 g,
904 79.7 mmol). The mixture was heated at 100 °C for 70 min, then (−)-(2-oxa-8-
905 azaspiro[4.5]decan-3-yl)methanol hydrogen chloride salt(4.15 g, 20.0 mmol; Source:
906 WuXiAppTec; $[\alpha]_D^{22} = -3.14$ (c 0.1, MeOH)) was added. The mixture was heated at 100
907 °C for 2.5 h. 400 mL water was added with stirring, after which the precipitate was filtered
908 and washed with water to give *tert*-butyl (6-fluoro-4-(3-(hydroxymethyl)-2-oxa-8-
909 azaspiro[4.5]decan-8-yl)-2-((2-methylpyrimidin-5-yl)oxy)-9H-pyrimido[4,5-b]indol-8-
910 yl)(methyl)carbamate as a yellow solid in 71.5% yield (8.50 g, 14.3 mol). The product was
911 used in the next step without further purification.

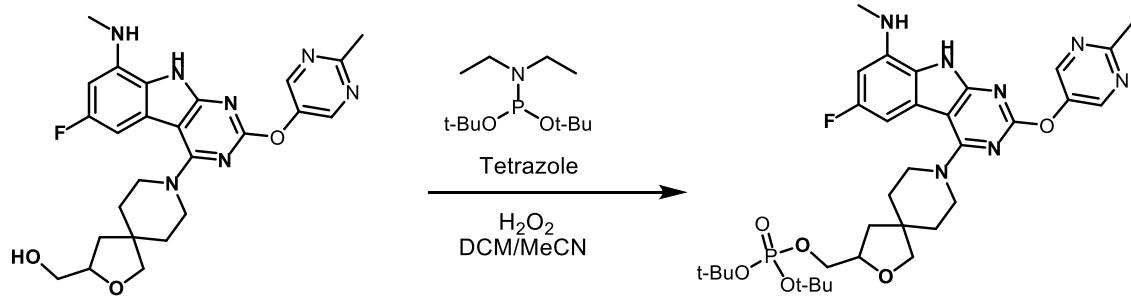
912 **Scheme 2**



926 (d, J = 2.9 Hz, 1), 4.67 (s, 1), 4.04 – 3.90 (m, 1), 3.68 (ddd, J = 18.1, 13.0, 5.1 Hz, 2), 3.63
 927 – 3.47 (m, 4), 3.41 (d, J = 4.7 Hz, 2), 2.85 (d, J = 3.8 Hz, 3), 2.66 (s, 3), 1.93 (dd, J = 12.3,
 928 7.2 Hz, 1). $[\alpha]_{D}^{22} = -3.49$ (c 0.5, MeOH). LRMS m/z: $[M+H]^+$ Calcd for $C_{25}H_{29}FN_7O_3$ 494.2;
 929 found 494.2.

930 **Scheme 3**

931



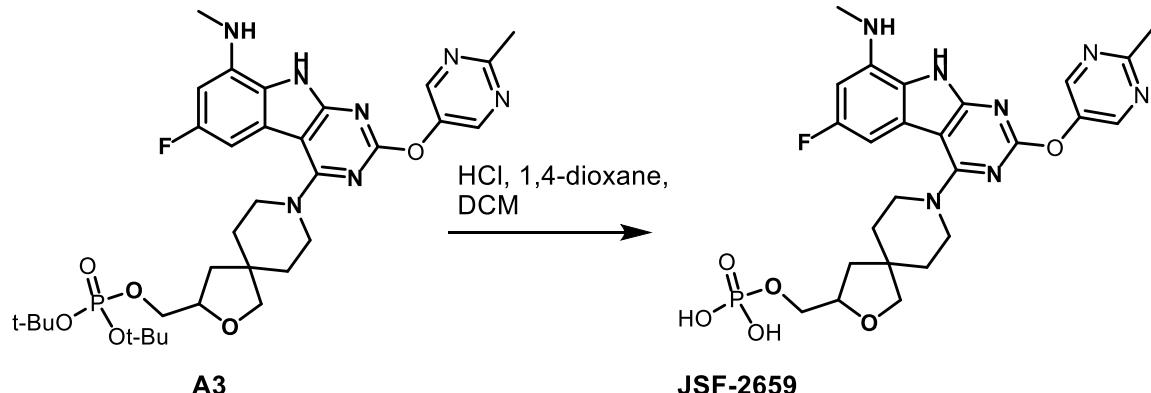
932 JSF-2414

A3

934 To JSF-2414 (1.45 g, 2.94 mmol) in dichloromethane (20 mL) and acetonitrile (2
 935 mL) was added a tetrazole solution (18.0 mL, 8.10 mmol, 0.45 M in acetonitrile) and di-
 936 *tert*-butyl N,N-diethylphosphoramidite (2.20 mL, 7.91 mmol). The mixture was stirred at rt
 937 for 2 h. Then a 20% aqueous solution of H₂O₂ (3.0 mL) was added. After being stirred at
 938 rt for 10 min, the mixture was extracted with ethyl acetate. The organic phase was washed
 939 with saturated aqueous brine solution and dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate. The
 940 solution was filtered, concentrated and purified by flash column chromatography on silica
 941 gel, eluting with 0 – 4% methanol/dichloromethane to give di-*tert*-butyl ((8-(6-fluoro-8-
 942 (methylamino)-2-((2-methylpyrimidin-5-yl)oxy)-9H-pyrimido[4,5-b]indol-4-yl)-2-oxa-8-
 943 azaspiro[4.5]decan-3-yl)methyl) phosphate as a brown oil in 64.6% yield (1.30 g, 1.90
 944 mmol). LRMS m/z: [M+H]⁺Calcd for C₃₃H₆FN₇O₃P 686.3; found 686.2.

945

946 **Scheme 4**



947

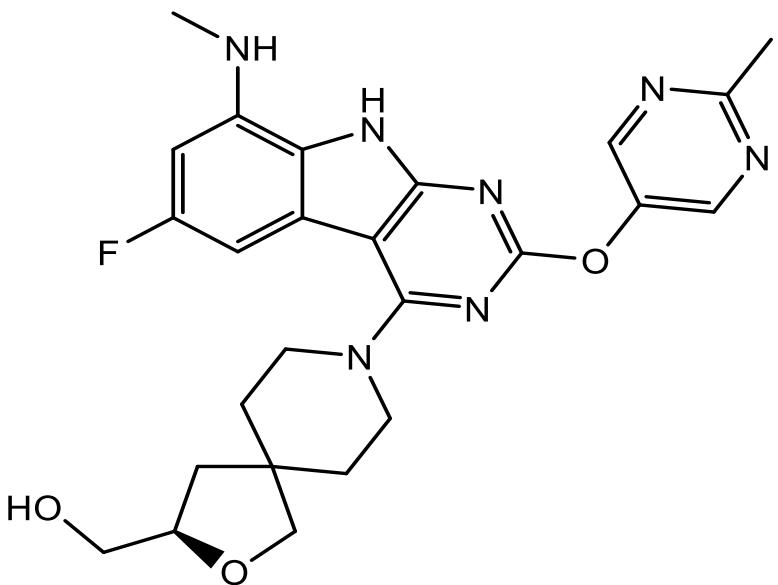
948 To A3 = di-*tert*-butyl ((8-(6-fluoro-8-(methylamino)-2-((2-methylpyrimidin-5-yl)oxy)-
949 9H-pyrimido[4,5-*b*]indol-4-yl)-2-oxa-8-azaspiro[4.5]decan-3-yl)methyl) phosphate (260
950 mg, 0.379 mmol) in dichloromethane (10 mL) was added 0.7 mL 4 N HCl_(aq) in 1,4-dioxane
951 (2.8 mmol) dropwise. The mixture was stirred at rt for 10 min. Then dichloromethane was
952 removed by pipette. The solid was washed with ethyl acetate (2 x 10 mL) and dried *in*
953 *vacuo* to give JSF-2659 as a yellow powder in 99% yield (250 mg, 0.377 mmol). Elemental
954 analysis was consistent with two HCl and one H₂O molecules per molecule of targeted
955 product. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, D₂O) δ 8.53 (s, 2), 6.27 (d, J = 11.8 Hz, 1), 6.22 (d, J = 10.2
956 Hz, 1), 4.26 – 4.14 (m, 1), 3.82 – 3.72 (m, 1), 3.70 – 3.61 (m, 1), 3.58 (s, 2), 3.29 – 3.05
957 (m, 4), 2.75 (s, 3), 2.62 (s, 3), 1.97 – 1.85 (m, 1), 1.46 (s, 5). Two Hs were unaccounted
958 for and presumably were the two N-Hs which were exchanging with D₂O. LRMS m/z:
959 [M+H]⁺Calcd for C₂₅H₂₉FN₇O₆P 573.2; found 574.2. The bis-sodium salt JSF-2659-B was
960 prepared by adding saturated aqueous NaHCO₃ to the HCl salt in water. Purification by
961 HPLC, eluting with water/acetonitrile gave a white solidJSF-2659-B. ¹H NMR (500 MHz,
962 d₆-DMSO) δ 11.9 (s, 1), 8.76 (s, 2), 6.67 (d, J = 9.8 Hz, 1), 6.41 (d, J = 11.8, 1), 4.10 –
963 4.10 (m, 1), 3.87 – 3.77 (m, 2), 3.75 – 3.62 (m, 2), 3.59 (s, 3), 3.57 – 3.49 (m, 2), 2.85 (s,
964 3), 2.67 (s, 3), 1.73 – 1.61 (m, 4), 1.59(s, 1), 1.53 (dd, J = 12.2, 8.6 Hz, 1). Also noted
965 10.3– 9.0 (brs, solvent H₂O bound to OH of acid). LRMS m/z: [M+H]⁺Calcd for
966 C₂₅H₃₀FN₇O₆P 574.2; found 574.2.

