

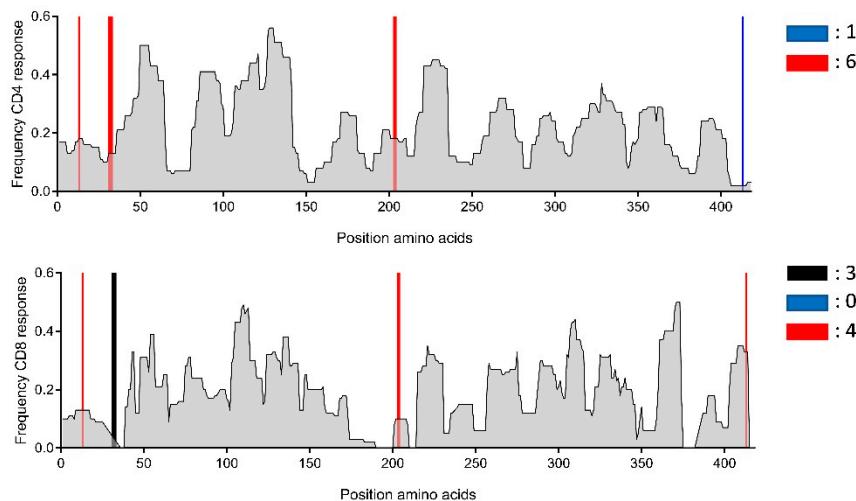
Supplementary Material

SARS-CoV-2-Specific T-Cell as a Potent Therapeutic Strategy against Immune Evasion of Emerging COVID-19 Variants

S1.1. Supplementary Figures

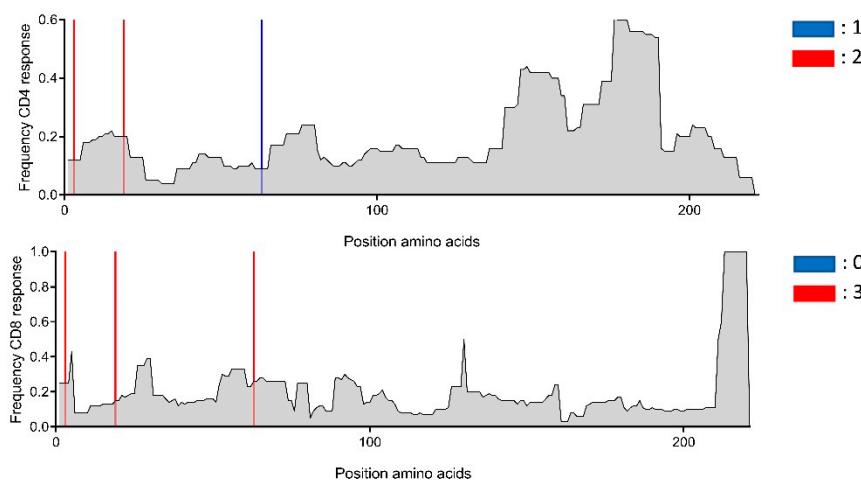
A. SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variant (BA.5) - 7 mutations in the nucleocapsid

*Red line: Ancestral SARS-CoV-2 frequency of recognition > 10%
 *Blue line: Ancestral SARS-CoV-2 frequency of recognition < 10%
 *Black line: Ancestral SARS-CoV-2 frequency of recognition unknown



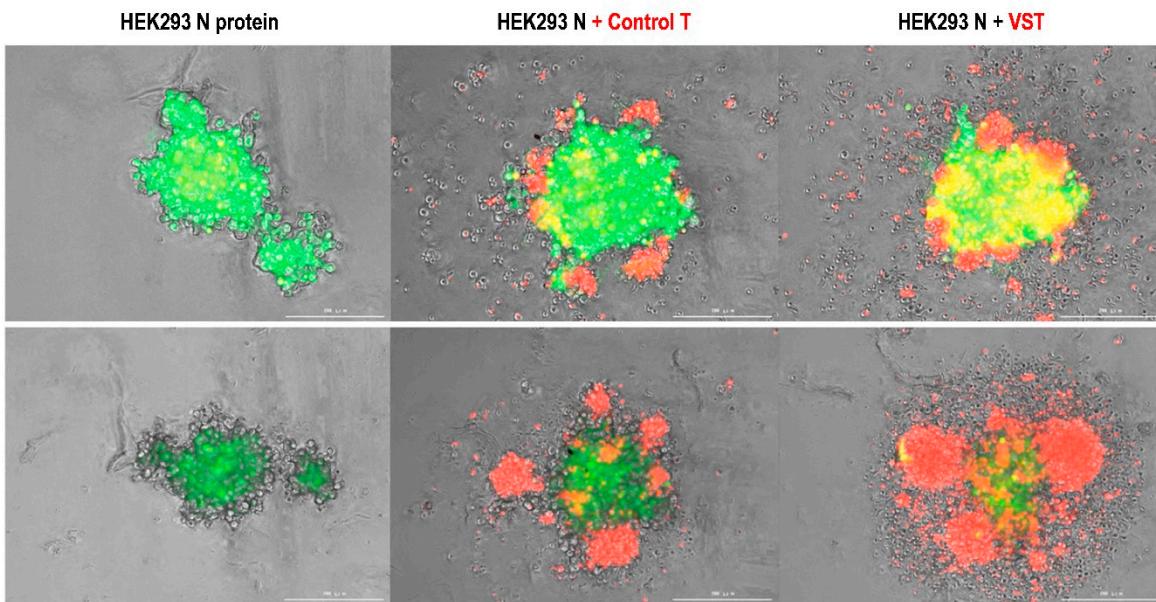
B. SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variant (BA.5) - 3 mutations in the membrane

