

Supplemental information

Integrative analysis of neuroblastoma by single-cell

RNA sequencing identifies the NECTIN2-TIGIT

axis as a target for immunotherapy

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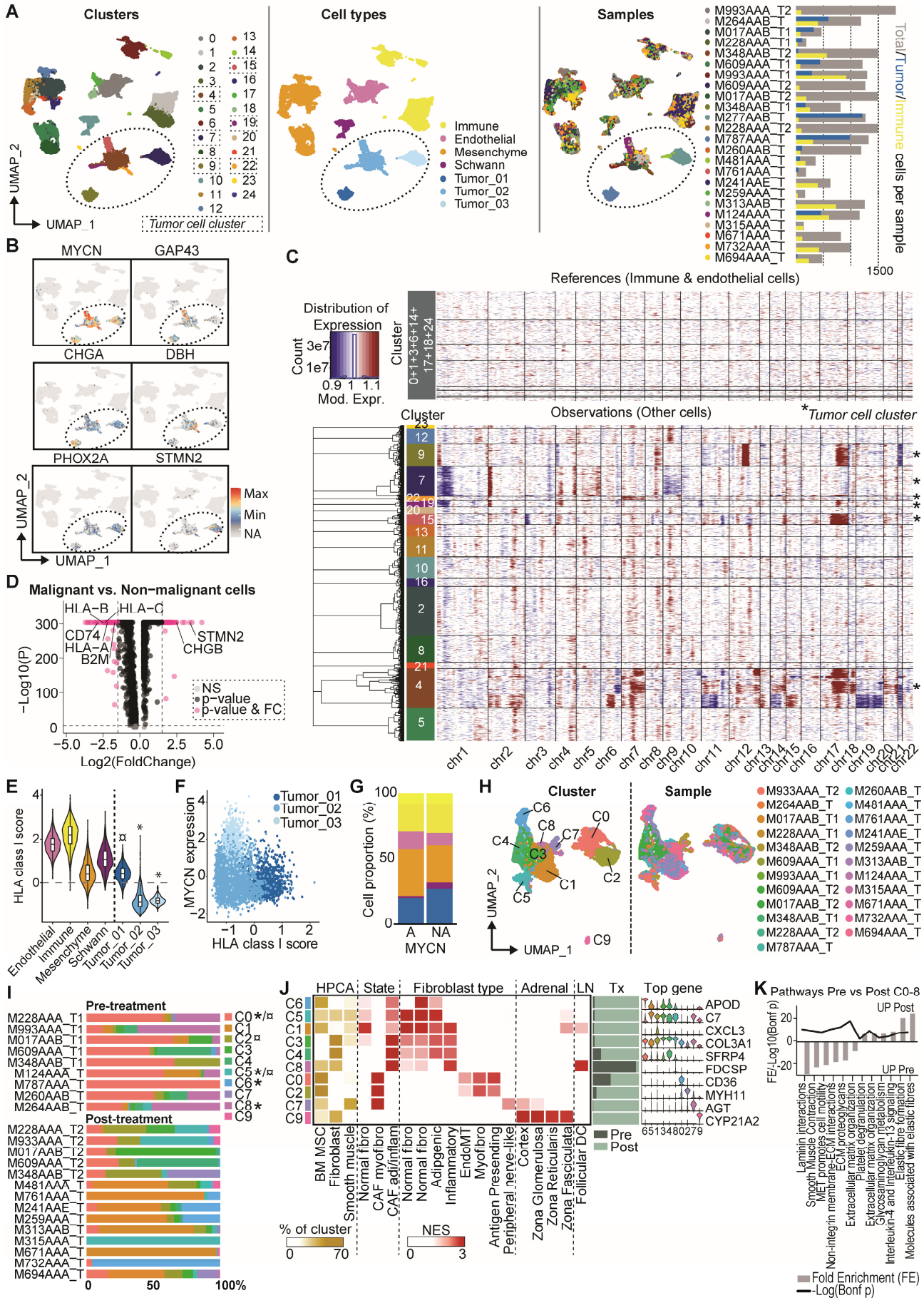


Figure S1. The single-cell landscape of neuroblastoma, related to figure 1. (A) UMAP of identified cell clusters, main cell types and sample distribution. Dotted circles highlight the tumor cell clusters. Right panel: number of total cells, tumor cells and immune cells per sample. **(B)** UMAP with expression of typical neuroblastoma genes (extension of Figure 1D). **(C)** Copy number profile of the samples, generated using *inferCNV*, to confirm tumor cell identity. The identified cell clusters (Figure S1A) were used as cell groups, in which immune and endothelial cell clusters were used as reference. *Clusters annotated as tumor cells based on gene expression profile. **(D)** Volcanoplot of differentially expressed genes ($p_{adj} < 0.05$) between tumor cells (malignant) and all other cells (non-malignant). **(E)** Violin plot showing the modulescore of HLA class I genes *HLA-A*, *HLA-B*, *HLA-C*, *HLA-E*, *HLA-F* and *B2M* in the main cell types. *Kruskall-Wallis + Dunn's*. $^{\circ}p < 0.0001$ versus all non-malignant clusters except mesenchyme, which was not significant. $^{*}p < 0.0001$ versus all non-malignant clusters. **(F)** Correlation between *MYCN* expression and HLA class I gene score for the three tumor clusters. **(G)** Cell proportion in MYCN-A versus MYCN-NA samples. **(H)** UMAP of mesenchyme clusters and sample distribution. **(I)** Proportion of different mesenchymal clusters per sample. "T1" and "T2" refer to paired samples before and after treatment, respectively. *Proportion significantly differs pre vs post treatment over all samples ($p < 0.05$; Mann-Whitney U test). \times Proportion significantly differs pre- vs post-treatment in paired samples ($p < 0.05$; Wilcoxon matched-ranks test). **(J)** Annotation of mesenchyme clusters with signatures from human protein/cell atlas (HPCA), GSEA using signatures of CAF states and fibroblast types¹, signatures of adrenal cell types², and signatures of follicular dendritic cells (FDC)³. Distribution pre- vs post-treatment (Tx) per cluster and top differentially expressed gene per cluster. *NES* = normalized enrichment score. **(K)** Pathway analysis (Reactome; Bonferroni p -value < 0.05) of combined clusters C0-8 of genes which were significantly upregulated ($p < 0.05$) pre-treatment vs post-treatment using all samples.

