



Supplementary Figure Legend

Suppl. Fig. 1: A 4-week course of ribavirin pretreatment increases the pSTAT4-dependent IFN- γ production of NK cells during subsequent PegIFN/ribavirin therapy.

(A-B) Changes in the frequency of CD3-CD56⁺ (A) and CD56^{bright} NK cells (B) that produced IFN- γ during therapy with PegIFN/ribavirin of patients who either had (solid lines, n=22) or had not (broken lines, n=31) received a 4-week course of ribavirin pretreatment. The frequency of IFN- γ -producing NK cells was determined *ex vivo*. Mean \pm SEM are shown. Asterisks indicate a $p \leq 0.05$ by unpaired t test for the indicated time point. The comparison of the results from both patient groups by serial measures ANOVA is significant ($p < 0.0001$ for panel A, $p < 0.0001$ for panel B).

(C) Frequency CD56^{bright} NK cells that produced IFN- γ in ribavirin-pretreated patients who mounted either a slow (open triangles) or fast (filled triangles) 2nd phase virological response to subsequent PegIFN/ribavirin therapy. The frequency of IFN- γ -producing NK cells was determined *ex vivo*. Statistical analysis: Mann-Whitney nonparametric two-sample rank test after analysis with the D'Agostino & Pearson omnibus normality test. Mean \pm SEM are shown.