967

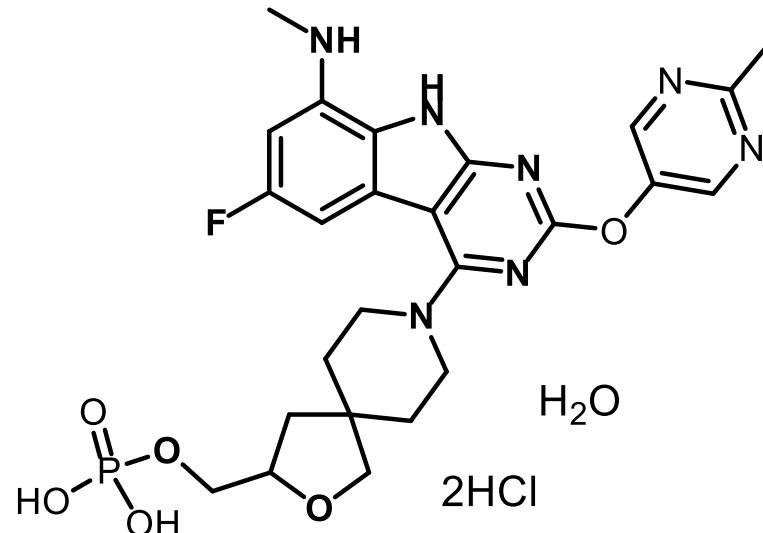
Table. 1 Individual MIC values for clinical isolates of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*

Strain ID		Test and Control Articles MIC ($\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{ml}^{-1}$)						
Southern Research	CDC	JSF-2414	Azi	Cfx	Cro	Cip	Pen	Tet
		MIC Range	MIC Range	MIC Range	MIC Range	MIC Range	MIC Range	MIC Range
		0.0005-0.03	0.016->16.0	0.016 - 4	<0.002-0.125	<0.016 - 16	<0.008 - 4	0.063 - 16
CDC1	GCREF2012016	0.0039	0.25	0.125	0.031	8	1	2
CDC2	GCREF2012045	0.0039	0.5	0.125	0.031	16	1	1
CDC3	GCREF2013013	0.0039	0.125	0.125	0.031	8	1	1
CDC4	GCREF2013030	0.0039	0.125	0.125	0.031	8	1	0.5
CDC5	GCREF2012001	0.0039	0.5	0.125	0.063	8	1	1
CDC6	GCREF2012002	0.0078	0.5	0.25	0.063	8	1	1
CDC8	GCREF2012004	0.002	0.125	0.125	0.016	8	0.25	1
CDC9	GCREF2012005	0.0039	0.125	0.125	0.031	8	1	1
CDC10	GCREF2012006	0.0039	0.5	0.125	0.031	16	1	1
CDC11	GCREF2012007	0.0039	0.25	0.125	0.031	8	1	1
CDC12	GCREF2012008	0.0039	0.125	0.25	0.031	8	1	1
CDC13	GCREF2012009	0.0039	0.125	0.063	0.031	8	1	1
CDC14	GCREF2012010	0.0039	0.125	0.25	0.031	8	1	1
CDC15	GCREF2012011	0.0078	4	0.031	0.008	2	0.125	0.5
CDC16	GCREF2012012	0.0078	0.25	4	0.063	8	2	1
CDC18	GCREF2012014	0.0078	0.5	0.063	0.063	16	1	1
CDC19	GCREF2012015	0.0039	8	0.125	0.008	<0.016	0.25	0.5
CDC20	GCREF2012017	0.016	>16.0	0.125	0.063	2	0.125	1
CDC21	GCREF2012018	0.0039	0.125	0.25	0.031	16	1	1
CDC22	GCREF2012019	0.03	0.5	0.031	0.008	4	0.25	1
CDC23	GCREF2012020	0.0078	0.125	0.125	0.031	8	1	1
CDC24	GCREF2012021	0.0039	0.25	0.063	0.063	8	1	1
CDC25	GCREF2012022	0.0039	0.125	0.25	0.031	8	2	1
CDC26	GCREF2012023	0.0078	0.5	0.063	0.031	4	0.25	0.5
CDC27	GCREF2012024	0.0039	0.25	0.063	0.031	8	1	1
CDC28	GCREF2012025	0.0039	0.25	0.25	0.031	16	1	1
CDC29	GCREF2012026	0.0078	0.5	0.125	0.016	<0.016	1	1
CDC30	GCREF2012027	0.0078	0.25	0.125	0.031	8	1	1
CDC31	GCREF2012028	0.0078	0.5	0.25	0.031	8	2	2
CDC32	GCREF2012029	0.0078	0.125	0.125	0.063	8	1	0.5
CDC33	GCREF2012030	0.0078	0.125	0.5	0.125	2	1	0.5
CDC34	GCREF2012031	0.0039	0.125	0.063	0.125	16	1	1
CDC35	GCREF2012032	0.0039	0.25	0.25	0.125	16	2	2
CDC36	GCREF2012033	0.002	4	0.063	0.031	8	0.25	1
CDC37	GCREF2012034	0.0039	0.25	0.125	0.031	16	1	1
CDC38	GCREF2012035	0.0039	0.25	0.063	0.031	16	1	1
CDC39	GCREF2012036	0.0039	0.25	0.25	0.031	8	2	1
CDC40	GCREF2012037	0.0039	0.25	0.125	0.031	8	1	1
CDC41	GCREF2012038	0.0039	0.25	0.25	0.031	8	2	1
CDC42	GCREF2012039	0.0039	0.25	0.25	0.031	16	2	2
CDC43	GCREF2012040	0.0039	0.25	0.25	0.031	16	2	2
CDC45	GCREF2012042	0.0078	0.5	0.25	0.125	16	2	2
CDC46	GCREF2012043	0.0039	0.125	0.125	0.031	16	1	1
CDC47	GCREF2012044	0.0039	0.5	0.125	0.031	16	1	1
CDC48	GCREF2012046	0.0039	0.25	0.125	0.031	8	1	1