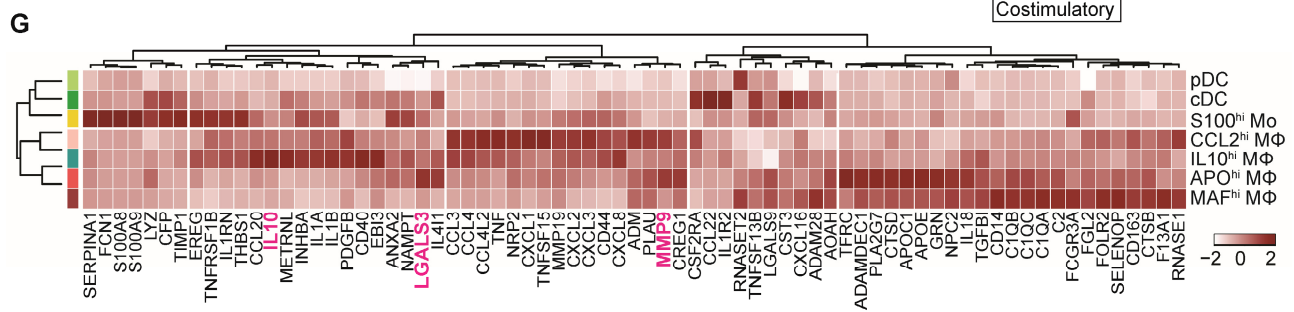
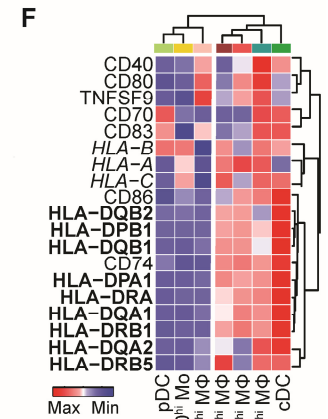
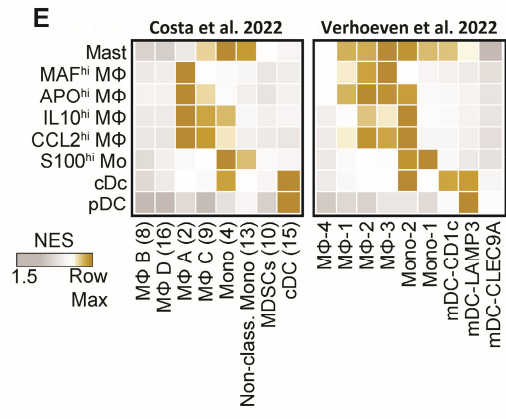
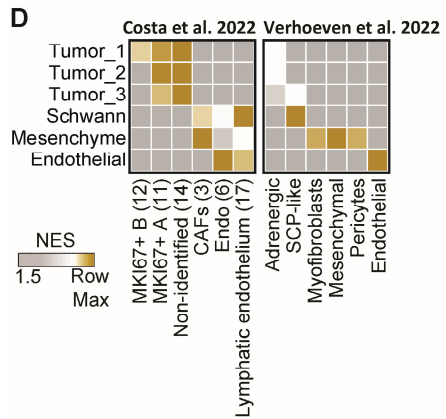
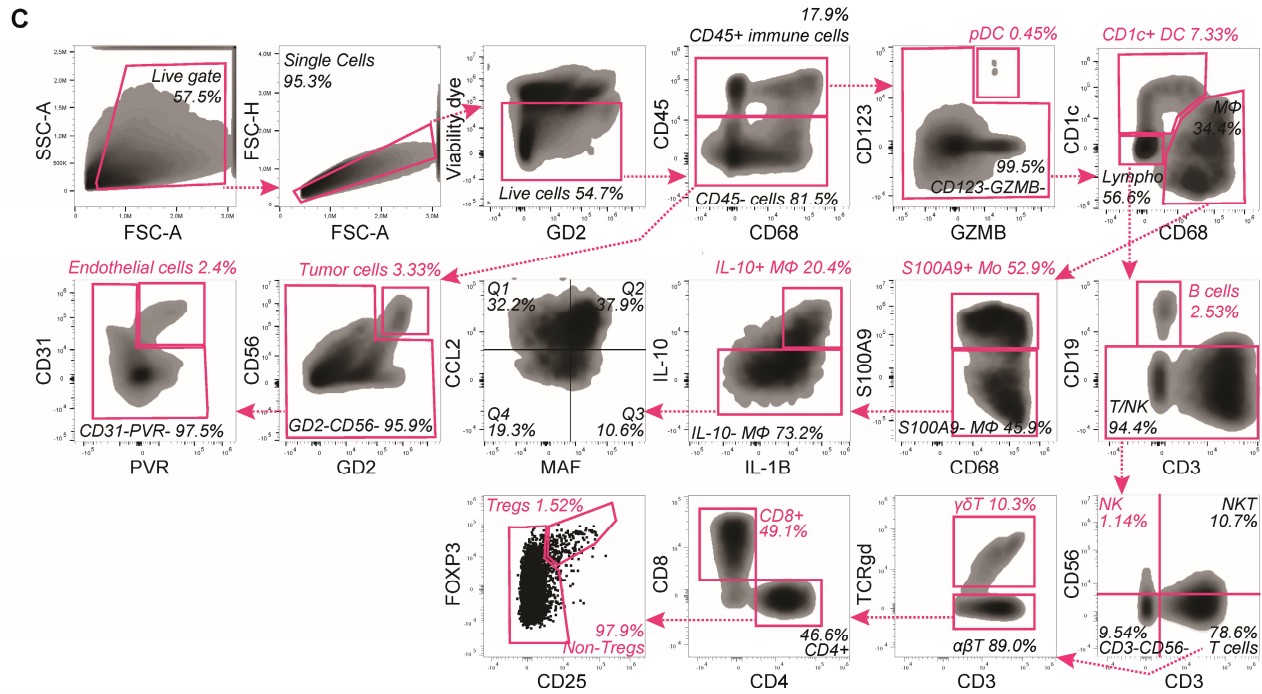
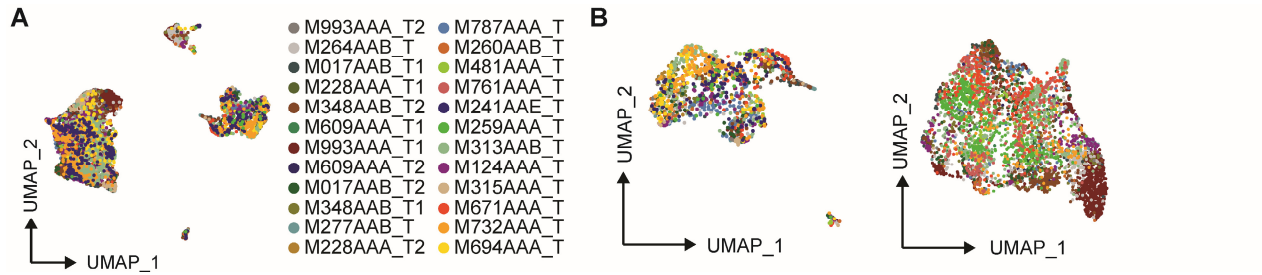


Figure S2. The immune environment of neuroblastoma, related to figure 2. (A) UMAP of sample distribution in immune compartment. (B) UMAP of sample distribution in myeloid cell (*left*) and lymphoid cell (*right*) compartments. (C) Flow cytometry gating strategy to identify cell populations in the tumor microenvironment. Merged data from 5 individual tumor samples are shown. (D-E) Gene set enrichment analysis comparing the identified non-immune (D) and myeloid (E) populations in our dataset to identified populations in the datasets of Costa et al. and Verhoeven et al.^{4,5}. Gene signatures were derived from FindAllMarkers analysis in Seurat (genes with $\text{padj} < 0.05$). NES=normalized enrichment score. (F) Heatmap of genes representing antigen presenting/co-stimulatory capacity. Genes are included in module score shown in [Figure 2C](#). (G) Heatmap with secreted factors which were 1) specifically upregulated in myeloid cells compared to all other cells ($\text{padj} < 0.05$) and 2) among the differentially expressed genes between the myeloid clusters ($\text{padj} < 0.05$).