*Red line: Ancestral SARS-CoV-2 frequency of recognition > 10%
 *Blue line: Ancestral SARS-CoV-2 frequency of recognition < 10%

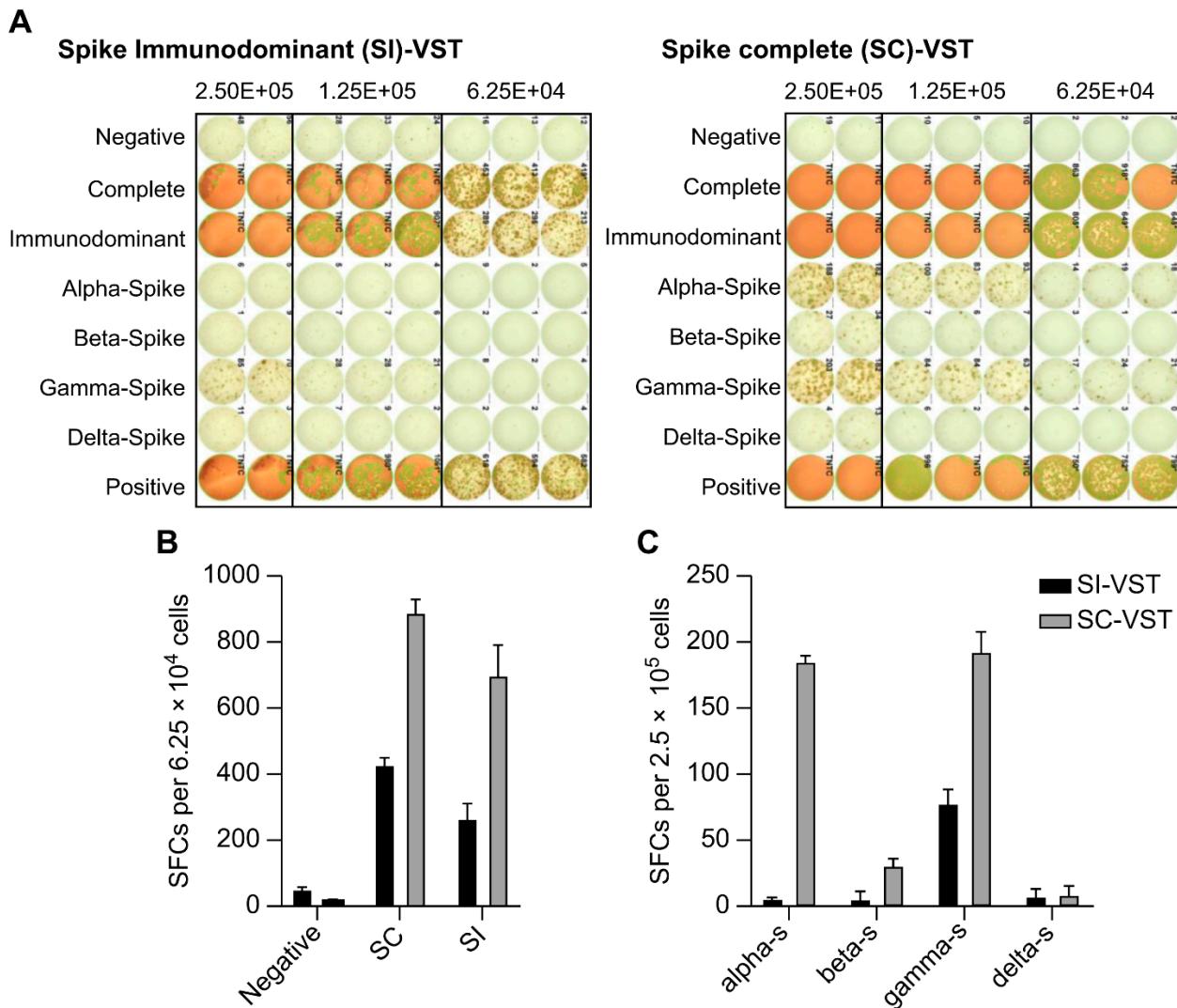


Supplementary Figure S1. VSTs educated by the ancestral SARS-CoV-2 strain recognize conserved nucleocapsid and membrane epitopes in the Omicron variant. The expected response frequency for the nucleocapsid and membrane-mutation domain of Omicron BA.5. (A) Analysis of nucleocapsid-protein epitopes in the Omicron sub-variant (BA.5) targeted by CD4⁺ T cells (conservation rate: 82%) and recognized by CD8⁺ T cells (conservation rate: 85%). (B) Analysis of membrane-protein epitopes in the Omicron sub-variant (BA.5) targeted by CD4⁺ T cells (conservation rate: 96%) and recognized by CD8⁺ T cells (conservation rate: 96%). SARS-CoV-2: severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2; VST: virus-specific T cell.

