

Intracellular AIEC LF82 relies on SOS and stringent responses to survive, multiply and tolerate antibiotics

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- 2 tolerate antibiotics.
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25 Abstract

26 Adherent Invasive Escherichia coli (AIEC) strains recovered from Crohn's disease lesions 27 survive and multiply within macrophages. A reference strain for this family, AIEC LF82, 28 forms microcolonies within phagolysosomes, an environment that prevents commensal 29 E. coli multiplication. Little is known about the LF82 intracellular growth status, and 30 signals leading to macrophage intra-vacuolar multiplication. We used single-cell analysis, genetic dissection and mathematical models to monitor the growth status and 31 32 cell cycle regulation of intracellular LF82. We found that within macrophages, bacteria 33 may replicate or undergo non-growing phenotypic switches. This switch results from 34 stringent response firing immediately after uptake by macrophages or at later stages, following genotoxic damage and SOS induction during intracellular replication. 35 Importantly, non-growers resist treatment with various antibiotics. Thus, intracellular 36 37 challenges induce AIEC LF82 phenotypic heterogeneity and non-growing bacteria that 38 could provide a reservoir for antibiotic-tolerant bacteria responsible for relapsing 39 infections.

40

41 Introduction

42 Adherent Invasive *Escherichia coli* (AIEC) strains recovered from Crohn's disease (CD) 43 lesions are able to adhere to and invade cultured intestinal epithelial cells and to survive and multiply within macrophages (Glasser et al 2001). Attention around the potential 44 role of AIEC in the pathophysiology of CD is growing (Elhenawy *et al*, 2018); however 45 much remains to be learned about the host-pathogen interactions that govern AIEC 46 47 infection biology. The diversity of virulence factors displayed by multiple AIEC strains 48 suggests that members of this pathovar have evolved different strategies to colonize 49 their hosts. AIEC ability to persist, and in some cases replicate within macrophages is 50 particularly intriguing. Previous work performed with murine macrophage cell lines has 51 revealed that LF82, the first AIEC to have been characterized, multiplies in a vacuole 52 presenting the characteristics of a mature phagolysosome (Bringer *et al.*, 2006). In such 53 an environment, AIEC should encounter acidic, oxidative, genotoxic and proteic stresses. 54 Screening of genes involved in LF82 fitness within macrophage has revealed that HtrA, DsbA, or Fis proteins are required for optimum fitness, (Bringer et al., 2005; Bringer et 55 56 al., 2007; Miquel et al., 2010). These observations confirmed that LF82 encounter 57 stresses in the phagolysosomes. The impact of these stresses on the survival and growth 58 of LF82 inside phagolysomes has not yet been investigated.

59 Studies on the bacterial cell cycle of few model organisms under well-controlled 60 laboratory conditions have revealed that to achieve accurate transmission of the genetic 61 information and optimal growth of the population, molecular processes must be coordinated. (for reviews see Hajduk et al., 2016; Haeusser & Levin, 2008; Margolin & 62 63 Bernander, 2004). When growth conditions deteriorate, the cell cycle can be modified slightly, as in the case of cell filamentation when genotoxic stress induces the SOS 64 65 response, or more drastically when sporulation is induced by nutrient deprivation (Jonas, 2014). Such cell cycle alterations affect the entire population. However, under 66 67 unperturbed conditions, a subset of the population also appears to present a significantly reduced growth rate that allows tolerance to antibiotic treatments. This 68 69 small portion of the population, typically 1/10000 bacteria, is known as persisters 70 (Wood et al., 2013; Lewis, 2010; Bigger, 1944). Persisters have been detected for a 71 number of bacteria. They can be found spontaneously in normally growing or stationary 72 phase populations, or they are induced by exogeneous stresses or mutations. Recently, 73 significant increase of the proportion of S. typhimurium persisters has been observed

74 when these bacteria invade macrophages (Helaine et al., 2014). Using a fluorescent 75 reporter, it has been demonstrated that these persisters were not multiplying prior to 76 antibiotic addition. The same tool also revealed the presence of non-growing 77 mycobacteria inside macrophages (Mouton et al., 2016). Several mediators of 78 persistence have been identified, with toxin-antitoxin modules emerging as key players and the reduction of metabolic activities as the main driver of persistence (Rycroft et al., 79 80 2018; Dörr et al., 2009; Shan et al., 2017; Balaban et al., 2004; Harms et al., 2017; Amato 81 et al., 2014). Persisters are increasingly viewed as a major cause of the recurrence of 82 chronic infectious disease and could be an important factor in the emergence of 83 antibiotic resistance (Verstraeten et al., 2016). In addition to persisters, bacterial 84 tolerance to antibiotic treatments has been observed. In contrast to persisters, tolerance 85 concerns the entire population. Tolerance corresponds to a weaker ability of antibiotics to kill slow growing compared to fast growing bacteria. Tolerant bacteria emerge, for 86 87 example, in the presence of a nutritional limitation. The viability of tolerant bacteria is impacted by the concentration and length of the antibiotic challenge (Kim & Wood, 88 89 2017). Tolerant cells have some aspect of active metabolism, and their frequency in the 90 population changes when bacterial environmental sensing is altered (Amato & 91 Brynildsen, 2015; Bernier et al., 2013; Radzikowski et al., 2016). Persistence is often 92 viewed as the result of a phenotypic switch ensuring long-term adaptation to variable 93 environments, however the origin of persistence and tolerance in vivo remain unclear, 94 and their distinction in the context of a host- pathogen interaction is difficult (Kim & Wood, 2017). 95

96

97 In the present work, we analyzed growth characteristics of LF82 in THP1 monocytes 98 differentiated into macrophages. We observed that stresses within macrophages induce 99 a profound bacterial response that leads to the formation of non-growing and antibiotic-100 tolerant LF82 at a high rate through the successive induction of stringent and SOS 101 responses. A portion of non-growing LF82 formed within macrophages is tolerant to 102 antibiotics and present a survival advantage. Our work revealed that internalization 103 within phagolysosomes curbs bacterial multiplication, and frequent escape from the 104 replicative cycle toward non-growing state(s) is a way to improve long-term survival in 105 the host.

106

107 **Results**

108

109 Inside macrophages, LF82 population size increases despite extensive death.

110 We used THP1 monocyte-derived into macrophages to monitor the population size of 111 AIEC LF82 bacteria over a 24 h period post infection (P.I.) (Figure 1A). CFU 112 measurements revealed that the LF82 population exponentially increased for 10-14 113 hours (τ = 0.15 h⁻¹, 0.21 doubling / h) after a long lag. The population reached a 114 maximum at 18-20 h of approximately 5-fold the value at 1 h; the number of LF82 then 115 slightly decreased (reaching 3 -fold) at 24 h. In this environment LF82 might 116 simultaneously encounter acidic pH, oxidative and genotoxic stresses, toxic molecules 117 such as cathepsins and a lack of important nutrients. Surprisingly, the tolerance level of 118 LF82 to any individual stress did not differ from a commensal K12 E. coli in in vitro 119 conditions (Supplementary Figure S1A). Using direct ex vivo Live and Dead labeling, it 120 has been previously proposed that LF82 are not killed or only rarely killed by 121 macrophages (Lapaquette *et al.*, 2012). We observed that this method underestimates 122 dead bacteria inside macrophages compared to the labeling dead bacteria with 123 propidium iodide (PI) immediately after macrophage lysis (Supplementary Figure S2A). 124 We observed 20 - 30% PI-positive bacteria at 1 h, 12 h, 18h and 24 h post-infection 125 (Figure 1A). To estimate the speed of dead bacteria disappearing in macrophages, we 126 observed the elimination of heat-killed bacteria by THP1 macrophages. Dead LF82 127 disappeared exponentially with a decay rate of 0.6 h^{-1} and a half-life of 1.4 h 128 (Supplementary Figure S2B); therefore dead LF82 observed at 12h, 18h or 24 h did not 129 correspond to the accumulation over infection period but rather to the bacteria killed in 130 the last 3 hours before observations. This finding led to consider that LF82 must be 131 under stress attack by macrophages at all times during infection.