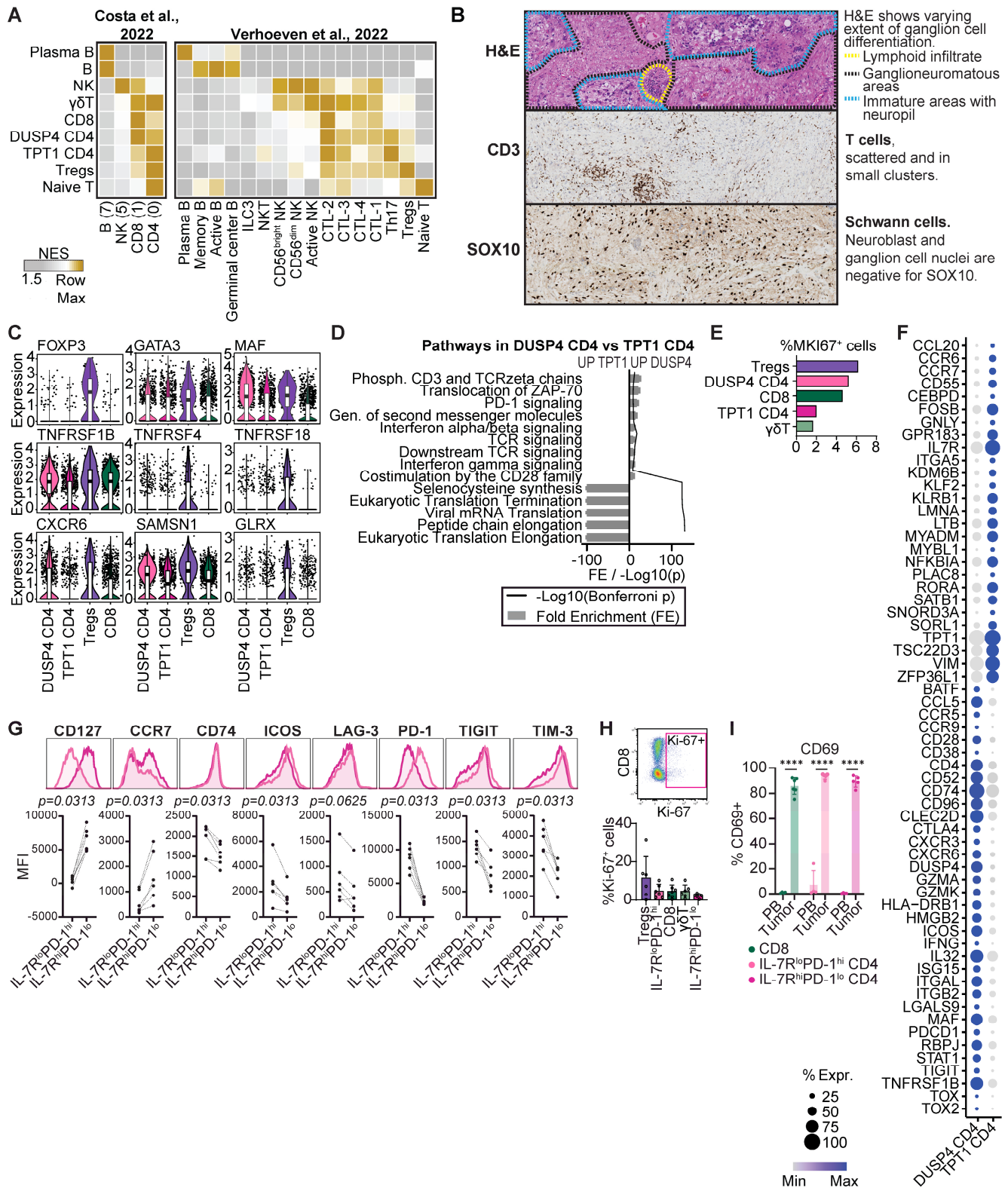


Figure S3. Neuroblastoma is characterized by immunosuppressive and dysfunctional lymphoid populations, related to figure 3. (A) Gene set enrichment analysis comparing the identified lymphoid populations in our dataset to identified lymphoid populations in the datasets of Costa et al. and Verhoeven et al.^{4,5} Gene signatures were derived from FindAllMarkers analysis in Seurat (genes with $p_{adj} < 0.05$). NES=normalized enrichment score. (B) Immunohistochemical staining of hematoxylin & eosin (H&E), CD3 and SOX10 showing T cell infiltration in a representative neuroblastoma lesion. (C) Expression of effector Treg marker genes which are

significantly upregulated (*padj*<0.05 in *FindAllMarkers* analysis among lymphocytes) in neuroblastoma-infiltrating Tregs. **(D)** Pathway analysis (Reactome; Bonferroni-corrected *p*-value<0.05) of differentially expressed genes (*padj*<0.05) between the *DUSP4*^{hi} and *TPT1*^{hi} CD4⁺ T cell populations. **(E)** Percentage of T cells expressing proliferation marker *MKI67*. **(F)** Dotplot with selected differentially expressed genes (*padj*<0.05 in *FindMarkers* analysis) between the two CD4⁺ T effector populations. **(G)** Flow cytometric analysis of the two neuroblastoma-infiltrating CD4⁺ T cell subsets showing memory, activation and exhaustion markers. *Mann-Whitney U* test; *MFI* = median fluorescent intensity. **(H)** Flow cytometric analysis of proliferation marker Ki-67 in neuroblastoma-infiltrating T cell subsets. **(I)** Flow cytometric analysis of tissue-resident T cell marker CD69 in neuroblastoma-infiltrating T cell subsets compared to their counterparts in healthy donor peripheral blood. *TPT1*^{hi} CD4 were gated as IL-7R^{hi}PD-1^{lo} CD4⁺ cells and *DUSP4*^{hi} CD4 were gated as IL-7R^{lo}PD-1^{hi} CD4⁺ cells, as shown in [figure 3F](#). 2-way ANOVA. *****P*<0.0001.