CDC49	GCREF2012047	0.0039	0.5	0.25	0.031	16	2	1
CDC50	GCREF2012048	0.0078	0.25	0.25	0.063	16	2	1
CDC51	GCREF2012049	0.0039	0.125	0.125	0.008	16	2	1
CDC52	GCREF2012050	0.0039	0.125	0.25	0.008	16	2	1
CDC53	GCREF2012051	0.0078	0.125	0.25	0.004	16	2	1
CDC54	GCREF2012052	0.0039	0.016	0.25	0.004	16	2	1
CDC55	GCREF2013001	0.0078	0.125	0.125	0.031	16	1	1
CDC56	GCREF2013002	0.0039	0.125	0.25	0.016	16	1	1
CDC57	GCREF2013003	0.0039	0.125	0.125	0.004	<0.016	1	0.5
CDC58	GCREF2013004	0.002	0.125	0.25	0.004	16	2	1
CDC59	GCREF2013044	0.002	0.125	0.25	0.004	4	2	16
CDC60	GCREF2013005	0.0078	0.125	0.125	0.031	16	4	1
CDC61	GCREF2013006	0.0078	0.25	0.125	0.031	32	4	1
CDC62	GCREF2013007	0.016	0.125	0.25	0.008	0.125	0.25	0.5
CDC63	GCREF2013008	0.0078	0.016	0.125	<0.002	<0.016	<0.008	0.063
CDC64	GCREF2013009	0.016	0.125	0.125	0.008	<0.016	0.5	1
CDC65	GCREF2013010	0.0078	0.125	0.125	0.016	<0.016	0.5	0.5
CDC66	GCREF2013011	0.016	4	0.125	0.008	<0.016	0.25	0.5
CDC67	GCREF2013014	0.0078	0.125	0.125	0.008	0.25	0.5	1
CDC68	GCREF2013016	0.002	0.125	0.063	0.016	16	1	1
CDC69	GCREF2013017	0.002	0.125	0.063	0.031	16	1	1
CDC70	GCREF2013018	0.0039	4	0.125	0.004	16	2	1
CDC71	GCREF2013019	0.016	0.125	0.016	0.008	0.25	0.25	1
CDC72	GCREF2013020	0.0078	0.125	0.25	0.031	16	2	1
CDC73	GCREF2013021	0.016	0.125	0.125	0.008	0.125	0.5	1
CDC74	GCREF2013022	0.016	0.125	0.125	0.008	<0.016	0.25	1
CDC75	GCREF2013023	0.0078	0.5	0.125	0.016	<0.016	0.5	1
CDC76	GCREF2013024	0.0078	0.125	0.125	0.016	<0.016	0.5	1
CDC77	GCREF2013025	0.0078	4	0.125	0.008	0.25	0.125	1
CDC78	GCREF2013026	0.0005	0.031	0.063	0.016	2	0.5	1
CDC79	GCREF2013027	0.0039	0.125	0.125	0.016	16	1	1
CDC80	GCREF2013028	0.0039	8	0.125	0.008	0.25	2	1
CDC81	GCREF2013029	0.0039	0.125	0.25	0.031	16	2	1
CDC82	GCREF2013031	0.0078	2	0.125	0.031	32	1	0.5
CDC83	GCREF2013032	0.016	0.125	0.125	0.008	0.125	0.25	0.5
CDC84	GCREF2013033	0.0078	0.125	0.125	0.008	<0.016	0.25	0.5
CDC86	GCREF2013035	0.0078	0.125	0.125	0.008	0.25	<0.008	0.25
CDC87	GCREF2013036	0.0039	0.125	0.25	0.063	16	2	1
CDC88	GCREF2013037	0.0078	2	0.125	0.031	16	2	0.5
CDC89	GCREF2013038	0.0039	2	0.125	0.008	16	1	1
CDC90	GCREF2013039	0.0078	0.125	0.125	0.031	16	2	1
CDC91	GCREF2013040	0.0078	0.125	4	0.125	16	2	1
CDC92	GCREF2013041	0.0039	0.125	0.125	0.031	16	2	1
CDC93	GCREF2013042	0.0039	0.125	0.125	0.016	16	1	1
CDC94	GCREF2013043	0.0078	2	0.125	0.008	<0.016	0.25	0.5
CDC95	GCREF2013045	0.0078	0.125	0.25	0.031	16	2	1
CDC96	GCREF2013046	0.002	0.125	0.125	0.016	16	1	0.5
CDC97	GCREF2013047	0.0039	0.125	0.125	0.031	16	1	1
CDC98	GCREF2013048	0.0078	2	0.125	0.008	<0.016	0.25	0.5
CDC99	GCREF2013012	0.0078	4	0.125	0.008	<0.016	0.25	0.5
CDC100	GCREF2013015	0.0039	0.125	0.25	0.031	16	1	1



JSF-2414



JSF-2659

	JSF-2414	JSF-2659
Kinetic solubility (μ M)	0.576	440
MLM $t_{1/2}$ (min)	58.2	1386
MLM Cl_{int} (μ L/min/mg protein)	11.9	0.500
HLM $t_{1/2}$ (min)	330	ND
HLM Cl_{int}	2.1	ND
hERG IC50 (mM)	>50	>50

Fig. 1

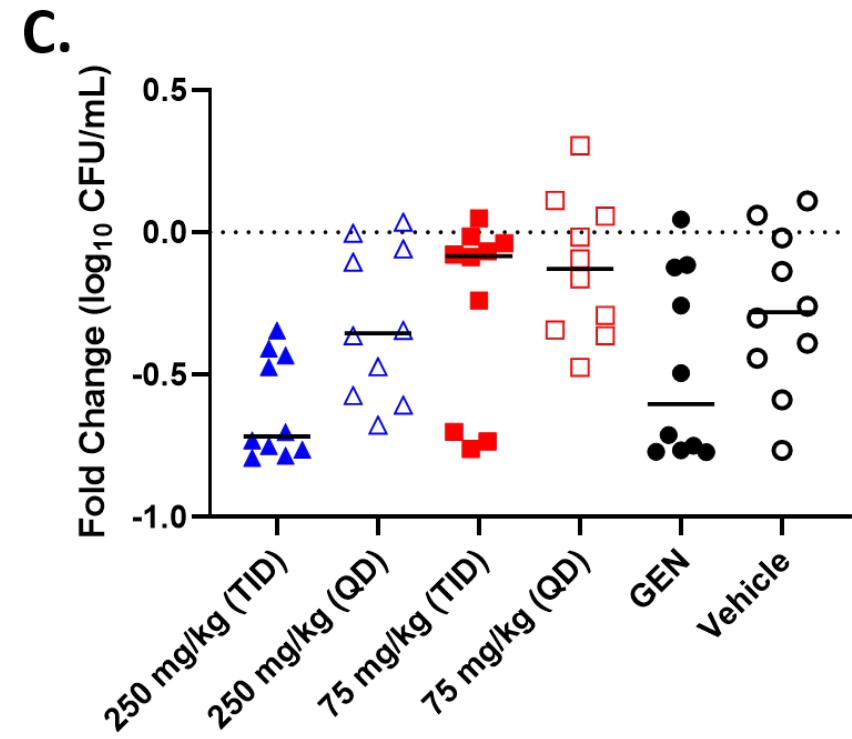
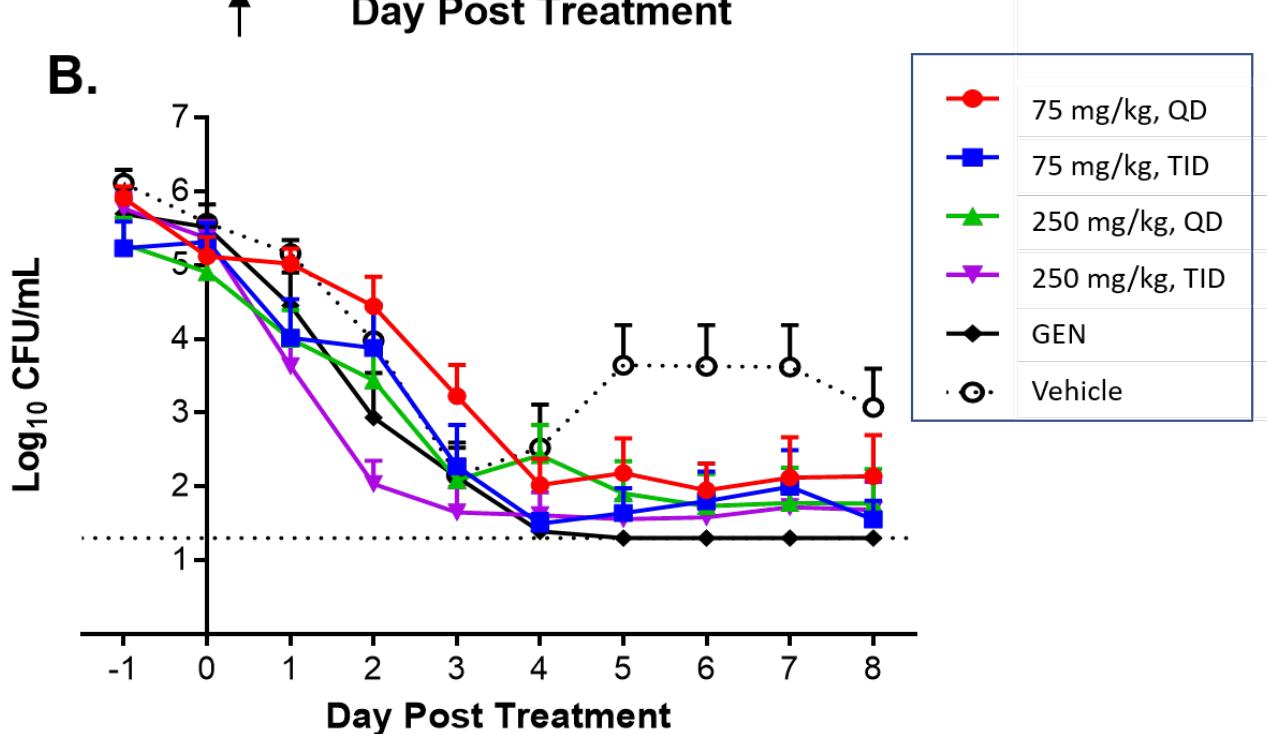
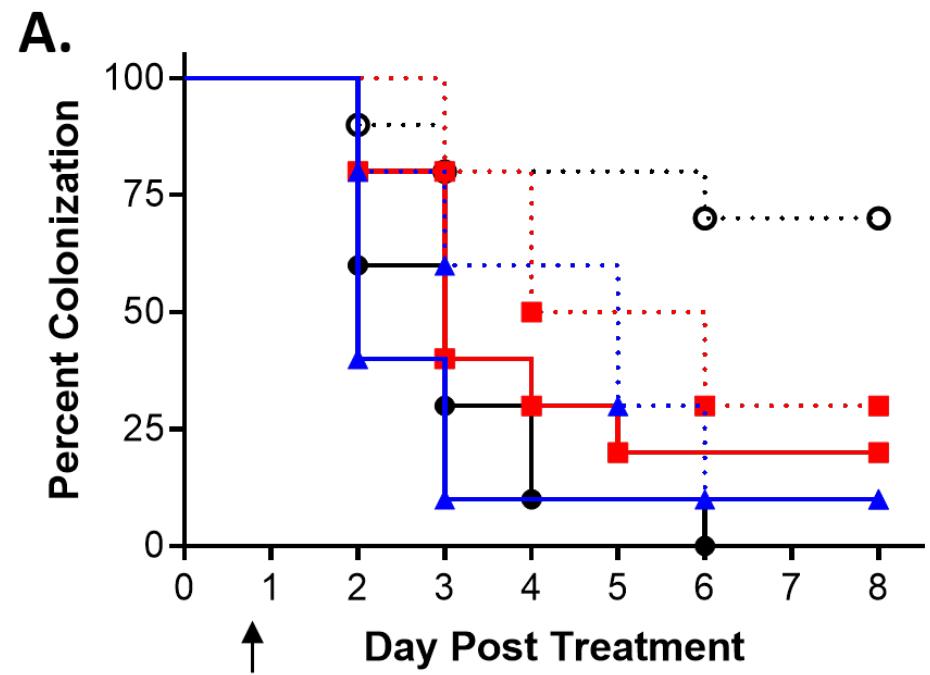


