Supplementary Information

Disruption of the tumour-associated *EMP3* **enhances erythroid proliferation and causes the MAM-negative phenotype**

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Contents

Supplementary References Supplementary Proteomics Data File 1

Supplementary Table 1. MAM-negative patient samples (coded P1-P10) and P9's family samples (coded P9-mother, P9-father, P9-sibling) included in the study.

Supplementary Table 2. Serological characterisation of MAM.

Key: anti-MAM found to be positive (∆) with RBCs lacking high prevalence antigens of this molecule; MAM-negative cells found to be positive (\triangle) which to be ability in provalence antigence of this manipoleone, molecule. nt, not tested.

Supplementary Table 3. Serological typing of red blood cells (RBCs) from five MAM-negative patients (P2, P4, P8, P9 and P10) and MAM-positive control cells, with anti-In^b and anti-INFI (antibodies reacting with antigens of Indian blood group system, carried on CD44).

nt, not tested

Supplementary Table 4. MAIEA results with anti-MAM (P1).

*****Also tested with P4 anti-MAM and found positive; **^Ɨ** also tested with P2 and P5 anti-MAM and found positive.

Supplementary Table 5. Summary of *EMP3* inactivating mutations identified in all MAM negative samples tested (P1-P10) and family members of P9 (P9-mother, P9-father, P9-sibling).

**EMP3* reference sequence NM_001425.2, five exon transcript, coding exons 2-5.

Supplementary Table 6. Nonsense variants in *EMP3* found in the gnomAD exome dataset v2.1.1⁴ (no loss-of-function homozygous variants recorded). NM_001425.2 was used as the reference sequence. The gnomAD database uses the ENST00000270221.6 transcript with coding exons 2-5 identical to NM_001425.2 but with a slightly longer non-coding exon 1.

* Start codon lost. Next methionine is found 69bp downstream.

** Detected in multiple studies. Twenty-five of these alleles have been detected in Ashkenazi Jews (0.25% allele frequency in this group).

Supplementary Table 7. EMP3 alleles found among the 2,504 individuals included in the 1000 Genomes Project⁵. NM_001425.2 was used as the reference sequence. Only one allele with a probable inactivating variant was found in this dataset. The impact on MAM antigen expression for other alleles is not known.

Super-populations defined in the 1000 Genomes Project: AFR = African. AMR = Ad Mixed American. EAS = East Asian. EUR = European. SAS = South Asian.

Start codon lost. Next methionine is found 69bp downstream.

Supplementary Table 8. Relative EMP3 expression compared to CD81 and glycophorin A obtained from proteomics data generated by previous MS analysis of undifferentiated (expanding) BEL-A2 cell line compared with cultured adult erythroid cells at day 8 of culture⁶.

Supplementary Table 9. Serological testing of human anti-MAM and monoclonal anti-EMP3 with two MAM-negative patients (P8, P9) and two MAM-positive controls (C1, C2).

Unt, untreated cells; Pap+F, papain+PNGaseF (2 stage) enzyme-treated cells

Supplementary Table 10. Inhibition of anti-EMP3 binding to MAM, where incubation of MAM-positive papain+PNGaseF treated RBCs with human anti-MAM blocked the binding of murine monoclonal anti-EMP3, whilst no blocking was observed with an unrelated antibody, anti-Jk^b.

Supplementary Table 11. Representative literature assessing EMP3 expression levels in cancers from diverse tissue sources, where *EMP3* has been reported either as an oncogene (upregulated) or as a tumour suppressor (downregulated).

* Not reported

Supplementary Table 12. Primers for PCR amplification and Sanger sequencing of *EMP3* and erythroid isoform of *CD44H*.

*F and R denote forward (sense) and reverse (antisense) direction, respectively

†Primer positions relative to the respective exon/intron boundary.

 Position in *CCDC114* (upstream of *EMP3*) is given relative to the start of *EMP3* coding +1A of ATG codon in exon 2, and in *TMEM143* (downstream) it is relative to the end of *EMP3* exon 5.

Supplementary Table 13. Parameters for homology modelling, molecular dynamics and software packages used.