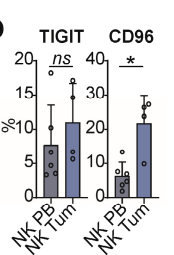
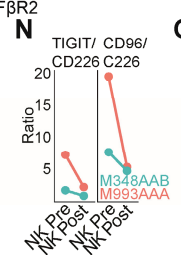
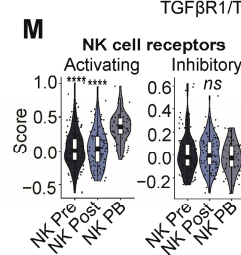
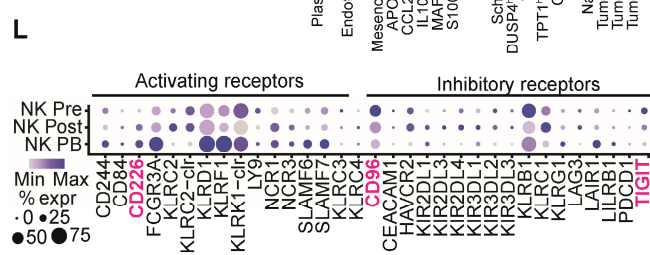
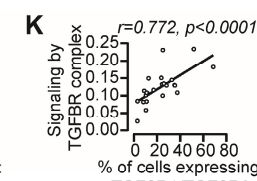
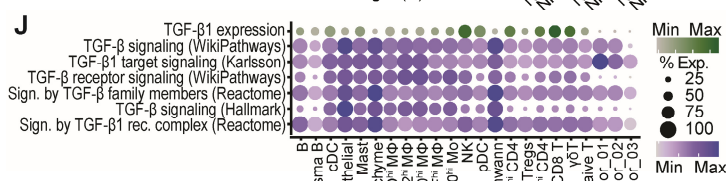
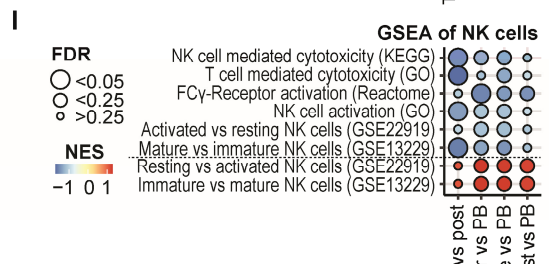
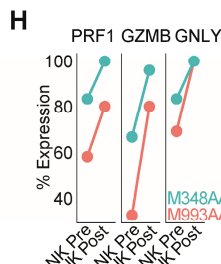
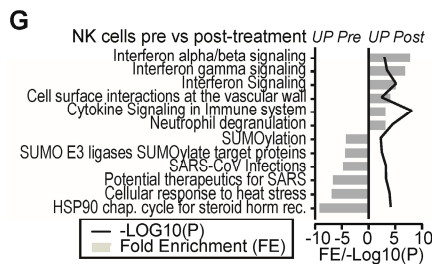
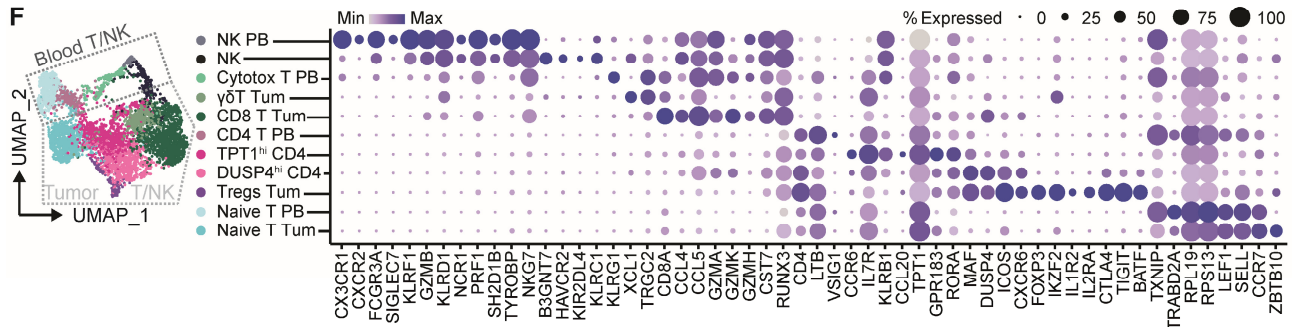
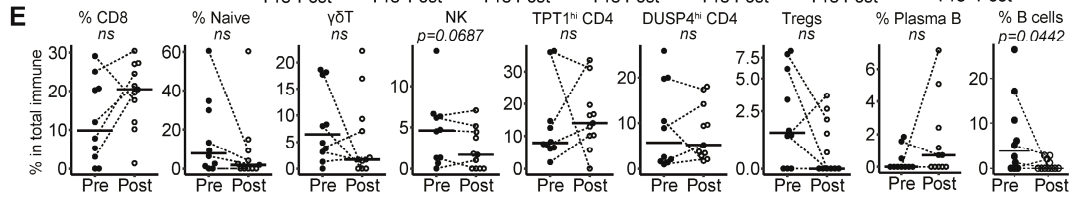
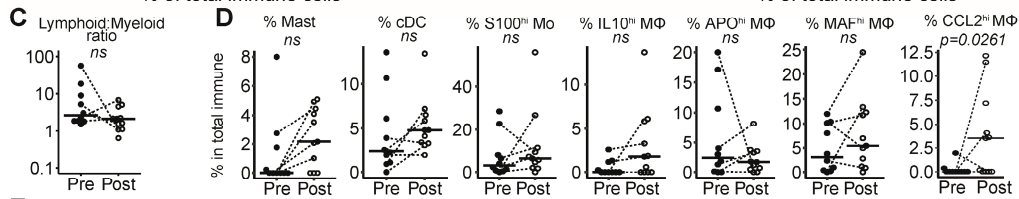
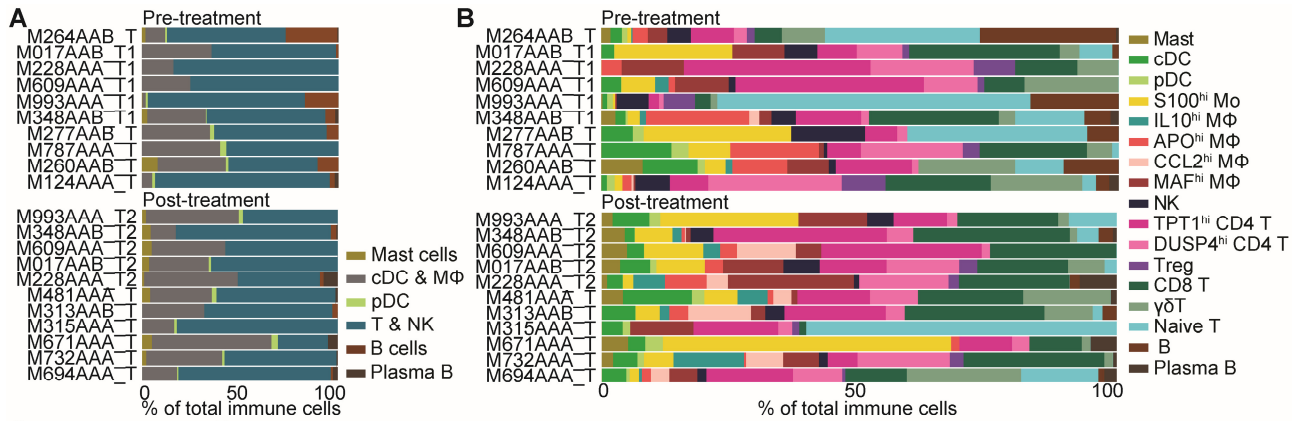


