

## Nef functions in BLT mice to enhance HIV-1 replication and deplete CD4<sup>+</sup>CD8<sup>+</sup> thymocytes

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In this study, we used humanized mouse model to study the role of Nef in HIV-1 replication and pathogenesis. Our results indicate that Nef plays an essential role in HIV pathogenesis: indirectly killing CD4<sup>+</sup> T cells by elevating viral replication and directly depleting CD4<sup>+</sup>CD8<sup>+</sup> thymocytes as a pathogenic factor. Our study also validates the use of humanized mouse model for the study of Nef and other HIV genes in the context of systemic infection.

### Biography

Wei Zou completed her graduate study from Indiana University in 2008, her postdoctoral work from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2011 and from Baylor College of Medicine in 2013. She just went back to China and started her new position of professorship there.

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