Fig. 2

A.

26 h post-infection

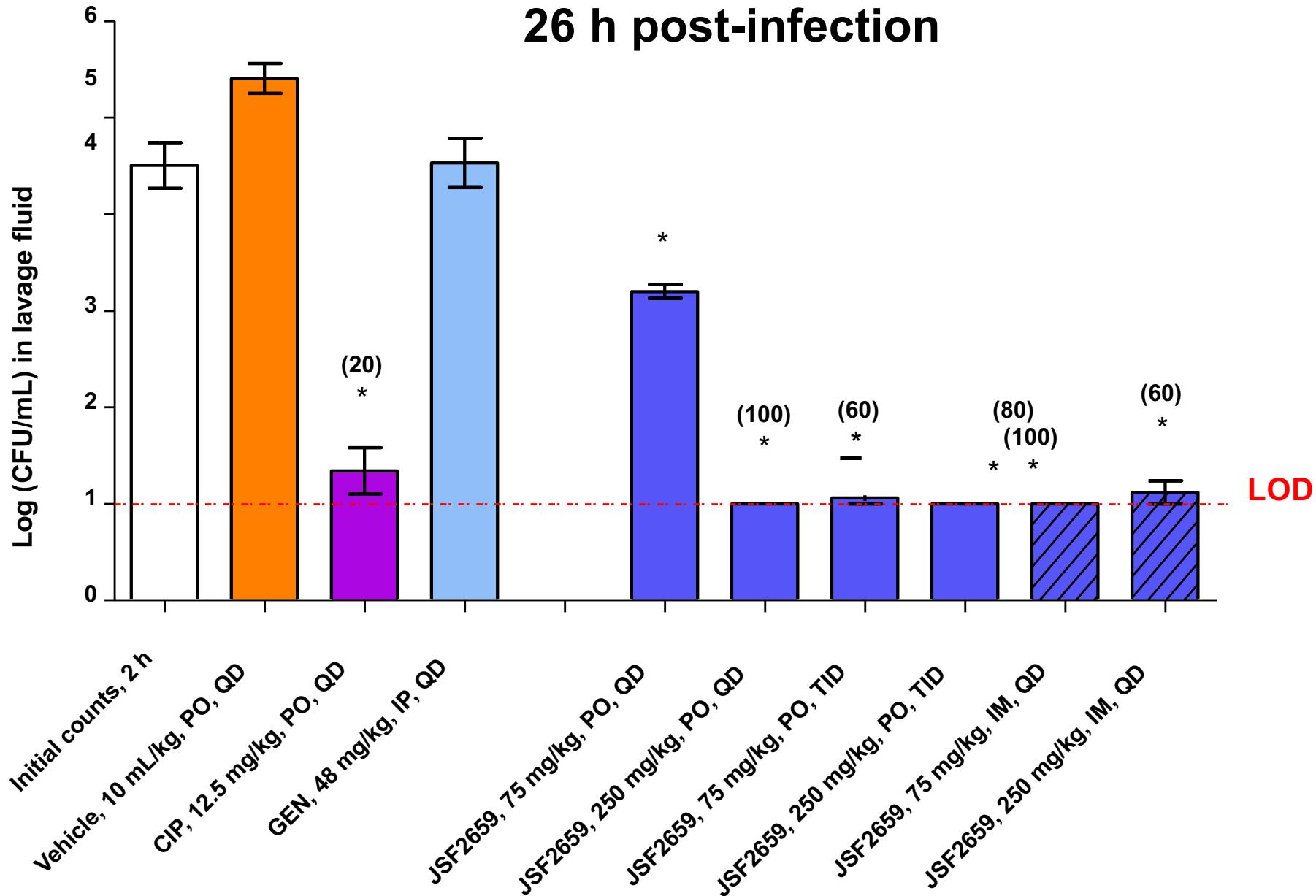


Fig. 3

B

26 h post-infection

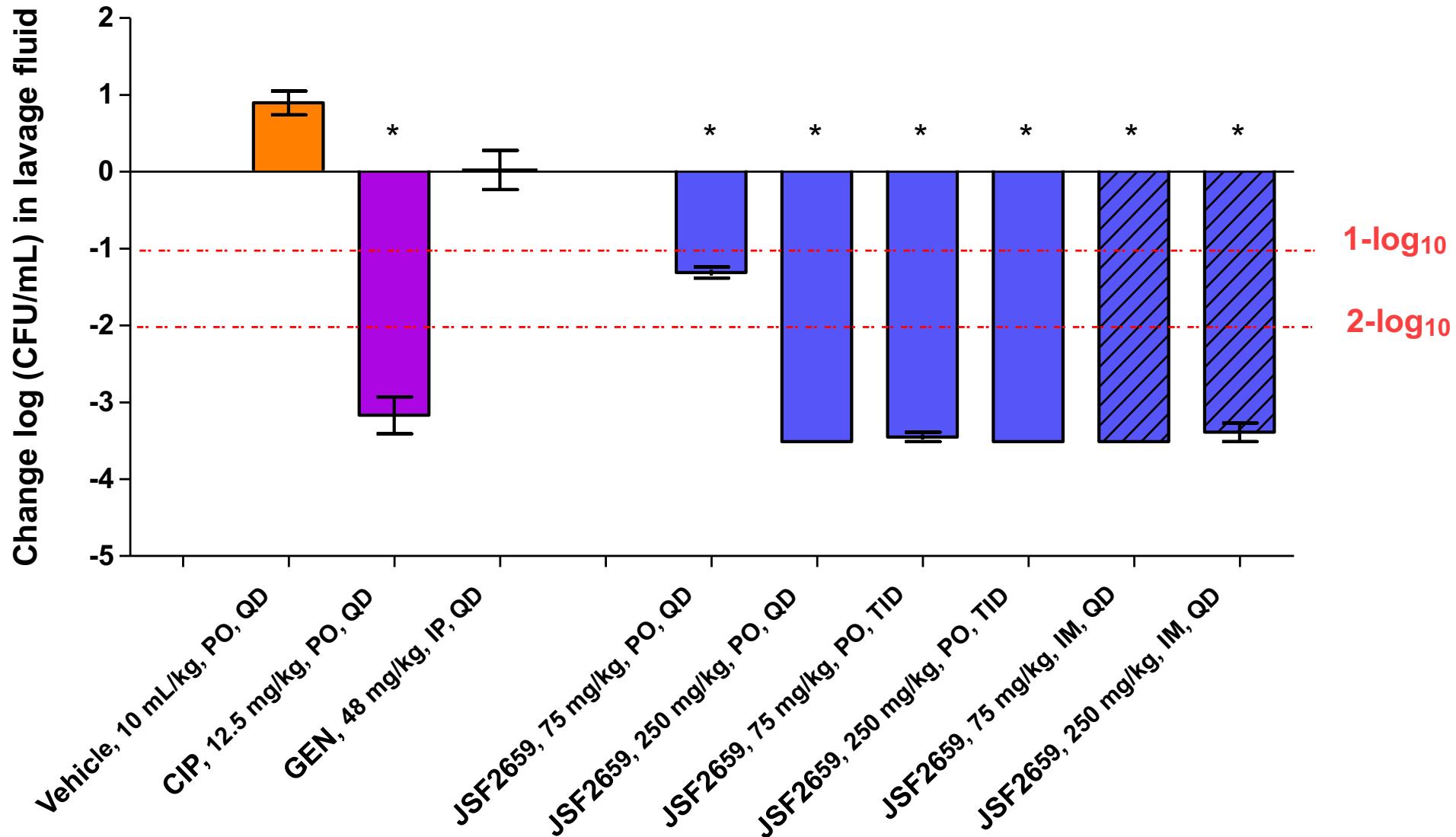


Fig. 3

C.