132

133 LF82 is under attack by macrophages.

Using RT-qPCR, we measured the expression of genes induced by the acid response (*asr*, *ydeO* and *frc*), the oxidative response (*soxS*, *ykgB*), the SOS response (*sulA*), the response to membrane alteration (*pspB*), the lack of Mg2+ (*mgrB*), the lack of phosphate (*phoB*), general efflux pump (*emrK*) and the *gltT* tRNA gene that is repressed by the stringent response (Figure 1B). Every response pathway was induced inside the macrophage. The induction of acid and the oxidative response were already high at 1 h post-infection,

- 140 while the SOS response, the response to membrane alterations and to the lack of Mg2+,
- 141 were peaking at 6 h post-infection. The expression of the *gltT* tRNA is strongly repressed
- 142 at time point 1h indicating that stringent response is on early in the infection. The
- 143 induction of most pathways decreased at 24 h.
- 144

145 **Environmental stresses influence LF82 survival.**

146 To test the impact of stress responses on the ability of LF82 to colonize macrophage, we 147 constructed deletion mutants of several key regulators of *E. coli* stress pathways and 148 analyzed their survival. Deletion of the acid stress regulators *evqA-evqS*, *phoP* and *vdeO* 149 significantly impacted the ability of LF82 to survive and multiply within macrophages to 150 a level comparable to or even below that of a commensal K12 *E. coli* (Figure 1C). Similar 151 observations were obtained with the rpoS deletion (general stress response), recA 152 deletion (SOS response), soxS deletion (oxidative stress) and pspA and htrA deletions 153 (envelope damages). The ppGpp0 strain (relA spoT deletions) is the most impacted 154 strain; less than 5% of the initial population survived a 24 h period within macrophages.

155

156 SOS and stringent responses severely impacted LF82 survival

157 We explored the stringent and SOS responses in more details. RecA is the main inducer 158 of the SOS response, which activates nearly 100 genes involved in DNA repair and many 159 others with unrelated or unknown functions, but it is also a crucial to correct DNA 160 lesions by homologous recombination and translesion synthesis (Kreuzer, 2013). In 161 addition to recA deletion, we constructed deletions of sulA (division inhibitor) and a 162 mutation in lexA (lexAind-), which blocks SOS induction in K12 E. coli and reduces 163 viability in the presence of mitomycin C for LF82 and K12 (Supplementary Figure S3A). 164 We observed that the deletion of each SOS gene significantly decreased the survival of 165 LF82 within macrophages (Figure 1C). Inside the macrophage, survival of the ppGpp0 166 strain was dramatically impacted. However, this mutant also presented a strong growth 167 defect in liquid culture that complicates interpretation of the macrophage results. To 168 study the impact of the stringent response on LF82 survival and induced antibiotic 169 tolerance, we constructed deletion mutants that might have partial stringent response 170 phenotypes; deletion of *dksA*, encoding a protein linking the stringent response to 171 transcription (Sharma & Chatterji, 2010); and deletion of the polyphosphate kinase and 172 exopolyphosphatase *ppk* and *ppx* (Rao & Kornberg, 1999). As expected, the *dksA* and

173 *ppk-ppx* deletions had a much less dramatic effect on LF82 growth and survival within 174 macrophages than the *relA-spoT* mutant; nevertheless, the *dksA* mutation significantly 175 impacted the number of live bacteria recovered at 24 h P.I. (Figure 1C). We probed the 176 ability of LF82 to survive within macrophages when both stringent and SOS responses 177 were altered. We chose to combine *dksA* deletion with *recA* deletion or *lexAind*-178 mutation. These strains presented a survival defect (CFU 24 h / CFU 1 h) comparable to 179 that of the single *dksA* mutant (Figure 1C). These observations demonstrate that 180 surviving LF82 simultaneously or successively require SOS and stringent responses.

181

182 Inside phagolysosomes individual LF82 were not homogenously responding to 183 stresses.

Imaging revealed great heterogeneity in the number of LF82 bacteria within individual 184 185 macrophages. At 18 h or 24 h P.I., many macrophages presented fewer than 5 bacteria, which was comparable to the amount observed at 1 h P.I. (Figure 2A); however, a 186 187 number of macrophages also presented foci containing up to 50 bacteria (Figure 2B). 188 These observations led us to consider that LF82 were not homogeneously stressed by 189 macrophages. We used GFP fusion with selected stress response promoters to monitor 190 variability of these responses among bacteria and among macrophages (Figure 2B). For 191 all stress responses, heterogeneity in GFP fluorescence was far larger than for LB 192 cultures (Figure 2 F - G). At 24 h P.I., we found that approximately 30% of the bacteria 193 had poorly respond to oxidative or acid responses (Figure 2E and 2F). Owing the high 194 stability of the GFP protein that we used in this assay, it is unlikely that this 195 heterogeneity resulted from short pulses of induction separated by long repression 196 periods. Such a sizeable phenotypic heterogeneity was moreover observed for bacteria 197 contained in a single macrophage as well as similar Lamp 1 positive vacuolar 198 environments (Figure 2C). We therefore questioned whether heterogeneity in stress 199 response might reflect the coexistence of multiple cell cycle regulation phenotypes.

200

201 Macrophages induce the formation of non-growing LF82

We essayed heterogeneity in LF82 cell cycle within macrophages by using two complementary fluorescence assays. First, Fluorescent Dilution (FD) highlights bacteria that have not divided since the time of infection (Figure 3A and Supplementary Figure S4A-C).

206 FD shows that at 24 h P.I. LF82 underwent up to 6 divisions, which is still below the 207 maximum dilution detectable by the assay in our conditions (8 generations in LB, 208 Supplementary Figure S4B). In good agreement with the CFU measurement FD shown 209 that only 20% of the population has performed more than 1 division at 6 h P.I. From 210 these observations, we can estimate that the highest generation rate of LF82 within 211 macrophages is ≈ 0.5 doubling /h between 6 and 20 h P.I.. Interestingly, FD also revealed 212 that approximately 4% of the population did not divide or divided fewer than 2 times in 213 24 h P.I. (Figure 3A and Supplementary Figure S4B). By contrast among the small 214 amount of K12 bacteria that survived for 24 h in the macrophage, 60% of K12 bacteria 215 underwent fewer than 2 divisions and less than 10% underwent 5 divisions 216 (Supplementary Figure S3D). Second, we used TIMER to refine these observations; it 217 provides an instantaneous evaluation of the generation time during the infection 218 kinetics (Figure 3B and S4A and S4B). Timer indicated that 18 h post-infection, 18% of 219 the LF82 population was not actively dividing, supporting the existence of a non-220 growing or slow-growing subpopulation. Since they require dilution of fluorescent 221 proteins both Timer and FD are poorly informative about the first hours of the infection. 222 Therefore, we used a GFP fusion with the septal ring protein FtsZ to monitor division in 223 the individual bacterium (Figure 3C). In LB, exponentially growing LF82 frequently 224 presented the FtsZ ring (70% of the population), but stationary phase LF82 rarely 225 presented the FtsZ ring (<2% of the population, Figure 3D). Following infection of 226 macrophages with the stationary phase culture of LF82 *ftsZ-gfp*, we observed that 5% 227 (+/-2) and 40% (+/-12) of the population, respectively, presented a FtsZ ring at 1 h and 228 24 h P.I. (Figure 3C and 3D). Following infection with exponentially growing LF82 we 229 observed a sudden reduction in the number of LF82 presenting a FtsZ ring at 1 h and 4h 230 P.I. (Figure 3D). The three reporters (FD, Timer and FtsZ) provided complementary 231 indications: i) within macrophages, LF82 strongly slow down their cell cycle for several 232 hours; ii) starting at 6 h P.I. LF82 multiply; in this phase the generation time may vary 233 among bacteria but can be as short as 2h; iii) a part of the population, completely halted 234 their cell cycle and become non-grower. The difference between the number of non-235 growing LF82 revealed by Timer and FD shows that non-growing LF82 are formed late 236 in the infection kinetics and not only upon phagocytosis.

