

1 **Supplementary Table S6 Seroconversion in inoculated and contact ferrets.**

Virus	Exposure	Nasal wash titers (\log_{10} EID ₅₀ /mL)							Seroconversion (HI titer)
		1 dpi	3 dpi	5 dpi	7 dpi	9 dpi	11 dpi	14 dpi	
MDk/W452(H5N8)	Inoculated	3.0	2	1.0	-	-	-	-	40
	Direct contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
	RD contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
	Inoculated	2.0	2.5	1.0	-	-	-	-	80
	Direct contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
	RD contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
	Inoculated	3.0	1.5	1.0	-	-	-	-	40
	Direct contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
	RD contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
En/W149(H5N1)	Inoculated	3.0	5.0	5.5	3.9	-	-	-	160
	Direct contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
	RD contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
	Inoculated	2.0	4.5	5.75	3.25	-	-	-	160
	Direct contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80
	RD contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
	Inoculated	3.0	5.0	5.25	3.0	-	-	-	80
	Direct contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
	RD contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
MDk/W401(H5N1)	Inoculated	2.0	3.0	2.5	-	-	-	-	40
	Direct contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
	RD contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
	Inoculated	2.25	3.25	2.0	-	-	-	-	40
	Direct contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
	RD contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
	Inoculated	2.0	3.0	2.5	-	-	-	-	80
	Direct contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10
	RD contact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<10

2 Three animals were intranasally inoculated with 10^6 EID₅₀/mL of virus, 500 μ l per nostril. Each inoculated animal was
3 individually co-housed in the same cage with a seronegative direct-contact host plus a respiratory droplet (RD)-contact
4 ferret separated by two stainless steel grill dividers. To monitor viral growth in the upper respiratory tract, nasal swabs
5 were collected every other day from inoculated animals starting at 1 dpi and everyday from both DC- and RD-contact
6 animals starting 1 day post-exposure. Dash line indicates no virus detected (lower limit= $0.7 \log_{10}$ EID₅₀/mL). HI assays
7 were conducted by using homologous virus and 0.5% chicken red blood cells. Abbreviation: dpi, day post-infection.