Supplementary Figure 1. Flow cytometry experiments show CD44 to be markedly reduced on RBCs of MAM-negative individuals. Flow cytometric data from RBCs of five MAM-negative individuals [P2, P4, P5, P8, P9], three family members of P9 [mother (P9-M), father (P9-F) and sibling (P9-S)] and four random control samples [C1-C4] tested with anti-CD44 (BRIC222). All MAM-negative samples had a reduction in fluorescent signal compared to the control samples in agreement with serological (Supplementary table 3) and immunoblotting results (shown in Supplementary Figure 7a). The amount of CD44 on MAM-positive RBCs of the parents (F1 and F2) and sibling (F3) of P9, all MAM heterozygotes, had similar expression of CD44 to control samples. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.

Supplementary Figure 2. Reduction of EMP3 expression examined by cell surface expression analyses and qPCR. Wild-type BEL-A2 cells were maintained in culture for 65 days, with doubling time of 23.9 h. Lentiviral delivery system was used to package and prepare four EMP3 shRNA constructs, of which two worked well (EMP3 sh4 only shown here) and scrambled controls (scr) in HEK293T cell line. BEL-A2 cells were transduced with concentrated virus, and transduced cells were cultured for 28 days following the selection in puromycin. Scrambled control cells retained the same doubling time as native BEL-A2, whilst EMP3 shRNA transduced cells had an improved doubling time of 21.1 h, showing 10-fold higher cumulative increase in cell number on day 28 than the control. **(a)** Reduction in *EMP3* RNA expression (to approximately 25% of scr in EMP3 sh4 cells) was monitored by qPCR on days 2 or 3, and at days 9 or 10 post-transduction. No reduction was observed in *CD44H* RNA expression levels. Source data are provided as a Source Data file. **(b)** Approximately 50% reduction of EMP3 in EMP3 sh4 cells was determined by flow cytometry using a human anti-MAM antibody (P9; prepared by adsorption and elution from antigen-positive cells). **(c)** Confocal microscope immunofluorescence analysis (magnification 40x) showed no difference in CD44 expression between EMP3 sh4 and scr cells when stained with anti-CD44 on day 5 of differentiation. However, when sh4 and scr cells were stained with anti-MAM on day 5 of differentiation, reduction of EMP3 in sh4 cells was observed. Representative images selected from 10 images. The same results were obtained with EMP3 sh2 (not shown). CD44 and MAM stained green; DAPI stained blue. Scale bars are 10 um.

Supplementary Figure 3. Disruption of the *EMP3* **gene by CRISPR/Cas9 gene editing in BEL-A2 cell lines; clone E0.5-18 stained with commercially available anti-EMP3. (a)** Cells from three of the eight successful transfectant KO clones, as determined by *EMP3* Sanger sequencing and anti-MAM staining, were also tested with anti-EMP3 monoclonal antibody, to assess directly the expression of EMP3 on cell surfaces. Flow cytometry assays displayed reduced expression of EMP3. **(b)** Sanger sequencing of *EMP3* exon 2 confirmed an inactivating deletion in KO clone E0.5-18, NM_001425.2: c.17_21delTGGTG. The deletion, detected close to the location of the guide DNA, would introduce a reading frame shift and premature termination of the protein translation (p.Leu6ArgfsTer49). **(c)** Immunofluorescence assays displayed markedly reduced expression of EMP3. EMP3 stained green; DAPI stained blue. Scale bars are 10 um. Three KO clones were stained on two different days with anti-EMP3, all giving the same results. In general, commercially available monoclonal anti-EMP3 proved to be poor reagents and a low level of staining of KO cells was observed with both flow cytometry and immunofluorescence methods. We suspect this was due to cross-reactivity with the other members of the EMP family of proteins. A similar level of cross-reactivity was detected by serological tests (data not shown).

Supplementary Figure 4. EMP3 distribution in human tissues and cell lines. EMP3 expression levels in **a)** human tissues and **b)** a selection of cell lines, shown as median protein expression data from proteomics-based draft of the human proteome, collated by ProteomicsDB^{31,32}.