74 h post-infection

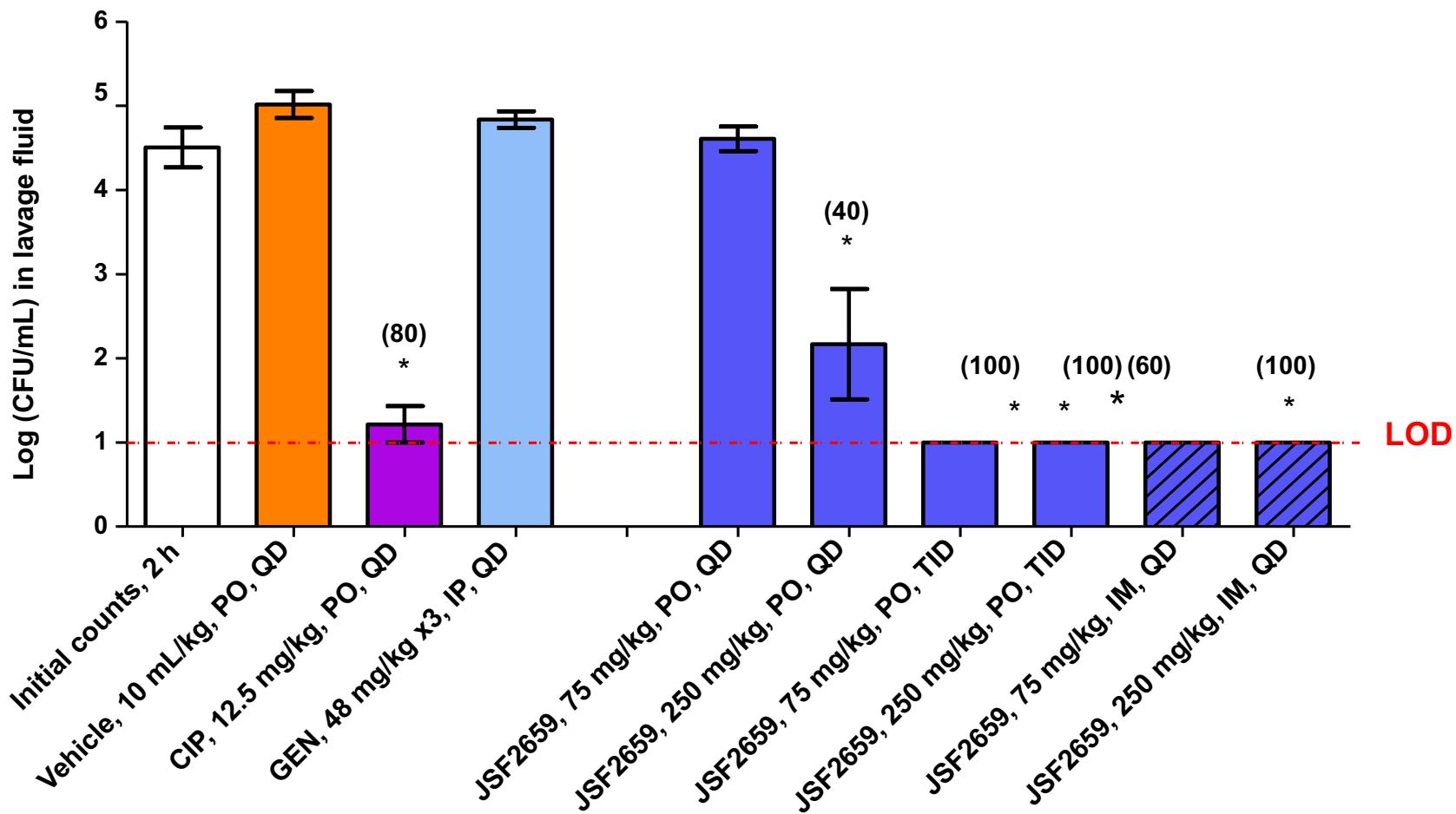


Fig. 3

D

74 h post-infection

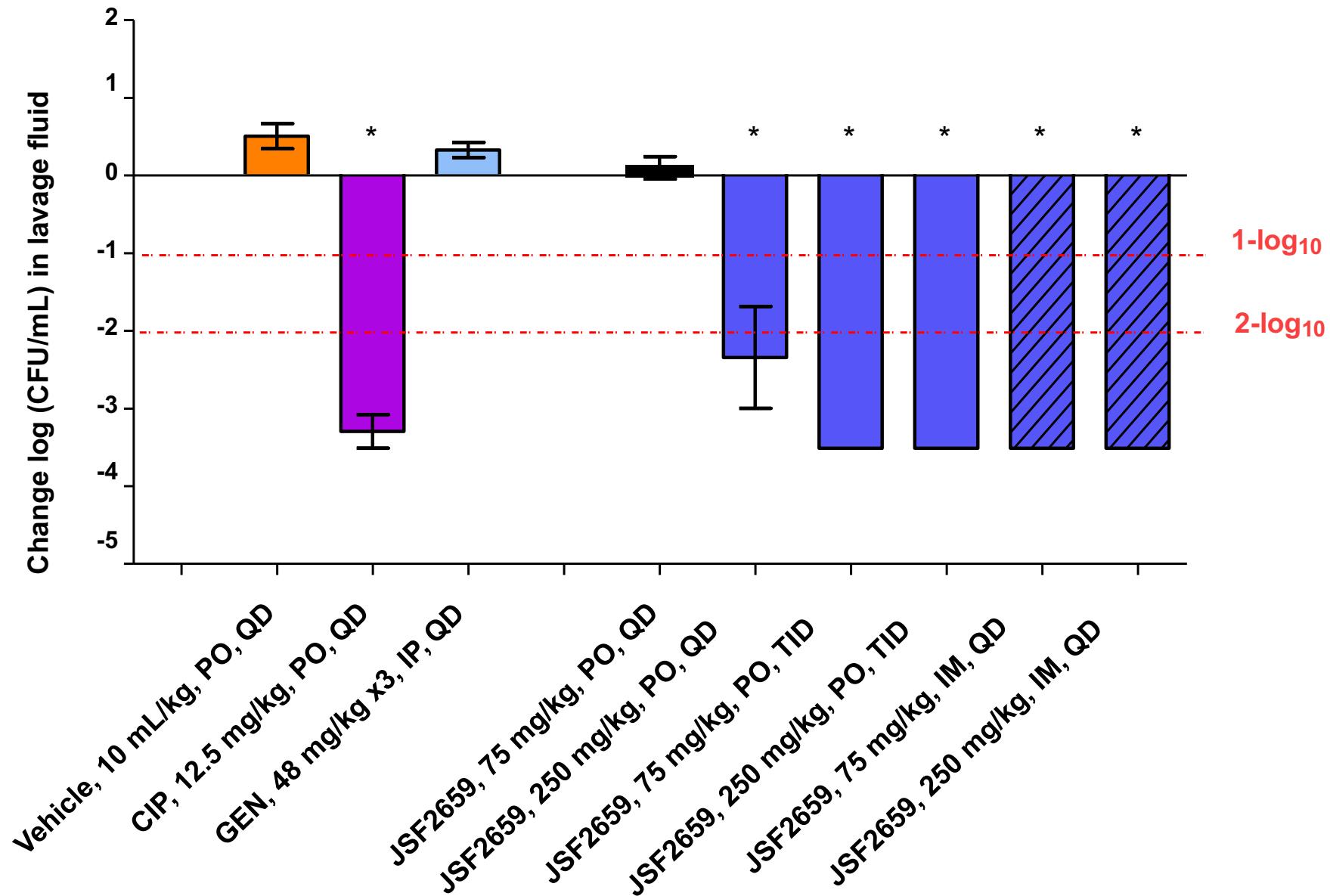