237

238 Macrophages induce the formation of antibiotic-tolerant LF82.

239 Non-growing Salmonella phenotypes have been observed inside macrophages and 240 during mouse infection (Helaine et al., 2014; Claudi et al., 2014). Being tolerant to 241 subsequent antibiotic challenge they were recognized as persisters. We inquired 242 whether also for LF82 the non-growing component of the population had enhanced 243 antibiotic tolerance. In exponentially growing liquid cultures, approximately 1/10000244 LF82 tolerated a 3 h ciprofloxacin challenge, and can therefore be considered persisters. 245 Following a brief passage through the macrophage, the frequency of LF82 bacteria 246 tolerant to ciprofloxacin increased to 0.5 % (nearly 50 fold compared to exponentially 247 growing LF82). Interestingly the number of tolerant LF82 increased to 5% (500 fold 248 compared exponentially growing LF82) after 24 h in the macrophage (Figure 4A). This 249 near to 10-fold increase at 24 h compared with 1 h indicates that, like non-growers, 250 tolerant phenotypes are not exclusively formed upon infection, but also as bacteria 251 multiply inside the macrophage. In this respect, the behavior of LF82 differs significantly 252 from *S. typhimurium*, which forms a large number of persisters upon macrophage entry, 253 but this number remains stable during the infection (Helaine et al., 2014). To test if non-254 growing LF82 revealed by the FD assay indeed corresponded to the antibiotic-tolerant 255 population, we used the macrophage-permeable antibiotic ofloxacin. We added 256 ofloxacin (10x MIC) for 4 h after 20 h of intracellular growth, and we observed 257 significant increases in the proportion of green LF82 (non-growing) inside macrophages 258 (Figure 4B). These observations suggest that the sub-population of non-growing 259 bacteria largely overlaps with that of persisters, where protection from antibiotics may 260 also confer enhanced tolerance to intracellular stresses.

261

262 Tolerance to antibiotics is enhanced for LF82 compared with commensal *E. coli*.

263 We compared the number of LF82 and a commensal K12 laboratory strain with 264 tolerance to ciprofloxacin following brief (1 h) or long (24 h) passages in macrophages. 265 After a brief passage in macrophages, the proportion of LF82 that were tolerant to 266 ciprofloxacin was significantly higher for LF82 than K12 (Figure 4C). Interestingly, even 267 if the absolute number of ciprofloxacin-tolerant K12 was largely reduced compared with 268 LF82, their proportions among bacteria that survived 24 h inside macrophages were comparable (Figure 4C). These findings demonstrate that the number of antibiotic-269 270 tolerant bacteria formed in response to macrophage attack is reinforced for LF82 271 compared with a commensal strain.

272

273 **Tolerance to antibiotics is a transient state.**

274 We next evaluated whether the antibiotic tolerance was a stable or transient phenotype. 275 We used the macrophage lysis procedure to recover LF82 with induced persistence for 1 276 h in the macrophage; then, we either challenged them immediately with ciprofloxacin or 277 allowed them to recover in LB for 1 h or 2 h before antibiotic challenge. When bacteria 278 were cultured for 1 hour in LB, the frequency of tolerant bacteria was decreased in 279 comparison to bacteria that were immediately treated with the antibiotic; however, this 280 number was still higher than that of bacteria that had not infected macrophages. Two 281 hours in LB was sufficient to cause a comparable frequency of ciprofloxacin-tolerant 282 LF82 to that of bacteria that had not encountered macrophages (Figure 4D). These 283 observations show that when the environment is no longer stressful, antibiotic-tolerant, 284 non-growing LF82 rapidly switch back to a replicative mode.

285 286

287 Characterization of non-growing LF82.

Both FD and TIMER revealed slightly more non growing LF82 (4% and 18% 288 289 respectively, figure 3A) than antibiotic-tolerant LF82 after macrophage lysis (0.5% at 1 290 h P.I. or 5% at 24 h P.I., Figure 4A). This finding raised the possibility that persisters 291 only form a portion of the non-growing population. To quantify this proportion, we 292 infected macrophages with TIMER-tagged LF82, lysed the macrophages and allowed 293 bacterial growth on a LB-agarose pad under the microscope at 37°C. Seventy percent of 294 the LF82 recovered quickly from the challenge and formed microcolonies, but 295 approximately 30% of them never divided (Figure 4E). These non-cultivable LF82 296 presented either non-growing and growing TIMER fluorescence (Figure 4F). The 297 presence of non-cultivable LF82 among the bacteria with non-growing TIMER 298 fluorescence explains the difference between fluorescence and antibiotics assays.

299

SOS and stringent responses influence antibiotic tolerance.

Among mutants that affected LF82 survival (Figure 1C), only the *recA*, *relA* spot and *dksA* deletions negatively impacted the number of LF82 that were tolerant to a 3-h ciprofloxacin treatment (Figure 5A). The impact of the *recA* deletion might be misinterpreted because ciprofloxacin alters DNA and limits resuscitation of *recA*

305 persisters. Therefore, we repeated the tolerance assay with cefotaxime for the following 306 SOS mutants: *recA* (impaired for DNA lesion repair and SOS induction), *lexAind-* (unable 307 to induce SOS) and *sulA* (unable to block cell division). When they were tested *in vitro*, 308 SOS mutants did not present defect for cefotaxime tolerance (Supplementary Figure 309 S3B). However, these mutants exhibited decreased tolerance when persisters were 310 induced by a pretreatment with subinhibitory concentrations of ciprofloxacin 311 (Supplementary Figure S3C). This finding is in good agreement with previous reports 312 (Dörr et al., 2009), it confirms that SOS induction favors the production of persisters. 313 We analyzed cefotaxime tolerance of these SOS mutants following 1 h and 20 h passages 314 within macrophages (Figure 5B and 5C). We observed for recA and sulA mutants a 315 significant reduction of the proportion of cells that were tolerant to cefotaxime 316 treatment after a 20 h passage in the macrophage (Figure 5C) but no immediate effect 317 for the 1 h time point (Figure 5B). The *lexAind*- mutant did not change the number of 318 tolerant LF82 in these conditions. We also analyzed the *dksA* mutant in these assays; 319 surprisingly, it behaved differently than the recA and sulA mutants: we observed a 320 significant reduction of the proportion of cefotaxime tolerant LF82 following a 1 h 321 passage within macrophages (Figure 5B) but not when the bacteria were grown for 20 h 322 in macrophages (Figure 5C). To test an eventual epistatic relation between SOS and 323 stringent response we combined *recA* and *dksA* deletions. They had an additive impact 324 on the ability of LF82 to become tolerant to cefotaxime after a brief infection (Figure 5B) 325 and a 20-hour infection (Figure 5C). Our observations suggest that production of 326 persister/tolerant LF82 is under the control of the stringent response in the first hours 327 of infection and controlled by genotoxic stress, the SOS response and DNA lesion 328 processing later in the infection. When one of these to responses is deficient the 329 production of persister /tolerant LF82 requires the other.