Supplementary Figure 5. MAM antigen is expressed on platelets and is not affected by the platelet activation status. a) The reactivity on platelets of MAMpositive and -negative (P10) samples following incubation with either anti-MAM eluate or isotype control (IgG) is shown as a histogram and a graph of mean fluorescent intensity of MAM reactivity. Source data are provided as a Source Data file. **b)** MAM expression is shown to be independent of the platelet activation status. Representative flow cytometry plots of platelets (collected from leucocyte-depleted apheresis units) and treated with Mock (top panel) and TRAP (bottom panel) were assessed (from left to right) for CD62P expression and further gated on CD62Pnegative and -positive to analyse MAM expression. **c)** FACS fluorescence intensity (FI) histogram overlay for MAM expression on non-activated and activated platelets showed no differences in MAM expression.

Supplementary Figure 6. Enhanced proliferation of P9 and P10 erythroid cells compared to age- and gender-matched controls, observed in two independent experiments with different culturing protocols, conducted in separate laboratories. CD34+ cells were isolated from buffy coats of P9, P10 and associated controls C1(P9) and C1(P10), C2(P10). **(a)** P9 and C1(P9) cells were cultured at IBGRL (Bristol, UK) for 21 days following the three-stage protocol described in Griffiths *et al*. ³³ P9 showed 4.2 times greater cell proliferation on day 21 than C1(P9) control. Source data are provided as a Source Data file. **(b)** P10 and two matched controls C1(P10), C2(P10) were cultured at the Transfusion Medicine laboratory, Lund University (Lund, Sweden) for 18 days, using a different three-stage method based on Giarratana *et al*.³⁴ and Flygare *et al*.³⁵ Culture stages labelled I, II, III. The results were analyzed using two-way ANOVA with adjustment for multiple comparisons. Error bars represent SEM of three technical replicates. P10 also had on average four times greater cell proliferation than C1(P10) control. ns, not significant; ****, P<0.0001. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.

Supplementary Figure 7. Immunoblotting and immunoprecipitation experiments demonstrate the marked reduction of CD44 on RBCs of MAMnegative individuals and the association between erythroid CD44 and the MAM-reactive glycoprotein. a) Immunoblotting of anti-CD44 antibodies to the electrophoretically separated components of RBC membranes from MAM-negative individuals (P2 [n = 3], P4 [n = 2], P5 [n = 3], P8 [n = 3], P9 [n = 4], P10 [n = 3]) and three random controls (C1 [n = 3], C2 [n = 2], C3 [n = 3]). 10% gels, non-reducing conditions, 10 µg protein loaded per lane. MAM-negative RBC membranes have a markedly reduced amount of CD44; the anti-actin control demonstrates consistent protein loading. The numbers quoted are from independent experiments; in 4 out 6 experiments the blots were run in duplicate and gave identical results in both duplicates (P4, $n = 3$; P2, P5 and P10, $n = 6$; P8, $n = 4$; P9 $n = 9$). Source images are provided in Supplementary Figure 11 and as a Source Data file. **b)** Immunoblotting of human anti-MAM eluate to the electrophoretically separated components of RBC-derived CD44 immune precipitates. **i)** Reactivity of human anti-MAM eluate (P9) with control (C1, the same control as in (a) above) and MAMnegative (P9) RBC membranes and control RBC-derived CD44 (CD44 IP) or isotype control (mG1 IP) immune precipitates electrophoresed on a 12% gel (non-reducing conditions; n = 2). *Reactivity with Protein G that is released in small quantities from the Protein G Sepharose used to isolate the immune complexes. **ii)** The same blot as (i) reprobed with anti-actin to demonstrate equivalent loading of RBC membrane samples (10 µg per lane). **iii)** The positive control gel of RBC-derived CD44 (CD44 IP) or isotype control (mG1 IP) immune precipitates and control and MAM- (C1, P9) RBC membranes immunoblotted with anti-CD44 (10% gel, reducing conditions; n = 2). **iv)** The same blot as (iii) reprobed with anti-actin to demonstrate equivalent loading of RBC membrane samples (10 µg per lane). Source images are provided in Supplementary Figure 11 and as a Source Data file.