Fig. 3

E

170 h post-infection

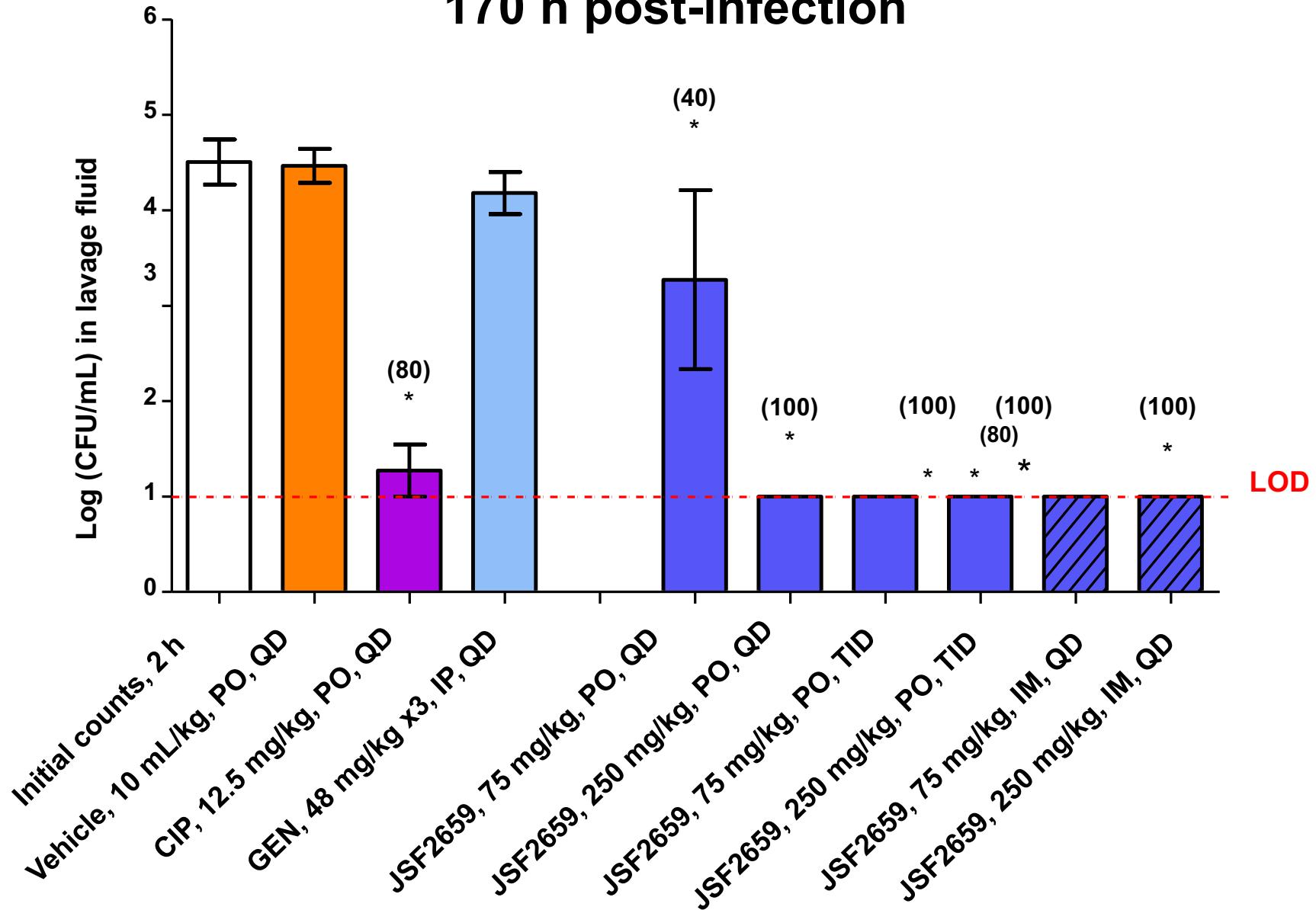


Fig. 3

F

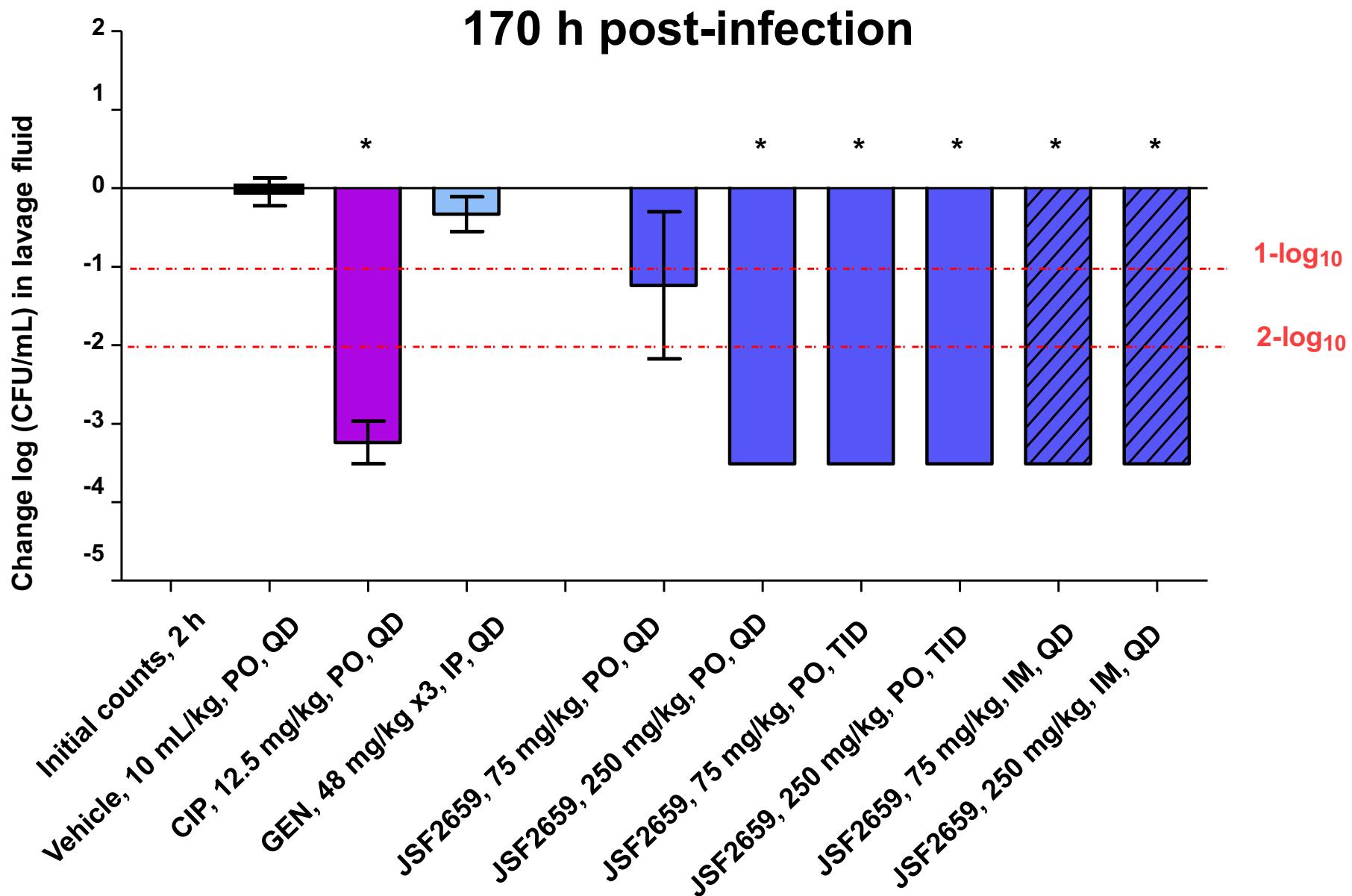
