

# The Conserved Elements (CE) approach to HIV vaccine design

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# Take home messages for the community

- HIV-infected individuals (SIV-infected macaques) respond to some features of the virus before and more strongly than others (immunodominance)
- If the response is to a critical component of the virus, better virologic control results
  - This helps explain why people with certain HLA types have persistently lower viral loads
- Responses to conserved elements are typically subdominant
  - Most people mount immunodominant responses to variable components of the virus
  - Associated with higher viral loads, faster disease progression
- A vaccine composed exclusively of critical components of the virion can focus responses onto these critical elements
  - Subsequent exposure to the full-length protein does not subvert the CE-imposed immunodominance
  - CE responses may be more effective at destroying infected cells