Supplementary Figure 8: MAM (EMP3) and CD44 expression during *ex vivo* **cell culture of MAM-negative example (P9) and the matched control (CTRL), as determined by flow cytometry analysis.** CD34+ progenitor cells from a buffy coat of P9 and age, gender matched control were cultured for 21 days by three-stage protocol³³. **a)** Expression levels of cell surface MAM antigen were monitored by immunostaining with anti-MAM eluate from day 6 of the culture. No detectable MAM expression was observed in P9 for the duration of the culture, whilst MAM expression in CTRL increased on day 8 and was subsequently maintained at approximately the same level. Source data are provided as a Source Data file. **b)** Expression levels of cell surface CD44 were followed by immunostaining with monoclonal BRIC222 anti-CD44 from day 7 of the culture. In the later stages of the culture, when cells were more abundant, CD44 expression was examined by an additional monoclonal anti-CD44, BRIC235. CD44 expression was high in the early erythroid cells (day $8 - 10$) but it was much reduced in the later stages (day 15 onwards), especially in P9, where no detectable CD44 was seen on cell surfaces on day 18. Filtered reticulocytes and red cells from P9 retained lower levels of CD44, compared to the control cells. Source data are provided as a Source Data file.

Supplementary Figure 9. The total ablation of CD44 in BEL-A2 cell line does not affect expression of MAM. (a) Flow cytometry analysis of three BEL-A2 wildtype cells treated with an empty vector (WT) and three knock-out (KO) clones with anti-CD44 (BRIC222). The CRISPR/Cas9-mediated gene editing system was used to disrupt CD44 in BEL-A2 erythroid cell line. All three tested transgenic BEL-A2 CD44 KO clones had no detectable CD44 on cell surfaces. The representative histogram shows CD44 reactivity relative to isotype control in CD44 KO clone 3, compared to wild type BEL-A2 cells treated with a mock vector. **(b)** Flow cytometry analysis of BEL-A2 three CD44 KO clones and three wild type clones treated with a mock vector. Representative histograms show anti-MAM reactivity relative to negative control. MAM expression remains the same in CD44 KO clones when tested with two human anti-MAM eluates (P=0.831 for P1 and P=0.719 for P9 eluate; unpaired two-tailed t-test, n=6 for each antibody).

Supplementary Figure 10. The representative gating strategies for flow cytometric evaluation. (a) Gating strategy used in flow cytometry experiments depicted in Figure 2a (analysis of EMP3 KO clone E0.5-6 with anti-MAM), Supplementary Figure 2b (reduction of EMP3 expression in BEL-A2 transduced with EMP3 shRNA), Supplementary Figure 3a (analysis of EMP3 KO clone E0.5-18 with anti-EMP3) Supplementary Figure 9a, b (total ablation of CD44 in BEL-A2 cell line does not affect expression of MAM); these experiments utilised BEL-A2 cells, all analysed by the same gating strategy. The gate on the FSC vs SSC dot plot defines the cellular population; the isotype negative control was used to set the FL-2 or FL-6 fluorescence voltages such that the gated cells fell within the first decade. **(b)** Figure 3 (*EMP3* transfection causes MAM expression in Daudi cells); live Daudi cells were identified and gated; after doublet exclusion the GFP-positive cells were identified and MAM reactivity was measured on this third gated cell population. **(c)** Supplementary Figure 1 (CD44 is markedly reduced on RBCs of MAM-negative individuals); the gate on the FSC vs SSC dot plot defines the red cell population; the isotype negative control was used to set the FL-2 fluorescence voltages such that the gated cells fell within the first decade. All samples were analysed by the same gating protocol. **(d)** Supplementary Figure 5 (MAM antigen is expressed on platelets and is not affected by the platelet activation status); platelets isolated from leucocytedepleted apheresis units were gated on CD61-positivity after doublet exclusion, then MAM reactivity checked within the CD61-positive cells. **(e)** Supplementary Figure 8a, b (MAM and CD44 expression during *ex vivo* cell culture of MAM-negative (P9) and control samples); cultured red cells (cRBCs) were analysed on days 6 to 18 of culture. The gate on the FSC vs SSC dot plot defines the cellular population; the isotype negative control was used to set the FL-1, FL-2 or FL-6 fluorescence voltages such that the gated cells fell within the first decade. Anti-MAM and anti-CD44 expression were measured on the gated population of cells compared to their respective negative controls.

Supplementary Figure 11. Uncropped original immunoblotting scans from Supplementary Figure 7. Immunoblots presented in Supplementary Figure 7a, b are marked here by the red outline.

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