330

The role of SOS response and stringent response for the control of LF82 cell cycle in the macrophages.

Knowing that SOS and stringent responses influence the production of antibiotic tolerant LF82 after a passage within macrophage we examined whether SOS and stringent responses also contributed to LF82 cell cycle control, i.e. production of nongrowing, replicative or dead LF82. We used the FD assay to measure the number of nongrowing LF82 in *the relA-spoT* and *recA* mutants. FD revealed that the non-grower

338 number was dramatically reduced in the *relA-spoT* mutant (<1%) (Figure 5D). This 339 suggests that in the absence of stringent response LF82 cannot immediately curb its cell 340 cycle upon phagocytosis. By contrast the number of non-growers remained unchanged 341 in the *recA* mutant (Figure 5E). This is in agreement with the absence of effect of the 342 recA deletion on the production of cefotaxime tolerant LF82 early in the infections. 343 TIMER revealed that at 20 h P.I. the proportion of slow, mid and fast growing LF82 was 344 affected by the alteration of *recA*, *lexAind-*, *sulA* and *dksA*. The *recA* and *dksA* deletions 345 reduced the number of non-growing LF82; by contrast, the *lexAind-* and *sulA* mutations 346 only increased the number of fast growing LF82 in the population (Figure 5F). Finally, 347 the live and dead assay showed a strong increase in lethality of the recA, sulA, lexAind-348 *,relA spoT* and *dksA* mutants at both time points (Figure 5G) suggesting that in the 349 macrophage environment a failing cell cycle control will almost certainly lead to LF82 350 death. Altogether our results shown that stringent response is the main controller of the 351 early intracellular survival of LF82; it limits LF82 growth and induces the formation of 352 non-growers and among them persisters. Later on when replication is resumed SOS 353 response grows in importance. DNA lesions that have been accumulated in the lag phase must be repaired to allow replication and formation of new non-growers and new 354 355 persisters.

356

357 Kinetics of macrophage infection

358 LF82 tolerates macrophage induced stresses, thus it survives and multiplies in the 359 phagolysosome. The population expansion is accompanied by a rise in the number of 360 bacteria that do not grow and tolerate an antibiotic challenge (called henceforth 361 persisters). The change in time, during macrophage infection, of LF82 population size 362 and fraction of persisters are relevant to future fundamental studies, but also to devising 363 therapeutic strategies involving AIEC or other intracellular pathogens. In order to 364 explore the mechanistic bases of the infection kinetics, we have used a mathematical 365 model (Figure 6A) to fit the observed changes in CFUs and persister counts during 24 366 hours for LF82, K12 and the stringent response mutant LF82dksA (Figure 6B). The 367 model is based on the following biologically-informed hypotheses (illustrated in Figure 368 6A and detailed in the Supplementary text 1). i) Reproduction: the population of 369 replicating bacteria B has a constant net growth rate (birth minus death rate) δ_1 , which 370 is either 0 or negative during a lag phase of duration λ , and β >0 otherwise. ii) A stress-

induced death rate, $\delta_2(S)$ that increases with stress (S). We assume that stress S, possibly 371 372 due to lesions (DNA lesions, membranes alterations, oxidative damages among others) 373 that accumulate over time or due to a macrophage response to the infection, builds up in 374 time proportionally to the total number of bacteria in the population. iii) Switch to 375 persistence: bacteria have a constant probability k_p of generating non-growing, stress-376 tolerant phenotypes P. The dynamics of a population of bacteria can be described by a 377 set of three ordinary differential equations for the number B of non-persister bacteria, 378 the number P of persisters, and the stress variable S (Methods). The number of dead 379 bacteria D can be derived from these under the assumption that dead LF82 decay 380 exponentially with rate 0.56 (computed from the assay in Supplementary Figure 2C). 381 The model has a total of 12 parameters for the three strains, which are fitted to data as 382 explained in Methods and SI. Although LF82 displays a considerable overshoot in 383 population size (as also observed in (Glasser et al, 2001)), the dynamics can be reproduced by choosing the same β for every strain. We estimated such net growth rate 384 385 to 0.15 ± 0.003 h⁻¹, corresponding to 0.21 divisions per hour (Figure 6B), consistent with 386 independent cell-level measures by FD (Supplementary Figure 4). The most notable 387 quantitative difference between strains is that K12 displayed a lag phase of more than 388 13 hours, twice as long as LF82 and LF82*dksA*. A consequence of this difference is that 389 when K12 bacteria start actively duplicating, stress has already built up. Together with 390 K12's enhanced sensitivity to stress, this curbs the population expansion, resulting in a 391 lower overall growth within macrophages. In the LF82*dksA* mutant, growth is instead 392 impaired by increased initial mortality (whose rate δ_1 has been estimated by PI 393 measures, Supplementary Figure S2C), presumably related to stringent response failure. 394 With respect to the other strains, moreover, LF82 is advantaged at later times – when 395 the SOS response becomes important - thanks to reduced stress-induced death rate. 396 Rate of persistence production for LF82 and LF82 *dksA* (0.08 and 0.002 h⁻¹, respectively) 397 is estimated to be higher than for K12 $(0.001 h^{-1})$, supporting the notion that AIEC 398 strains within macrophages turn to persisters at an enhanced rate, but less so if their 399 stringent response is impaired. The model allows testing changes in infection dynamics 400 for 'virtual mutants' LF82*, obtained by varying k_p , λ and d_{max} – the parameters that 401 quantitatively differ between LF82 and *E. coli* K12 (Figure 6C). The total population 402 overshoot is enhanced when lag phase is shorter and the effect of stress less acute, but 403 damped when persisters production is more frequent. Interestingly, the phenotypes of

404 the single stress response mutants (acid, oxidative, lack of Mg^{2+}), i.e. reduced CFU at 24 h 405 without perturbation of the persister proportion in the population (Figure 1C and 3A) 406 were nicely reproduced by a change in the single d_{max} parameter. This suggests that the 407 model can be used to plan future works on the effect of mutants or drugs on macrophage 408 colonization by LF82.

- 409
- 410

411 **Discussion**

We analyzed the growth and survival strategies used by LF82 to colonize the THP1 macrophage cell line. Our analysis revealed that intracellular LF82 were constantly under stress while colonizing macrophages. The consequences of these stresses were important: increase in the death rate of LF82, slow multiplication of replicating LF82 and formation of a large number of non-growing LF82. LF82 adapts to this environment thanks to successive phenotypic switches that require the two main stress responses: the SOS response and the stringent response (Figure 7).