Figure S4. The immune cell composition and function in neuroblastoma before and after induction chemotherapy, related to figure 4. (A) Composition of overall immune cells per patient before and after induction chemotherapy. “T1” and “T2” indicate paired samples before and after treatment. **(B)** Composition of detailed immune cell clusters per patient before and after induction chemotherapy. “T1” and “T2” indicate paired samples before and after treatment. **(C)** Lymphoid:myeloid ratio before and after chemotherapy. Dotted lines indicate paired samples. *Mann-Whitney U test*. **(D)** Myeloid cell percentages before and after induction chemotherapy. Dotted lines indicate paired samples. *Mann-Whitney U test*. **(E)** Lymphoid cell percentages before and after induction chemotherapy. Dotted lines indicate paired samples. *Mann-Whitney U test*. **(F)** UMAP and dotplot of integrated T/NK subsets from both tumor and reference peripheral blood (PB) of adult healthy donors showing a selection of their differentially expressed and marker genes. **(G)** Pathway analysis of NK cells with differentially expressed genes pre- versus post-treatment (nominal $p < 0.05$; Reactome, Bonferroni-corrected p -values < 0.05). **(H)** PRF1, GZMB and GNLY expression in two paired samples before and after treatment. The other 3 paired samples did not have sufficient NK cells for a reliable analysis. **(I)** Gene set enrichment analysis of NK cells in pre-treatment tumors compared to NK cells from post-treatment tumors and blood. *NK tumor = pre- and post-treatment NK cells combined*. *NES=normalized enrichment score*. **(J)** DotPlot of TGF- β 1 expression and *modulescores* of curated signatures for TGF- β downstream signaling in the neuroblastoma TME⁶. **(K)** Pearson correlation between expression of signature for downstream signaling by the TGF- β receptor (TGFB β R) complex (Reactome) in each population shown in [figure S4J](#) and the percentage of cells expressing a *modulescore* of TGF- β receptor 1/2 in those respective populations. **(L)** Dotplot of NK cell activating and inhibitory receptor expression. **(M)** *Modulescore* of NK cell activating and inhibitory receptors shown in [Figure S4L](#). *Kruskall-Wallis with Dunn's, ****P<0.0001 vs NK PB, ns=not significant*. **(N)** The TIGIT/CD226 and CD96/CD226 gene expression ratio in two paired samples before and after treatment. The other 3 paired samples did not have sufficient NK cells for a reliable analysis. **(O)** Flow cytometric analysis of TIGIT and CD96 expression in neuroblastoma-infiltrating NK cells compared to blood NK cells. *Mann-Whitney U test; ns=not significant*.

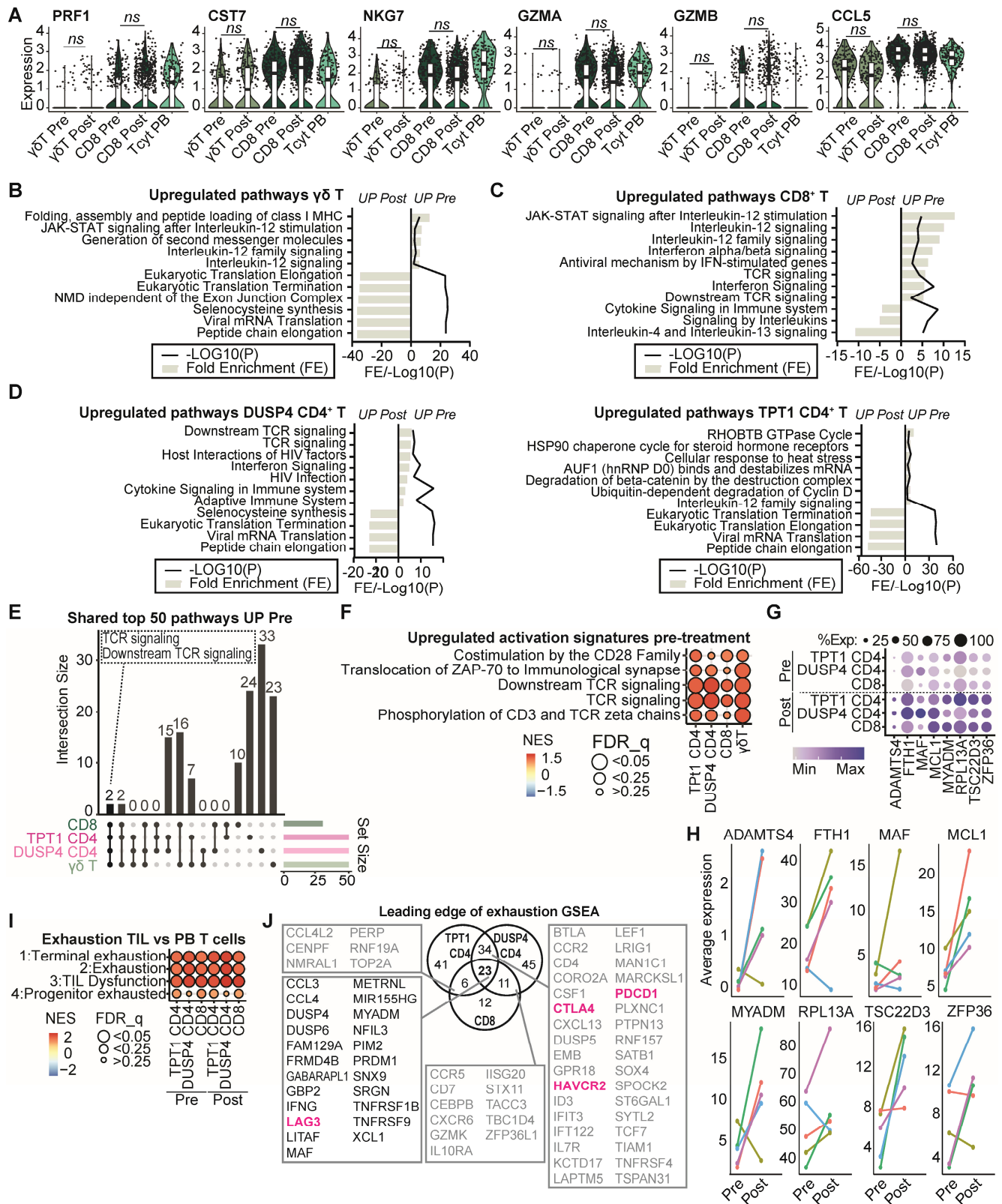


Figure S5. T cells in neuroblastoma show increased dysfunctionality post-treatment, related to figure 4. (A) Violin plots of genes associated with cytotoxicity in $\gamma\delta$ T and CD8 T cells pre- and post-treatment compared to cytotoxic T cells in reference blood (TcT PB). *ns*=not significant. **(B-D)** Pathway analysis of differentially expressed genes ($p_{adj}<0.05$) in $\gamma\delta$ T **(B)**, CD8 T **(C)** and CD4 T **(D)** pre-versus post-treatment (Reactome, Bonferroni-corrected p -values <0.05). **(E)** UpSetR ‘Venn’ diagram of top 50 upregulated pathways pre-treatment compared to post-treatment in the T cell subsets. **(F)** Gene set enrichment analysis (GSEA) with gene signatures for

TCR signaling in T cells pre-treatment vs post-treatment (all Reactome signatures). **(G)** Dotplot of shared upregulated genes comparing expression in CD4 and CD8 T cells pre- and post-treatment. **(H)** Analysis of gene expression of the eight shared upregulated genes post-treatment in $\alpha\beta$ T cells in five paired samples pre-treatment and post-treatment. **(I)** GSEA of exhaustion signatures (terminal & progenitor: GSE84105, exhaustion: ⁷, dysfunction: ⁸) in indicated CD4 and CD8 T cell clusters versus their respective counterparts from reference blood. **(J)** Venn diagram of shared upregulated genes post-treatment versus pre-treatment, which are present in leading edges (core enriched) of GSEA analysis with exhaustion/dysfunction signatures from [Figure 4N](#).