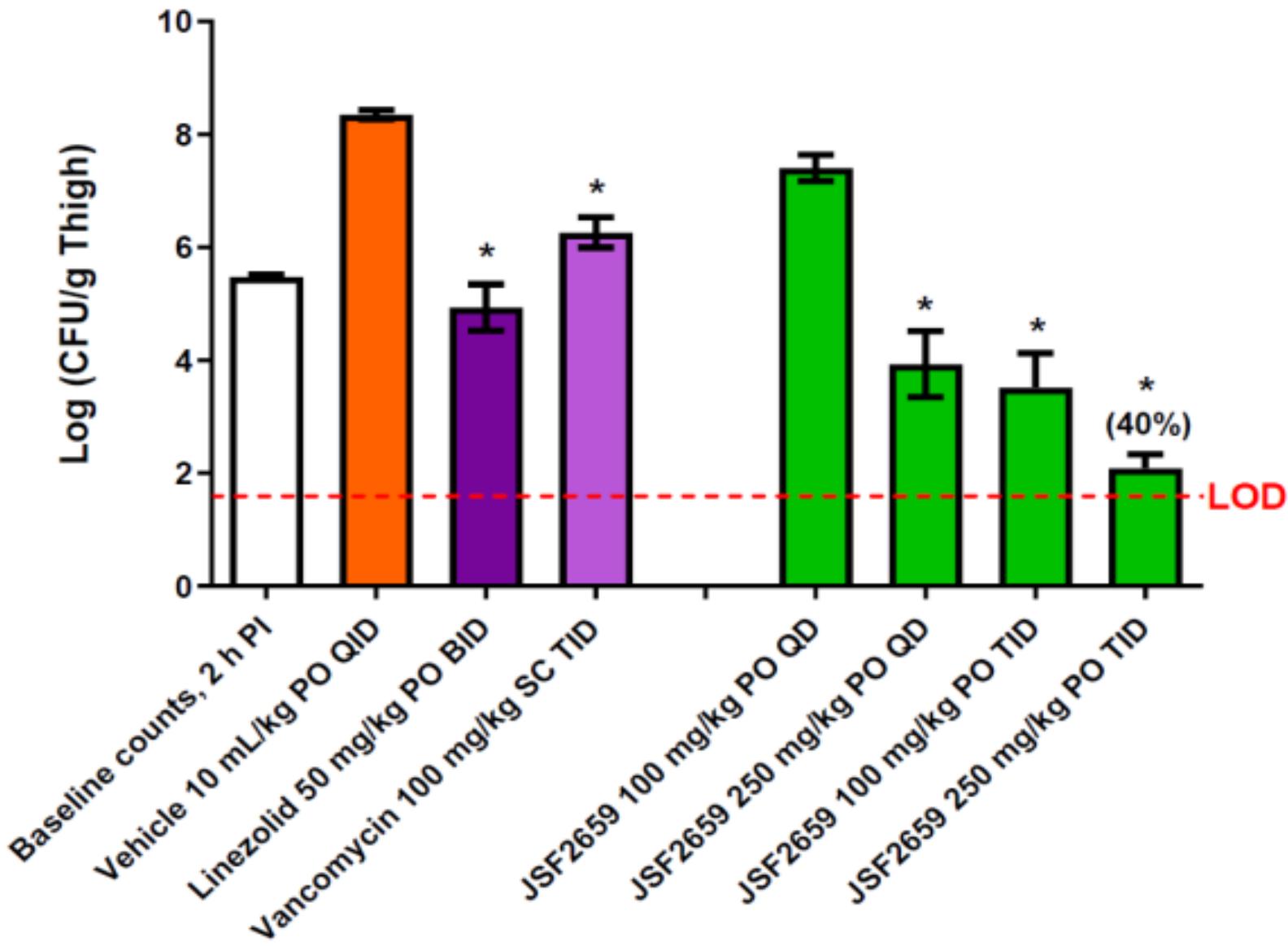
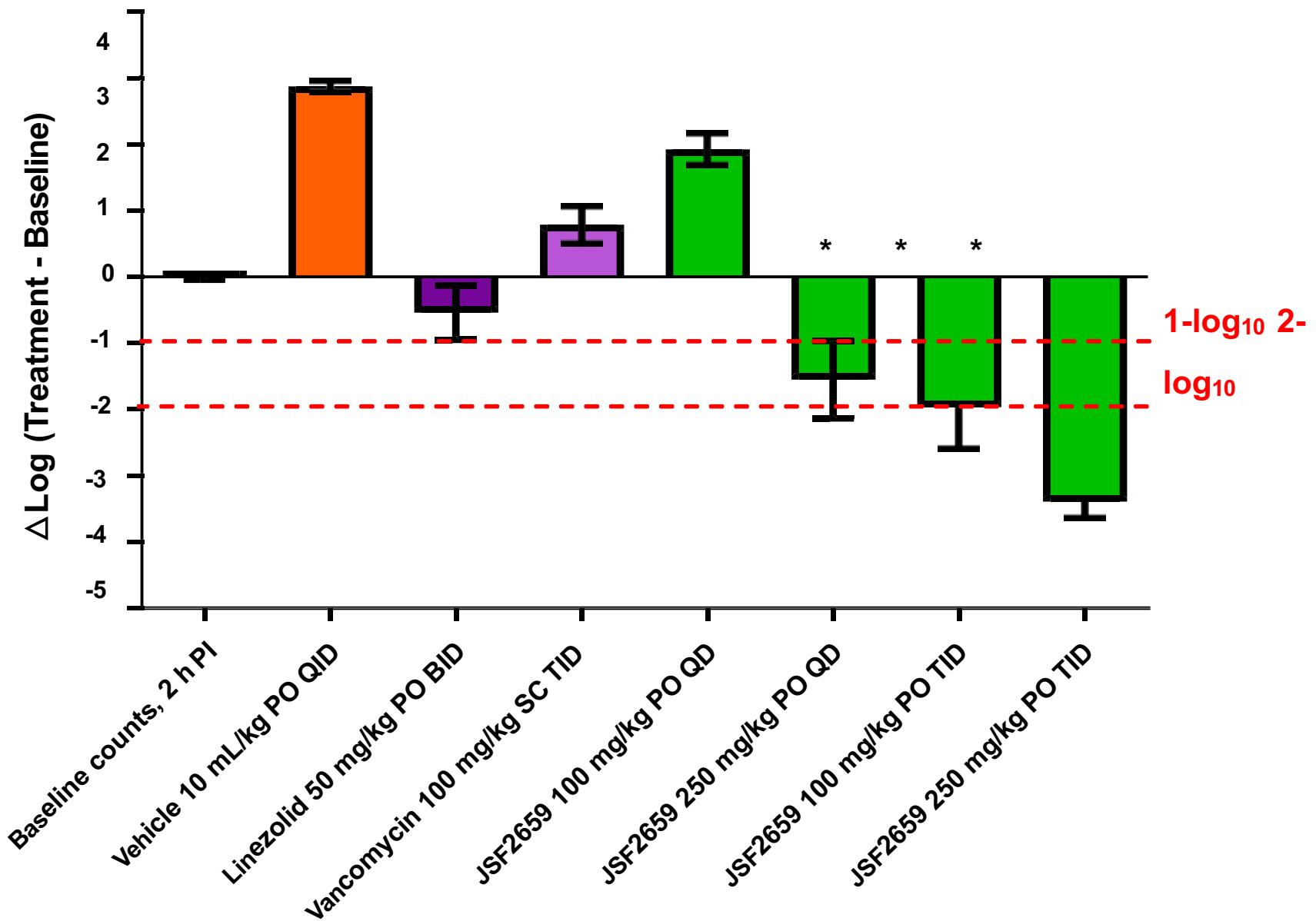
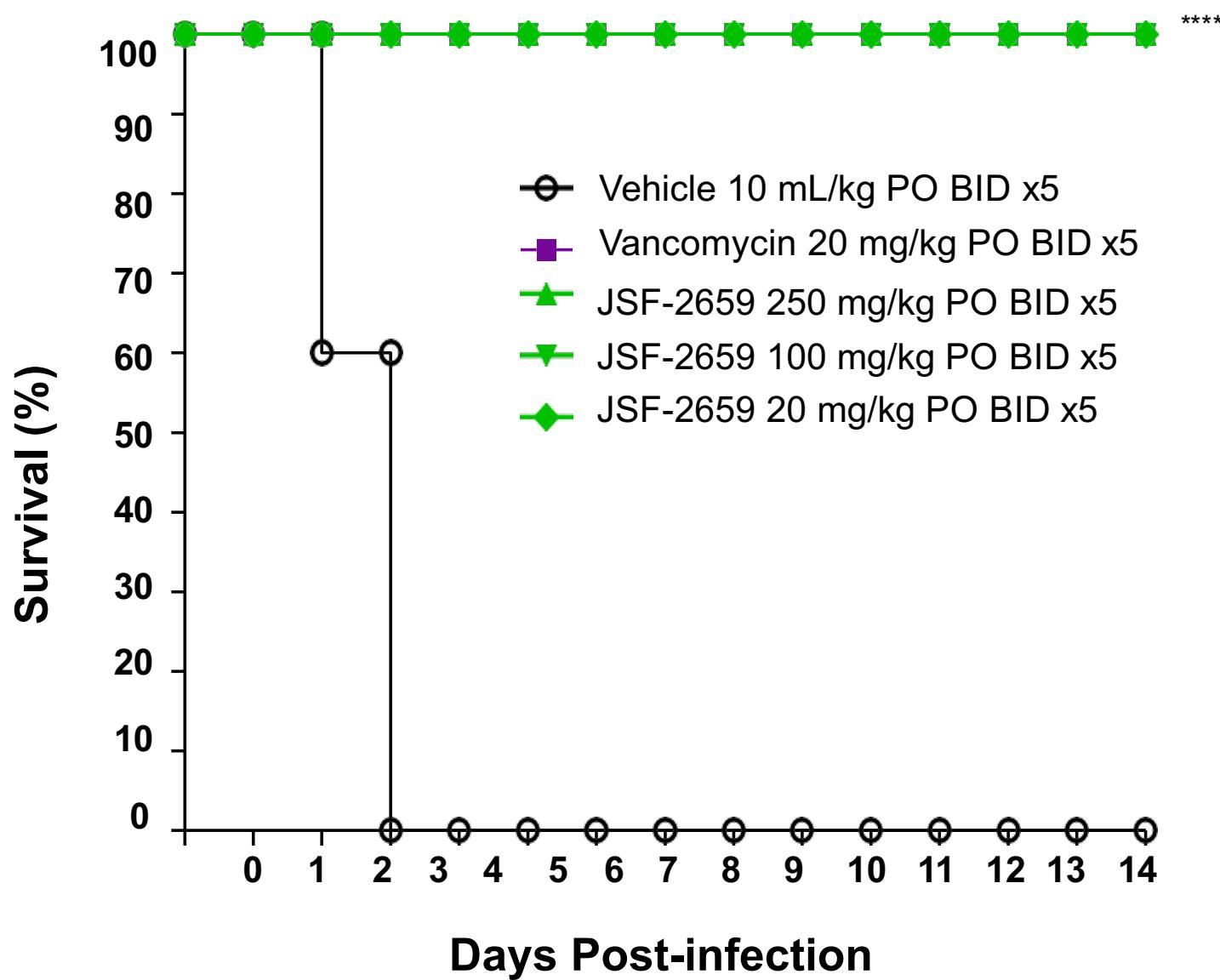