419

420 Macrophages place LF82 under lethal stress.

421 Using fluorescent reporters, we measured that half of the LF82 population present at 24 422 h P.I. had given rise to 6 or more generations. Under normal condition, this should 423 produce a 30 to 60-fold increase in the population size at 20 h compared with the 1 h 424 time point PI. However, we only observed a 3 to 6-fold increase in viable bacteria at 20-425 24 h compared with 1 h. We demonstrated that this modest colonization of 426 macrophages by LF82 is explained by a big death rate (Figure 1A) and switch from 427 replicative to non-growing cell cycle (Figure 3). At the single-macrophage and single-428 bacterium level, FD and TIMER fluorescent reporters revealed non-growing LF82. We 429 observed macrophages containing few (less than 4) LF82 with red fluorescent dilution 430 staining. These bacteria had therefore divided several times (>4) before observation and 431 thus should be accompanied by their siblings (>16). This observation is in good 432 agreement with our Live and Dead assay indicating that LF82 progeny has a significant 433 chance to be killed and destroyed by the macrophage. By contrast, some macrophages 434 contained growing LF82 and ultimately acquired more than 50 bacteria in one or 435 several compartments. The live and dead assay confirmed that LF82 was frequently 436 killed by macrophages. Because alterations of bacterial stress responses significantly

437 reduced the bacterial yield, we propose that LF82 death is the consequence of oxidative, 438 acid, genotoxic and proteic stresses imposed by the macrophage. We compounded these 439 experimental observations in a mathematical model describing the dynamics of 440 bacterial infection within macrophages. A first phase of stalled growth, a likely 441 combined effect of a prolonged lag phase and of compensation between death and 442 division, is followed by an exponential increase in bacterial concentration. This second 443 phase might correlate with a transient increased permissiveness of phagolysosomes or 444 more likely the adaptation of LF82 to growth in this stressful environment. This 445 expansion is successively curbed by the building-up of stressors. Many persisters are 446 formed in the first phase. However, in the second phase a phenotypic switch to non-447 growing LF82 will eventually result in a sizeable increase of the persister population. 448 We thus understand the survival of LF82 as a consequence of its ability to adapt to harsh 449 phagolysosome environment both at the entry of the macrophage, by induction of stress 450 responses and particularly the stringent response, and during exponential expansion by 451 SOS response. LF82 advantage over commensal K12 would reside in its ability to exit 452 from the lag phase to perform a few rounds of replication/division before stress 453 becomes too strong (Figure 6). Strategically, early onset of growth is compensated by 454 production of persistent bacteria, which endows the pathogenic strain with long-term 455 survival in spite of rapid exploitation of the macrophage environment. We have not yet 456 identified LF82 specific regulons, genes or mutations that allow this transition to take 457 place.

458

459 **Replicative LF82.**

460 Fluorescent dilution revealed that after the exit of lag phase LF82 replicated moderately 461 within macrophages, with generation time longer than 2 h. In vitro, this would be 462 comparable with generation times observed in minimal medium with poor carbon 463 sources such as acetate. Our observations revealed that within macrophages, 40% of the 464 LF82 population presented an FtsZ ring, which is significantly above the number 465 expected from a mixed population of *E. coli* growing with a 2h generation time (28% of 466 cells with FtsZ ring (den Blaauwen et al, 2001)) and non-growing cells. Interestingly, in 467 spite of SulA induction, we did not observe filamentation of LF82 within macrophage. 468 These finding demonstrates that some of the cell cycle rules that were established under 469 defined *in vitro* conditions do not apply to intracellular growth conditions, opening

470 avenues for future investigations of bacterial cell cycle regulation in the context of host471 infection or the microbiota.

472

473 Non-replicative LF82.

474 FD and Timer revealed that a significant number of intracellular LF82 were not growing. 475 FD revealed that approximately 4% of the phagocytosed LF82 immediately halted their cell cycle. TIMER revealed that at 20 h P.I., approximately 20% of the LF82 population 476 477 was not growing. We also demonstrated that once the macrophages were lysed, a large 478 portion of the LF82 population (from 0.3 to 10%) was tolerant to several hours of 479 antibiotic challenge, and the proportion of non-growers in the population increased in 480 macrophages in the presence of antibiotics. Altogether, these observations suggest that 481 the phagolysosome environment induces frequent cell cycle arrests among the 482 population and that a part of this arrested population is tolerant or persisters to 483 antibiotics. Such a phenomenon has been previously described during S. typhimurium 484 infection of macrophages (Helaine et al., 2014) or mice (Helaine et al., 2014; Claudi et al., 485 2014) and is reminiscent of VBNR mycobacteria (Manina et al., 2015). Interestingly, we 486 observed an increase in the proportion of macrophage-induced antibiotic-tolerant LF82 487 at later time points, suggesting adaptive responses to the intracellular 488 microenvironment.

489

490 **Stress responses are important for LF82 survival within macrophages.**

491 As expected for bacteria residing in a toxic environment, stress responses are important 492 for LF82 survival within macrophages. Acidic, oxidative, genotoxic, and envelope 493 alterations, lack of Mg2+ and lack of nutrient stress responses significantly decreased 494 the fitness of LF82 (50 to 10% of WT). In a few cases, we demonstrated an additive 495 effect of simultaneously altering two pathways. However, LF82 demonstrated 496 surprisingly good tolerance to these alterations compared with the *in vitro* findings for 497 individual stresses. For example, recA deletion mutant was extremely sensitive (<1% 498 survival) to prolonged treatment with genotoxic drugs (Supplementary Figure S3A); by 499 comparison, in macrophages, despite clear SOS induction, the viability of the recA 500 mutant was only reduced by half compared with WT. Set aside the possibility that 501 stress-less niches exist due a possible heterogeneity in the macrophage population, the

502 fitness decline of LF82 stress mutants may be limited by a combination of slow growth,

503 formation of non-growers and/or yet uncharacterized adaptation pathways.

504

505 **SOS and stringent responses successively control LF82 fate.**

506 We investigated the trigger that could allow some LF82 to halt their cell cycle inside 507 macrophages. It appeared to be unrelated to the ability to sense acidic or oxidative 508 stress (Figure 5A). At an early time point (1 h P.I.), stringent response mutants 509 significantly altered the survival and production of antibiotic-tolerant LF82 (Figure 1 510 and Figure 5A). This finding suggests that abrupt nutrient starvation is one of the first 511 signals received by LF82 upon phagocytosis. The early stringent response should result 512 in a slowdown of transcription, translation and DNA replication, and therefore, it might 513 provoke the formation of non-growers and a lag phase that last for 7 h (Figure 6). We 514 assessed whether the stringent response impaired the declines in viability in this first 515 period (Figure 5), and we observed a decrease in the number of bacteria with undiluted 516 GFP using the FD assay (Figure 5D), as well as a reduction in antibiotic-tolerant LF82 517 induction (Figure 5B). This suggests that the slowing down induced by the stringent 518 response confers a temporary protection than can be extended to antibiotic tolerance 519 when bacteria become persister. Accordingly the impact of stringent response alteration 520 was less apparent after the lag phase when replication is re-established in a portion of 521 the population of LF82 (Figure 5). SOS induction was moderate at 1 h but important at 6 522 h and 24 h P.I.; this is in good agreement with the lack of an effect of recA deletion on the 523 accumulation of LF82 with undiluted FD GFP (Figure 5D) and the lack of an influence of 524 SOS mutants on the number of LF82 that were tolerant to cefotaxim at 1 h after infection 525 (Figure 5B). DNA lesions could, however, form during this period, but they were mostly 526 observed when DNA replication restarted after 6 h. In this second phase of infection, SOS 527 induction in replicative bacteria might play several roles: i) sustaining DNA repair and 528 therefore DNA replication, cell division and increases in population size; ii) decelerating 529 the division progression, this is the role of SulA, and thus contributing to the formation 530 of new non-growers (Figure 5C and 5D and Figure 7); iii) intervening for resuscitation of 531 non-growers presenting DNA lesions, both within macrophages and after macrophage 532 lysis.