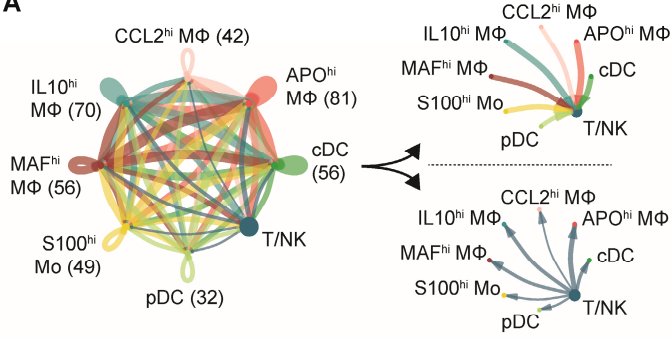
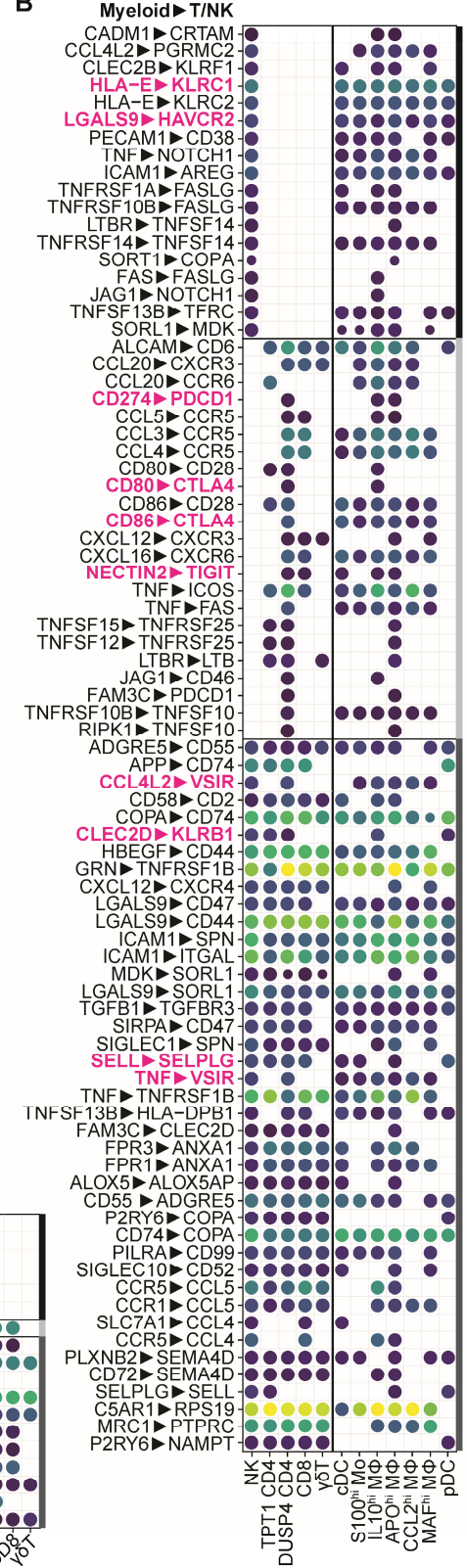
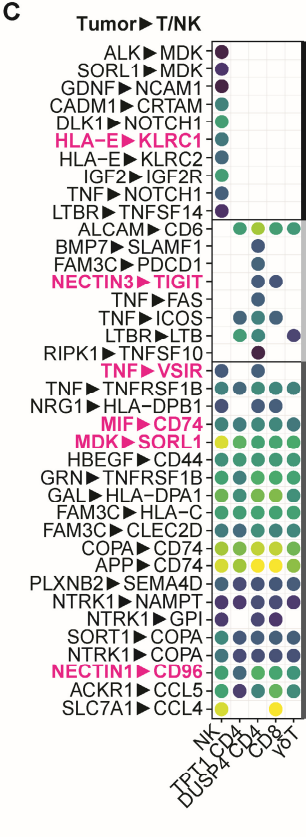
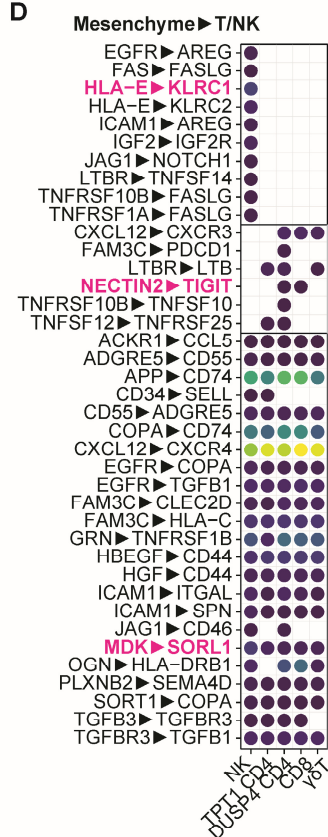
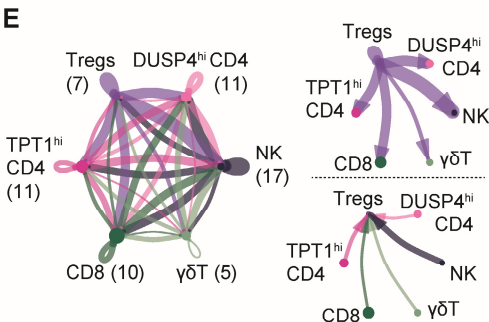
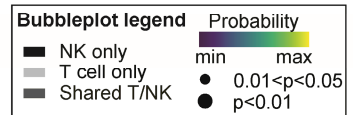
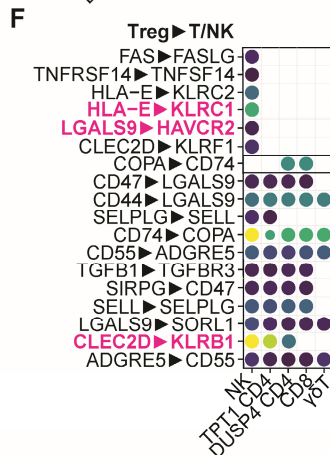
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Figure S6. Immunoregulatory interactions in the neuroblastoma tumor-microenvironment, related to figure 5. (A) Interaction network involving interactions between myeloid cells and T/NK cells constructed with CellChat⁹. **(B)** Bubbleplot of predicted interactions between myeloid cells and indicated T/NK subsets. Interactions with each specific T/NK subset and each specific myeloid subset were evaluated and subsequently merged, with the highest probability of each interaction pair depicted in the plot (*left: myeloid merged; right: T/NK merged*) **(C)** Bubbleplot of predicted interactions between tumor cells and indicated T/NK subsets. **(D)** Bubbleplot of predicted interactions between mesenchymal cells and indicated T/NK subsets. **(E)** Interaction network of interactions among Tregs and all other T/NK cell subsets. **(F)** Bubbleplot involving interactions between Tregs and indicated T/NK cell subsets.