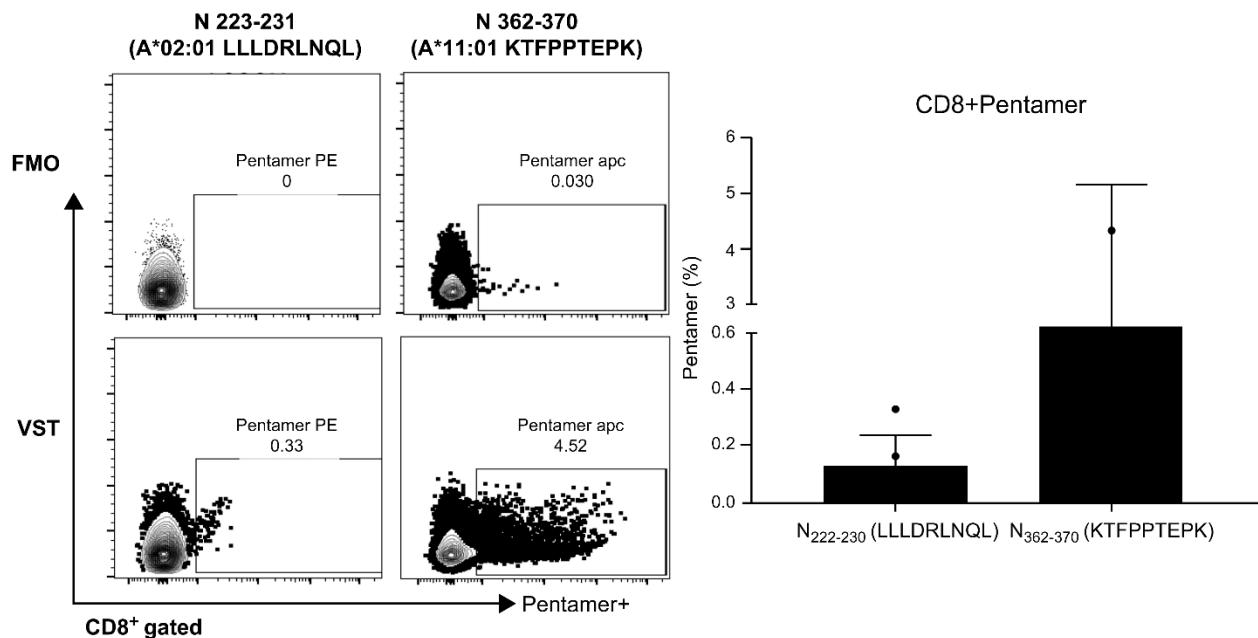
- ✓ Target Cells: HEK293 (N) (CFSE / Ex: 488nm)
- ✓ Effector Cells: VST (PKH26 Red / Ex: 551nm, Em: 567nm)



Supplementary Figure S2. Evaluation of VST cytotoxicity against SARS-CoV-2 N protein-expressing cells. Live cell imaging of VSTs on HEK293 N cells expressing the SARS-CoV-2 N protein. CFSE-labelled HEK293 N cell spheroids were co-cultured with PKH26 Red-labeled control T cells (Control T) and PKH26 Red-labeled SARS-CoV-2-specific T cells (VSTs) for 24 h. CFSE: carboxyfluorescein succinimidyl ester; N: nucleocapsid; SARS-CoV-2: severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2; VST: virus-specific T cell.



Supplementary Figure S3. Comparison of multiple epitope recognition abilities between VSTs stimulated by spike immunodominant peptide and VSTs stimulated by spike complete peptide. Based on ELISPOT analysis, the multiple epitope recognition abilities were compared between VSTs stimulated by spike immunodominant (SI) peptide and VSTs stimulated by spike complete (SC) peptide. (A) VST response against SARS-CoV-2 antigens. Data in box plots show spot-forming cells (SFCs). (B) Summarized results from 6.25×10^4 cells and (C) 2.5×10^5 cells. SARS-CoV-2: severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2; VST: virus-specific T cell.



Supplementary Figure S6. VSTs educated by the ancestral SARS-CoV-2 strain recognize conserved nucleocapsid epitopes in the Omicron variant. Representative data showcasing the pronounced reactivity of VSTs against two specific Omicron BA.5 nucleocapsid-protein immunogenic epitopes, determined by Pentamer analysis. A bar graph consolidates the results from 10 donors. APC: allophycocyanin; FMO: fluorescence minus one; N: nucleocapsid; PE: phycoerythrin; SARS-CoV-2: severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2; VST: virus-specific T cell.