533

534 Macrophages as a niche for LF82 survival

535 The purpose of macrophage colonization by LF82 in Crohn's disease patients is not yet 536 understood. In vitro, LF82 colonization did not provoke extensive death of macrophages, 537 which are thus unlikely to serve as a transient replicative niche for ileal infection. 538 Alternatively, we can imagine that dormant LF82 within macrophages can serve as a 539 long-term storage. In this environment, bacteria might be protected from competition with other species of the microbiota and coincidentally from antibiotics. Upon 540 541 macrophage lysis or inactivation, dormant LF82 would be released and would start to 542 multiply under adequate conditions.

543

544 Methods

545 **Strains and plasmids**

546 Deletion mutants (Supplementary Table S1) were constructed using the recombineering

547 method as described in (Demarre *et al.,* 2017). Plasmids are described in Supplementary548 Table S2.

549

550 Infection and microscopy

551 THP1 monocytes (5x10⁵ cells/ml) differentiated into macrophages for 18 h in phorbol 552 12-myristate 13-acetate (PMA, 20 ng/ml) were infected and imaged as previously 553 described (Demarre *et al.*, 2017). Infections were performed using an MOI of 30 554 (measured by CFU), resulting in the observation of 3 LF82 bacteria per macrophage on 555 average at 1 h post-infection. Imaging was performed on an inverted Zeiss Axio Imager 556 with a spinning disk CSU W1 (Yokogawa).

- 557
- 558

Antibiotic challenge and viable bacterial count using the gentamycin protection assay

To determine the number of intracellular bacteria after 20 min of infection, infected macrophages were washed twice with PBS, and fresh cell culture medium containing 20 µg ml⁻¹ of gentamicin (Gm) was added for the indicated time (1 h to 30 h). Cell monolayers were washed once with PBS, and 0.5 ml of 1% Triton X-100 in 1x PBS was added to each well for 5 min to lyse eukaryotic cells (Bringer *et al.,* 2006). Samples were mixed, diluted and plated on LB agar plates to determine the number of colony-forming units (CFU) recovered from the lysed monolayers. For the antibiotic tolerance assays,

568 macrophage lysates were transferred to 5-ml tubes and centrifuged for 10 min at 4100 569 g. The pellet was either resuspended in 1x PBS (t0) and ciprofloxacin (1 μ g/ml) for 1 h 570 and 3 h, or in LB and cefotaxim (100 μ g/ml) for 1 h and 3 h. CFU were measured by 571 serial dilution. Tolerance was estimated for the 1-h and 3-h time points as a function of 572 the CFU at t0.

573

574 Live and dead assay

At the indicated time points, macrophages were lysed with vigorous resuspension in 1x PBS 1% Triton. The cell lysate was pelleted at 300 g for 10 min to eliminate large cell remnants. The supernatant was centrifuged at 4000 g for 10 min. The bacterial pellet was suspended in 1x PBS and processed with the Live and Dead BacLight Viability kit (Thermo Fisher). The bacteria were pelleted for 3 min at 5000 g, resuspended in 50 μl of 1x PBS and spread on a 1% agarose 1x PBS pad for immediate observation.

581

582 Measurement of gene expression by RT-qPCR

Total RNA was extracted with TRIzol reagent from 10⁶ macrophages, as described in the *Molecular Cloning, a laboratory Manual* (Green and Sambrook, CSH Press). First-strand
CDNA synthesis was performed with the Maxima First Strand cDNA Synthesis Kit for RTqPCR (Thermo Fisher), and real-time qPCR was performed with SYBR Green Master Mix
(Bio-Rad) on a MyiQ real-time qPCR machine (Bio-Rad).

588

589 Fluorescence quantification

Custom-made FIJI macros were developed for the analyses of fluorescence. For the
Biosensors and FD, constitutive expression of mCherry from p-mCherry was used to
construct bacterial masks, which were subsequently used to measure GFP intensity. For
TIMER analyses, green fluorescence was used to construct the mask. Fluorescence
distributions were analyzed with the distribution fitting tool in MATLAB.

595

596 Mathematical model for the infection kinetics

597 A set of three ODEs recapitulates the main features of the observed growth within 598 macrophages, as explained in the main text and in the SI:

$$\frac{dB}{dt} = [1 - I(t < \lambda)]\beta B - k_p B - I(t < \lambda)\delta_1 B - \delta_2(S)B$$
$$\frac{dP}{dt} = k_p B (1)$$
$$\frac{dS}{dt} = B + P$$

Here, $I(t < \lambda)$ is the indicator function, which is unitary during lag phase. At the beginning of the infection, thus, the net growth rate $-\delta_1$ is either zero (K12 and LF82) or negative (stringent response mutant LF82dskA). At later times, net growth rate β is instead positive. The stress-induced death rate has been chosen to be a sigmoidal function of the stress level:

604
$$\delta_2(S) = \frac{d_{max}}{1 + e^{a(S - S_{1/2})}}$$

where the half-saturation stress value $S_{1/2}$ and the sensitivity parameter a are assumed to be identical for all strains. Here stress is an effective variable quantifying the effect of crowding on growth within macrophages, and could correspond both to densitydependent reduction of bacterial growth rate (e.g. due to resource depletion), and to the progressive buildup of macrophage-induced killing.

610

611 **Fit of the infection kinetics data**

Parameters providing the best fit of eqs. (1) to the times series of CFUs and persisters have been obtained by a weighted least-square distance minimization using the python differential evolution algorithm. We used a two-step approach to the fit which allowed us to establish first a subset of 7 parameters (λ and k_p for each strain and β) that shape the lag and exponential phases of growth. Subsequently, we fixed β and the λ s, and fitted the remaining parameters. Details of the fitting procedure are found in the SI, and the results of the fit in Table 1 of the SI.

- 619
- 620

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- ANR with the reference ANR-18-CE35-0007 and the support of the association François
- 630 Aupetit (AFA).
- 631
- 632

633 Table S1

Name	genotype	description	reference
AIEC LF82			(Glasser et al.,
			2001)
AIEC LF82 ∆bla	атрС		Gift from Nicolas
			Barnich
AIEC LF82 ∆htrA	htrA		(Bringer et al.,
			2005)
AIEC LFGD1	AIEC LF82 ⊿bla relA::kan		This work
AIEC LFGD4	AIEC LF82 ∆bla ydeO::kan		This work
AIEC LFGD6	AIEC LF82 ⊿bla lon::kan		This work
AIEC LFGD9	AIEC LF82 ⊿bla recA::kan		This work
AIEC LFGD11	AIEC LF82LF82 <i>∆bla HupA</i> -		This work
	mcherry-FRT-kan-FRT		
AIEC LFGD13	AIEC LF82 ⊿bla pspA::kan		This work
AIEC LFGD15	AIEC LF82 ⊿bla soxS::kan		This work
AIEC LFGD27	AIEC LF82 <i>∆bla phoP::kan</i>		This work
AIEC LFGD30	AIEC LF82 <i>∆bla evgA</i>		This work
	evgS::kan		
AIEC LFGD40	AIEC LF82 <i>∆bla evgAS-FRT</i>		This work
	phoP::kan		
AIEC LFGD41	AIEC LF82 <i>∆bla evgAevgS</i> -		This work
	FRT ydeO::kan		
AIEC LFGD56	AIEC LF82 <i>∆bla relA-FRT</i>		This work
AIEC LFGD57	AIEC LF82 <i>∆bla relA-FRT</i>		This work
	spoT::kan		
AIEC LFGD69	AIEC LF82 <i>Abla lexAind-</i>	Mutation X-> Y	This work
	::kan	in <i>lexA</i>	
		constructed by	
		recombineering	
AIEC LFGD79	AIEC LF82 ⊿bla dksA::kan		This work