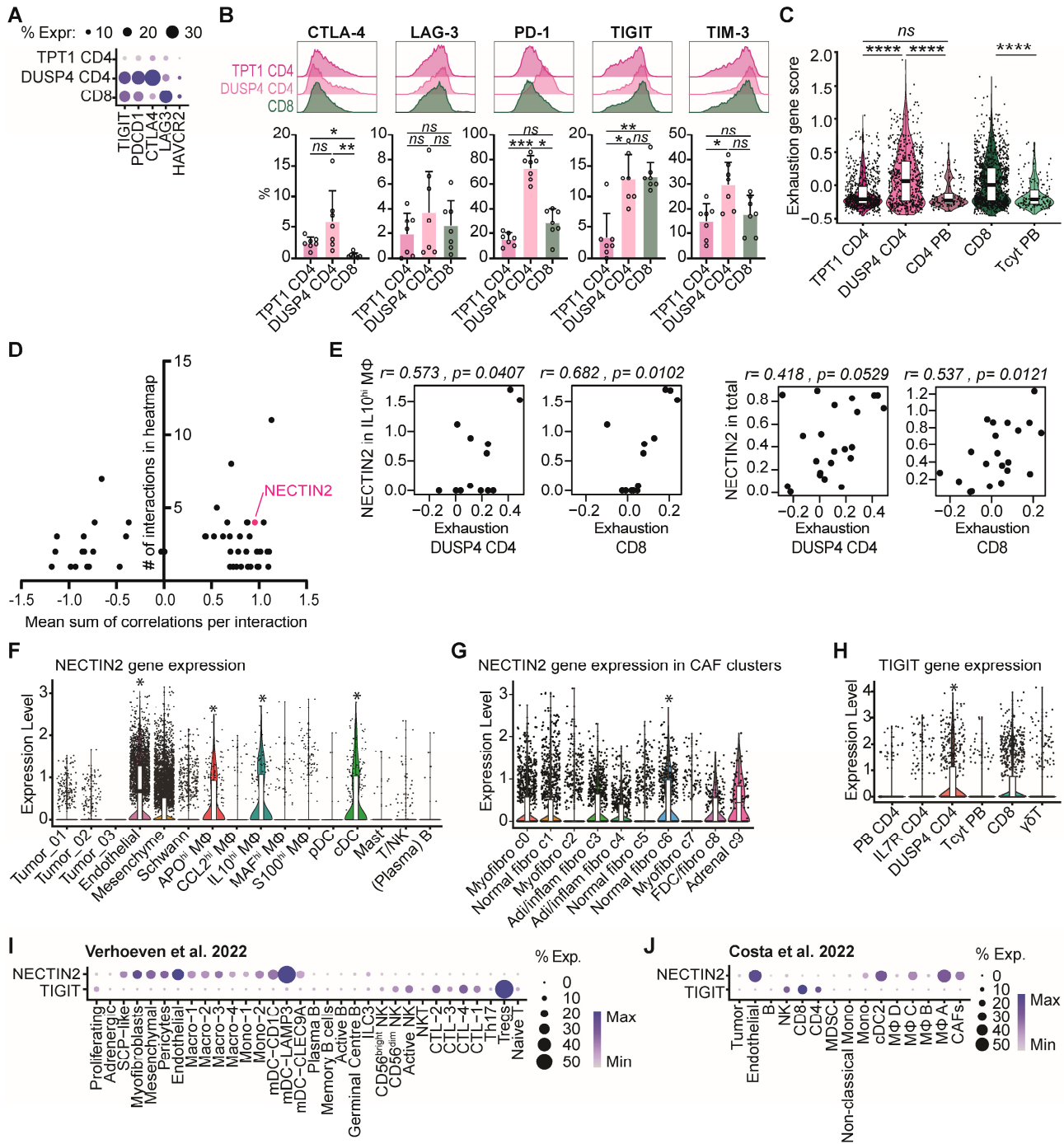


Figure S7. The *NECTIN2*-*TIGIT* axis is associated with T cell dysfunction, related to figure 6. (A) Dotplot with expression of dysfunction/exhaustion markers *CTLA4*, *LAG3*, *TIGIT*, *PDCD1* and *HAVCR2* in the indicated T cell subsets. **(B)** Flow cytometric analysis of *CTLA-4*, *LAG-3*, *TIGIT*, *PD-1* and *TIM-3* expression on neuroblastoma-infiltrating T cell subsets. TPT1^{hi} CD4 were gated as IL-7R^{hi}PD-1^{lo} CD4⁺ cells and DUSP4^{hi} CD4 were gated as IL-7R^{lo}PD-1^{hi} CD4⁺ cells, as shown in figure 3F. *Kruskall Wallis + Dunn's*. **P*<0.05, ***P*<0.01, ****P*<0.001, *ns*=not significant. **(C)** Modulescore of the dysfunction/exhaustion genes in the indicated T cell subsets. *Kruskall Wallis + Dunn's*. *****P*<0.0001. **(D)** *NECTIN2* 'ranking' among genes "B" from figure 6B which correlate positively with dysfunction score of T cells, showing the mean sum of correlations of all interactions involving gene "B" in figure 6B, and the total number of interactions involving gene "B" in figure 6B. **(E)** Correlation between *NECTIN2* expression in IL10hi Mφ and total cells in the TME with exhaustion scores of DUSP4^{hi} CD4 and CD8 T cells. **(F)** *NECTIN2* gene expression in neuroblastoma TME. **P*<0.0001 from *Findallmarkers* analysis. **(G)** *NECTIN2* gene expression in detailed mesenchyme clusters. **P*<0.0001 from *Findallmarkers* analysis. **(H)** *TIGIT* gene expression on T cells infiltrating neuroblastoma compared to T cells from healthy donor blood. **P*<0.0001 from *Findallmarkers* analysis. **(I)** *TIGIT* and *NECTIN2* expression in dataset of Verhoeven et al.⁵ **(J)** *TIGIT* and *NECTIN2* expression in dataset of Costa et al.⁴