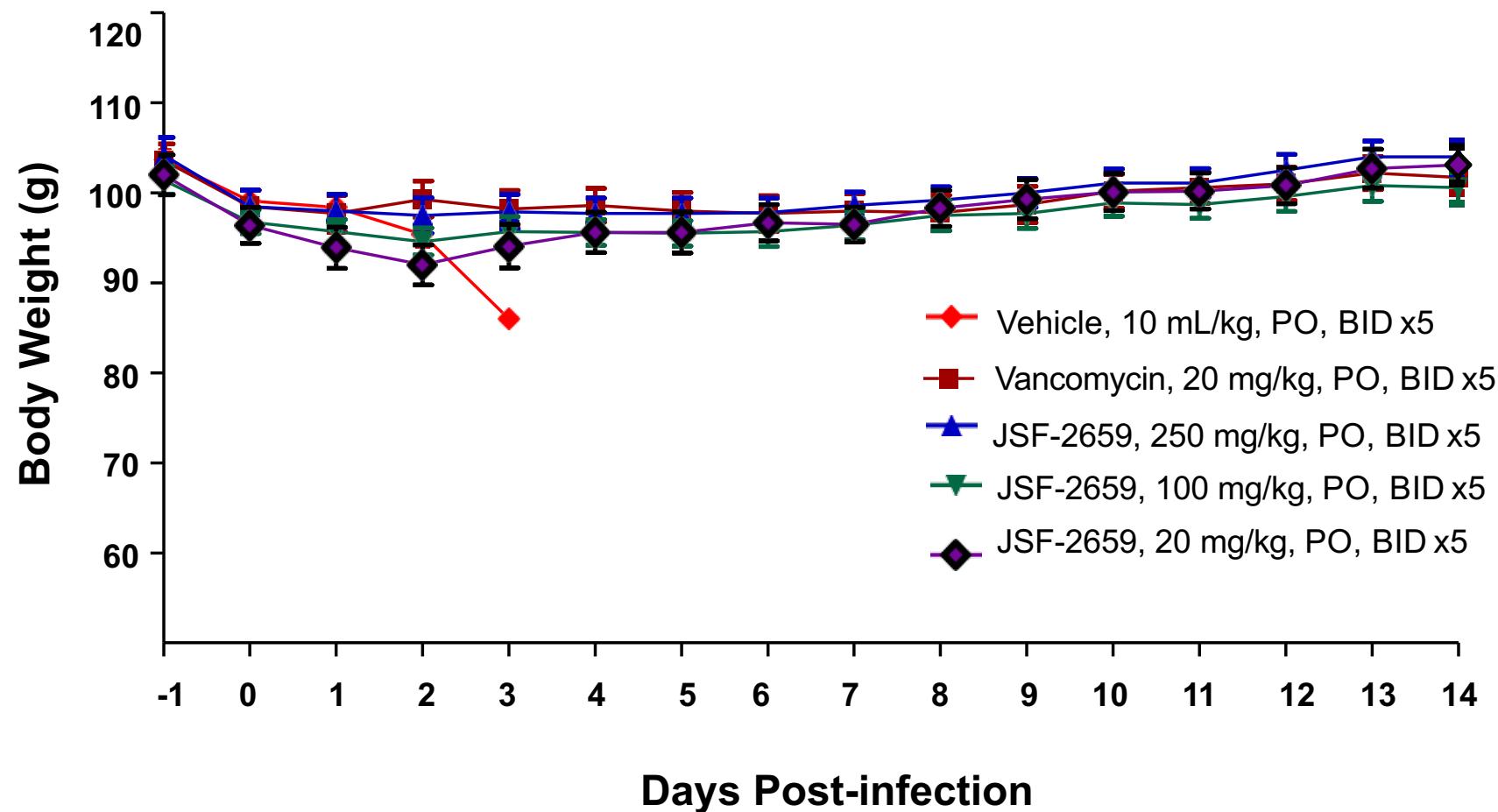


Fig. 3

A**Fig. 4**

B**Fig. 4**

A**Fig. 5**

B.**Fig. 5**