AIEC LFER1	AIEC LF82 <i>Abla lexAind-</i>	This work
	FRT dksA::kan	
AIEC LFER2	AIEC LF82 <i>Abla dksA-FRT</i>	This work
	recA::kan	
AIEC LFGD86	AIEC LF82 ⊿bla sulA::kan	This work
AIEC LFGD83	AIEC LF82 <i>∆bla ppk-</i>	This work
	ppX::kan	
AIEC LF82 ∆rpoS	rpoS::kan	Gift from Jakob
		Moller Jensen
		(Simonsen et al.,
		2011)

634

635

636 Table S2

name	description	Antibiotic	reference
		resistance	
pKOBEGA		ampR specR	(Derbise et al.,
			2003)
pAD37	Matrix vector for	kanR	(David <i>et al.,</i> 2014)
	recombineering		
pFWZ5	Para-fts-sfGFP-	kanR	Gift from Fabai Wu
	T::aph		(Wu <i>et al.,</i> 2015)
pFCcGi	pFP25 PrpsM-	ampR	Gift from Sophie
	mCherry, ParaBAD-		Helaine
	GFP		(Helaine et al.,
			2014)
pPrpsm-mcherry	pGBM2-PrpsM-	specR	This work
	mCherry		
pSC101-timer bac			Gift from Dirk
			Bumann (Claudi <i>et</i>
			al., 2014)
pom1-GFP	pGBM2-Pro3-GFP		(Espéli <i>et al.,</i> 2001)

pLA42	pFPV25 PkatG-	ampR	Gift from Laurent
	gfpmut3		Aussel (Viala <i>et al.,</i>
			2011; Hébrard et
			al., 2009)
pP1485	pFPV25 Pasr-gfp	ampR	Gift from Laurent
			Aussel (Viala <i>et al.,</i>
			2011; Hébrard <i>et</i>
			al., 2009)
pmgtC	pFPV25 PmgtC-gfp	ampR	Gift from Laurent
			Aussel (Viala <i>et al.,</i>
			2011; Hébrard et
			al., 2009)
pSulA-GFP	pZA31MCS-delta		(Esnault <i>et al.,</i>
	Xho P <i>sulA-GFP</i>		2007)

637

638

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766

767 Legend of the figures

768 Figure 1. A) Measure of viable and dead AIEC LF82 for 24 h post-infection of THP1 769 differentiated macrophages. Circles represent average CFU (blue) and Propidium iodide 770 (PI) positive bacteria (black) ± Standard deviation (SD) (dotted lines). B) Analysis by 771 qRT-PCR of the induction of LF82 stress responses at 1 h, 6 h and 24 h P.I. of THP1 772 macrophages. Values represent the average of two experiments. C) Proportion of viable 773 bacteria at 24 h P.I. of THP1 macrophages in comparison to 1 h. LF82, K12 and LF82 774 deletion mutants were infected at a MOI of 30 which corresponds to 0 - 5 visible bacteria 775 per macrophage at time point 1h (Figure 2A). Values represent the average of 3 to 7 776 experiments ± SD. Horizontal lines indicate viability decrease by 2, 5 and 10 fold compared to WT LF82. 777

778

779 Figure 2. A) Imaging of THP1 macrophages infection by LF82-GFP at a MOI of 30. 780 Representative images at 1 h and 24 h. Scale bar is 5 µm B) Imaging of LF82-mCherry 781 stress responses at the single cell level with biosensors. Imaging was performed at 24 h 782 P.I.. LF82-mCherry was transformed with plasmids containing either the *katG* promoter 783 fused to GFP (PkatG-GFP), the matC promoter (PmatC-GFP), the asr promoter (Pasr-784 GFP) or the sulA promoter (PsulA-GFP). C) Imaging of LF82-mCherry PasrGFP and 785 Lamp1 phagolysosome marker E) Measure of the fluorescence intensity of individual 786 LF82-mCherry containing the *katG* promoter fused to GFP at 1 h and 24 h P.I. F) Measure 787 of the fluorescence intensity of individual LF82-mCherry containing the *asr* promoter 788 fused to GFP at 1 h and 24 h P.I. G) LF82 PsulA-GFP, LF82 PkatGGFP, LF82 Pasr-GFP in 789 LB respectively supplemented with MMC (5μ M), with H2O2 (5μ M) or switched to pH4.7 790 1h before imaging. Distribution of the fluorescence of LF82 Pasr-GFP after 24h post 791 infection in macrophage (from panel B) and after 1 hours of growth in LB buffered at 792 pH4.7. Fluorescence values were expressed as their log2ratio with the average value of 793 the maximum decile (maximum expression). Distributions were compared with a Two-794 sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test.

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Figure 3. A) Representative image of LF82 containing the fluorescent dilution plasmid
(pFC6Gi) at 1 h and 24 h post-infection. The frequency of replicative and non-growing
LF82 (undiluted GFP) is indicated (N =300). B) Representative image of LF82 containing
the TIMER plasmid (pBR-TIMER) at 18 h post-infection. The red arrows points toward

the reddest LF82. The frequency of replicative and non-growing LF82 is indicated (N =300). C) Representative images of LF82-mCherry FtsZ-GFP at 1 h and 24 h postinfection. Infections presented in panels A to C were performed with a stationary phase culture of LF82 (O.D. 2). Scale bars are 5 μ m. D) Measure of the frequency of LF82 presenting a FtsZ ring in populations growing in LB or within macrophages (N =300).

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806 **Figure 4.** A) Measure of the proportion of LF82 that were tolerant to ciprofloxacin (10x 807 MIC) at 1 h or 3 h. LF82 were cultivated up to OD 0.3 in LB medium (in vitro) or 808 harvested after 1 h or 24 h post infection within macrophages. The challenges exerted 809 on bacteria passaged through macrophages started immediately after macrophage lysis 810 (see experimental procedures). B) Proportion of non-growing LF82 (labeled using the Fluorescent Dilution assay) observed within macrophages (24 h P.I.) following a 6 h 811 812 ofloxacin treatment. C) Ratio of ciprofloxacin-tolerant versus viable LF82 and K12 813 bacteria after macrophage infection. Values are averages of 5 experiments. Data were 814 analyzed using a Student's t test to determine differences with the proportion of 815 ciprofloxacin-tolerant LF82 at 1 h post-infection, *P < 0.05. D) Measure of the 816 proportion of LF82 that were tolerant to ciprofloxacin at 1 h or 3 h with increasing times 817 after macrophage lysis. E) Imaging of the regrowth properties of individual LF82-TIMER 818 bacteria after macrophages lysis. Infections were performed for 20 h and then 819 macrophages were lysed, LF82 spread on to LB agarose pads and immediately imaged at 820 37°C. Timer red fluorescence was progressively lost as microcolonies formed. The lysis 821 procedure requires 20 minutes before the first field can be observed (t20 min). F) 822 Measure of the ability of LF82 to form microcolonies as a function of red TIMER 823 fluorescence at t20 min of the experiment are presented in E; areas of microcolonies are 824 expressed in pixels²;