Figure S8. Combined TIGIT/PD-L1 blockade enhances immune responses against neuroblastoma *in vitro* and *in vivo*, related to figure 7. (A) DotPlot with expression of PD-1 ligands *CD274* (PD-L1) and *PDCD1LG2* (PD-L2) in neuroblastoma. **(B)** Flow cytometric analysis of PD-L1 expression in the neuroblastoma tumor-microenvironment. **(C)** Gene set enrichment analysis of selected signatures for PD-1 and/or TIGIT downstream signaling. KO=knock-out, GC-Tfh=germinal center follicular helper T cells. NES=normalized enrichment score. **(D)** Gating strategy for flow cytometric expression analysis of Nectin-2 and PD-L1 expression on GFP-positive tumoroids as shown in [Figure 7C](#). **(E)** Flow cytometric analysis of PD-1 and TIGIT expression on healthy donor PBMC cocultured with neuroblastoma tumoroids for 6 days. 'PBMC w/o tumor' was measured at timepoint 0 before coculture. **(F)** Percentage of tumoroid (AMC691T) killing (=100-normalized luminescence) *in vitro* after 6 days of co-culture with PRAME-TCR transduced T cells at E:T ratio 1:300. Luminescence values were normalized against condition with untreated tumoroids only. n=4-5 technical replicates. *Kruskall-Wallis with Dunn's*. * $p < 0.05$; ns=not significant. **(G)** Percentage of tumoroid (AMC691T) killing (=100-normalized luminescence) *in vitro* after 6 days of co-culture with FACS-sorted immune subsets from healthy donor peripheral blood at E:T ratio 1:3. Luminescence values were normalized against condition with untreated tumoroids only. n=3 donors. *Two-way ANOVA with Sidak*. * $p < 0.05$; ns=not significant. w/o=without. **(H)** Tumor volumes at treatment start per condition for the three *in vivo* models. **(I)** Immunohistochemical staining of TIGIT, PD-1 and PD-L1 in the three *in vivo* models (vehicle condition). **(J)** Body weight of N1E-115, Neuro2a and N18 mouse models (n=6 per group) treated with anti-TIGIT and/or anti-PD-L1 up to day 15 of treatment. **(K-N)** Flow cytometric analysis of the TME *in vivo* in n=3 mice per treatment condition, treated with anti-TIGIT and/or anti-PD-L1 for 7 days. **(K)** Percentage of CD45+ immune cells of total live cells. **(L)** Total immune cell composition across treatments. Models were pooled. * $P < 0.05$ versus combination, **** $P < 0.0001$ versus combination. 2-Way ANOVA. **(M)** T cell composition across treatments. Models were pooled. * $P < 0.05$ versus combination. 2-Way ANOVA. **(N)** Macrophage composition across treatments. Models were pooled. 2-Way ANOVA.

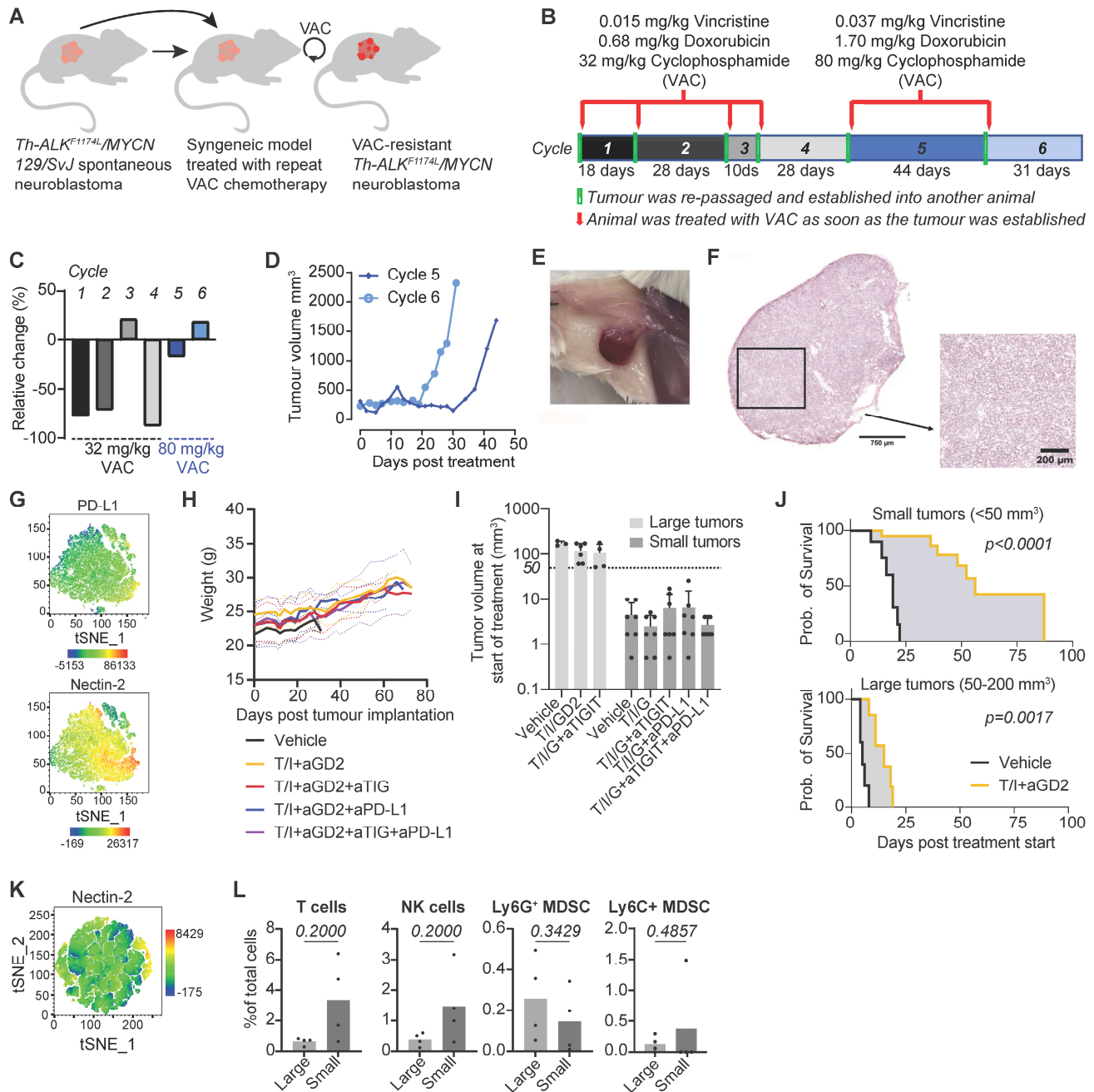


Figure S9. TIGIT blockade improves survival in a chemotherapy-resistant neuroblastoma model, related to figure 8. (A) Generation of chemotherapy-resistant neuroblastoma model from *Th-ALK^{F1174L}/MYCN* 129/SvJ models repeatedly treated with VAC (Vincristine, Adriamycin/Doxorubicin, Cyclophosphamide). (B) Summary of dose escalation treatment schedule to achieve resistance. Red arrows indicate when single dose VAC was administered. The number of days taken for the tumor to relapse is indicated below each cycle. At the end of each cycle, the allograft tumor was re-passaged into another animal before treatment started. (C) Percentage relative tumor volume change 7 days after treatment with single dose of VAC at 32 mg/kg or 80 mg/kg. (D) Time taken for allograft tumor to relapse after treatment with single high dose of VAC (80 mg/kg VAC) in Cycle 5 and Cycle 6. Tumor cells after Cycle 6 were used to establish allografts for therapeutic studies. (E) Macroscopic confirmation of tumor presence for small tumors. (F) Histological confirmation of tumor cell presence for small tumors. (G) TSNE representation of flow cytometric analysis of PD-L1 and Nectin-2 expression in the TME of small tumors (vehicle condition). (H) Body weight of mice with small tumors (n=7 per group) treated with TEM/IRI, anti-GD2 and/or anti-TIGIT and/or anti-PD-L1 up to day 80 of treatment. (I) Tumor volumes at start of treatment per treatment condition for mice with large and small tumors. (J) Survival analysis comparing response to TEM/IRI (T/I) +anti-GD2 (aGD2) in small and large tumors. (K) TSNE representation of flow cytometric analysis of Nectin-2 expression in the TME of large tumors (vehicle condition). (L) Flow cytometric analysis of immune cell subsets as a fraction of total live cells in the tumor. Mann Whitney U test. N=4 animals per condition.

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