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Figure 5. A) Proportions of LF82, K12 and LF82 deletion mutants that were tolerant to a
3-h ciprofloxacin challenge following a 1 h or 24 h intracellular growth period within
THP1 macrophages. Values represent the average of 3 to 7 experiments. Data were
analyzed using a Student's *t* test to determine differences compared with WT LF82. **P* <
0.05. B) Measure of the proportions of LF82 *lexA ind, recA, sulA, dksA, dksA lexAind-, dksA recA* mutants that were tolerant to 3 h of cefotaxim challenge after 1 hour of
macrophage infection. The 3 hour time point was below detection limit for the *dksA recA*

833 mutant because of the poor viability of the mutant in macrophages. Cefotaxime only kills 834 growing bacteria; therefore we resuspended LF82 in LB after macrophage lysis. Under 835 these conditions, we did not observe the plateau observed for persisters to 836 ciprofloxacin, suggesting that tolerant rather than persister LF82 were measured. C) 837 Same as in B but with 20 h of macrophage infection. Values represent the average of 3 to 838 7 experiments. Data were analyzed using a Student's t test to determine differences 839 compared with WT LF82. *P < 0.05. D) Imaging of the FD for the *relA spoT* and *recA* 840 mutants. Imaging at 24 h P.I. at an MOI 100x. Data represent the % of replicative and 841 non-growing LF82; a total of 300 bacteria were counted. E) Percentage of the LF82 842 population presenting a high, mid or low level of red TIMER fluorescence at 18 h P.I. of 843 macrophages. *recA*, *lexAind-*, *sulA* and *dksA* mutants were tested. F) Live and dead assay 844 performed 1h and 18h post infection, in the LF82, LF82recA, LF82lexAind-, LF82sulA, 845 LF82*relAspoT* and LF82*dksA* strains

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847 Figure 6. A) Model of infection of THP1 macrophages by LF82, describing the processes of net growth, switch to persistence and stress-induced death as explained in the text. 848 849 Part of the cells that enter the macrophage die at the onset of the infection (t=0). During 850 lag phase $(0 < t < \lambda)$, death either exactly compensates birth or, in the mutant lacking the 851 stringent response, results in a negative net growth rate $-\delta_1$. Later in the infection, the 852 net growth rate β is positive. Death rate due to stress accumulation (yellow bar) is 853 negligible in the early stages of infection and becomes particularly important at late time points. Bacteria switch to a persistent state at a rate k_p independent of the growth stage. 854 855 B) Experimental measures of the infection kinetics (CFUs from 5 replicate experiments, 856 circles; persister fractions, stars) collected over 24h for LF82, E. coli K12 and LF82 dksA 857 and the best fitting parameters (Supplementary text Table 1) of model eq. (1) 858 (Methods). Continuous lines represent total number of bacteria (B+P, continuous line) 859 and persiters (P, dotted line). Vertical lines indicate the duration λ of lag phase. C) 860 Projected changes in infection dynamics for 'virtual mutants' LF82*, obtained by varying k_{p} , λ and d_{max} – the parameters that quantitatively differ between LF82 and *E. coli* K12 – 861 862 around the LF82 best fit solution (black line); coloured lines correspond to parameter 863 values within the indicated interval.

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Figure 7: Schematics of LF82 infection dynamics in macrophage phagolysosomes.

Upon phagocytosis both replicative (green FtsZ ring) or stationary phase (brown) LF82 866 867 detect a signal, perhaps nutrient depletion, that led to stringent response activation. This 868 activates a first phenotypic switch toward a non replicating state (orange) that protects 869 LF82 from dying because of initial stress burst. Among these non replicating LF82 870 persisters are formed. After this lag phase, a second switch is required to initiate few 871 rounds of replication. The timing and perhaps the frequency of switching from lag phase 872 to replicative phase differentiate LF82 from our control commensal strain. We have not 873 yet identified LF82 specific determinants that allow this switch. Subsequent replication 874 rounds are dependent on the DNA repair machinery. A third switch, linked to the 875 increasing stress or lesions, is turned on in a portion of the replicative population to form new non growers and persisters. The SOS response might also be playing a role at 876 877 this stage. 878

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882 Legend of the supplementary figures

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Supplementary Figure S1. A) Growth curves of LF82 and K12 (C600) in LB medium at pH 7.4 (blue) and in the presence of SHX (15 mg/ml), SHX (7 mg/ml), EDTA (70 mM) or in LB at pH 4.7 and LB at pH 4.7 in the presence of EDTA (70 mM). B) Chemicals or a pH shift were applied at 160 min. B) same as in A with addition of the antibiotics ciprofloxacin (24 ng/ml) or cefotaxim (800 ng/ml). Data are the mean of 3 technical replicates.

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891 Supplementary Figure S2. A) Live and dead assay performed in situ on infected 892 macrophages and after macrophage lysis. For in situ experiments a very weak 893 propidium iodide (PI) labeling is observed on putative dead LF82. By contrast strong PI 894 labeling is observed after macrophage lysis. B) Measure of the speed of disappearance after phagocytosis by macrophages of heat-killed LF82. LF82 were killed by 15 min 895 896 incubation at 60°C and subsequently labeled with propidium iodide. Labeled dead LF82 897 were incubated with macrophage at an MOI of 100. Imaging was performed at 1h, 2h, 898 3h and 24h post infection. SYTO-9 was used to reveal macrophage and eventual live 899 bacteria. The number of dead LF82 per macrophage was measured at each time points. 900 Data are average of 3 experiments.

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Supplementary Figure S3. A) Measure of the resistance to MMC of LF82, LF82 *recA*,
LF82 *lexAind-*, MG1655, MG1655 *recA* and MG1655 *lexAind-*. B) Measure of the tolerance
to cefotaxim of LF82 and LF82 *recA*, LF82 *lexAind-*, LF82 *sulA* grown in LB medium to an
OD of 0.2. C) Induction of tolerance to cefotaxim by pretreatment with a subinhibitory
dose of ciprofloxacin (24 ng/ml). The data represent the ratio of the number of bacteria
that were tolerant to 3 h of cefotaxim in the presence or absence of ciprofloxacin.

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Supplementary Figure S4. A) Growth curve of LF82 pFC6Gi in LB at 37°C. Colored diamonds represent the sampling times analyzed by fluorescence microscopy in the panel B. B) Distribution of GFP fluorescence in the growing population of LF82; GFP fluorescence is expressed as the number of generations (each generation corresponds to a 2-fold decrease in GFP fluorescence compared with the average fluorescence of the fully induced population at t0). C) Distribution of GFP fluorescence in the population of

LF82-infecting macrophages. Fluorescence was measured for individual bacteria or
small bacterial clusters after macrophage fixation at 1 h, 6 h, 24 h and 48 h postinfection. D) Distribution of the GFP fluorescence in the population of K12 bacteria
infecting macrophages. Fluorescence was measured for individual bacteria or small
bacterial clusters after macrophage fixation at 1 h and 24 h post-infection.

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Supplementary Figure S5. A) Scatter plot of green versus red TIMER fluorescence measured for exponentially growing LF82 (green) and for a culture that had reached stationary phase (red). B) Distribution of the red TIMER fluorescence measured for exponentially growing LF82 (green) and stationary phase LF82 (red) at 4 h and 18 h post-infection. Curves represent the normal fit of the data. The middle peak height for exponential and stationary cultures was used to respectively define the fast-mid and mid-slow borders of the boxes.

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Figure 2







24H P.I.

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Figure 7

