

# Dynamic forecasting of severe acute graft-versus-host disease after transplantation

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1 **Dynamic forecasting of severe acute graft-versus-host disease after**  
2 **transplantation**

3

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20 **ABSTRACT**

21

22 To anticipate critical events, clinicians intuitively rely on multidimensional time-  
23 series data. It is, however, difficult to model such decision process using machine  
24 learning (ML), since real-world medical records often have irregular missing and data  
25 sparsity in both feature and longitudinal dimensions. Here we propose a  
26 nonparametric approach that updates risk score in real time and can accommodate  
27 sampling heterogeneity, using forecasting of severe acute graft-versus-host disease  
28 (aGVHD) as the study case. The area under the receiver operator characteristic curve  
29 (AUC) rose steadily after transplantation and peaked at  $>0.7$  in both adult and  
30 pediatric cohorts. Various numerical experiments provided guidelines for future  
31 applications.

32 **MAIN TEXT**

33

34 Allogeneic hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (allo-HSCT) is a last-resort  
35 treatment for many hematological malignancies. Severe aGVHD (grade III–IV) –  
36 extensive attack of the skin (**Figure 1a**), gut, and liver of the transplant recipient by  
37 the donor’s immune cells– remains to this day a leading cause of death after allo-  
38 HSCT, with a transplant-related mortality rate as high as  $\approx 30\%$  within 100 days and  
39  $\approx 50\%$  within 3 years.<sup>1</sup> It is desirable to accurately predict severe aGVHD, enabling  
40 the medical team to deliver prophylactic immunosuppression specifically to those  
41 deemed most likely to benefit from such treatment.<sup>2</sup>

42

43 Previously published algorithms for severe aGVHD prognosis were usually based on  
44 peri-HSCT ‘stationary’ (i.e., not time-varying) parameters (including recipient,  
45 donor, and transplantation procedural characteristics) or ‘landmark’ analysis  
46 (designating a specific time point post-transplant for biomarker analysis) without  
47 modeling multidimensional time-series after HSCT.<sup>3-15</sup> These methods’ discrimination  
48 capability was limited, especially for patients who develop severe aGVHD later;  
49 sizable dynamic clinical data have already accumulated for these patients, and yet  
50 much of this new information remains unused. AUCs of models using only stationary  
51 parameters were reported to be  $\approx 0.62$ , even when data from  $> 20,000$  patients were  
52 available.<sup>9,12</sup> For landmark analysis, progress has been made on the identification of  
53 novel biomarkers.<sup>2-8,14</sup> No biomarker for severe aGVHD, however, is widely adopted

54 in clinical practice today.<sup>16</sup> Previous studies often relied on biomarkers measured at  
55 aGVHD onset for prognosis.<sup>4,6,8</sup> Attempts that tried to use biomarkers measured prior  
56 to the appearance of aGVHD signs to forecast severe aGVHD gave conflicting  
57 results.<sup>7,10,11,13,14</sup>

58  
59 ML research on dynamic risk monitoring has been active in intensive care, where  
60 blood samples and expert-rated scores are taken frequently and a plethora of devices  
61 are connected to the patient.<sup>17,18</sup> HSCT patients, however, have much lower data  
62 density and also higher heterogeneity in data collection than patients in intensive care.  
63 Limited data capture, non-uniform sampling rates, and data integration issues have all  
64 been cited as primary challenges in applying ML in HSCT.<sup>19</sup> One recent study applied  
65 penalized logistic regression to vital signs (temperature, heart rate, etc.) that were  
66 consistently and frequently recorded within the first 10 days after HSCT<sup>20</sup>, and we  
67 would like to investigate if we could utilize additional evidence from other dynamic  
68 features that were more irregularly measured.

69  
70 Unlike intensive care<sup>21</sup>, currently there is no publicly available multidimensional  
71 time-series dataset for HSCT. The Center for International Blood and Marrow  
72 Transplant Research and the European Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation  
73 databases collect primarily peri-HSCT stationary parameters, treatment regimes, and  
74 treatment outcomes. To close this gap, we compiled and curated post-transplant  
75 multidimensional time-series data of HLA- mismatched allo-HSCT patients treated at

76 the Institute of Hematology and Blood Diseases Hospital, Chinese Academy of  
77 Medical Sciences & Peking Union Medical College (IHCAMS) (Tianjin, China)  
78 between 1 April 2012 to 31 April 2021—hereafter referred to as the ‘aGOAT’  
79 (aGVHD Onset Anticipation Tianjin) dataset.

80

81 aGOAT contained 599 adult and 82 pediatric HLA- mismatched allo-HSCT cases. 12.4%  
82 of the adult cohort and 22.0% of the pediatric cohort suffered from severe aGVHD  
83 within the first 40 days after transplantation (**Figure 1b and Supplementary Table 1**).

84 aGOAT encompassed a total of 194 dynamic variables for the adult cohort and 159  
85 dynamic variables for the pediatric cohort collected during the first 30 days after  
86 transplantation (**Supplementary Table 2**), including vital signs, daily fluid loss (due to  
87 diarrhea, vomiting, etc.), complete blood counts (CBC), blood chemistry and  
88 electrolytes, blood immune cell profiles (measured by flow cytometry), plasma  
89 inflammatory factor levels, etc. The dynamic variables were not measured uniformly  
90 across all the patients (**Figure 1b**). Some dynamic variables such as vital signs were  
91 available nearly daily, while the others such as blood immune cell profiles and plasma  
92 inflammatory factor levels were measured less frequently and not in all patients. In  
93 addition, 11 peri-HSCT stationary (i.e., not time-varying) variables were also included  
94 in aGOAT (**Supplementary Table 3**); they included information related to primary  
95 disease, blood type, stem cell source, conditioning regimen before transplantation, etc.

96

97 We then devised a dynamic probabilistic model – ‘daGOAT’ (dynamic aGVHD Onset



98 Anticipation Tianjin) – that integrated multidimensional time-series data to calculate  
99 risk for severe aGVHD after HLA- mismatched allo-HSCT. Our model updated the  
100 risk score  $\varphi_i(t)$  daily according to

$$102 \quad \varphi_i(t) = \sum_{k,t} (I_{ikt} \cdot \theta_k(x_{ik}(t), t)), \quad (1)$$

103  
104 where  $\theta_k(x_{ik}(t), t)$  was the contribution of ‘dynamic’ variable  $x_{ik}(t)$  to the relative  
105 risk of the  $i$ -th patient developing severe aGVHD. To borrow strength across  
106 neighboring time points, the function  $\theta_k(\cdot)$  was constrained to be ‘smooth’ with  
107 respect to time  $t$ .

108  
109 daGOAT aimed to leverage information from a wide spectrum of clinical variables,  
110 even if some of them might be ‘spotty’. For instance, even if plasma cytokine data  
111 were not available for some patients, the model would still try to infer risk based on  
112 other clinical variables. Furthermore, the model updated calculated risk for each  
113 patient dynamically, adjusting its assessment whenever new data became available.

114  
115 To validate our methodology, we compared its performance to the performance of  
116 stationary features-only models (‘StationaryFeatures’), landmark-specific plasma  
117 biomarker levels, and landmark-specific random survival forests models<sup>22</sup>  
118 (‘LandmarkRSF’) using the aGOAT dataset.

119

120 daGOAT, StationaryFeatures, and LandmarkRSF were trained and evaluated by 5-fold  
121 cross validation (with identical randomization) using all available variables without  
122 variable selection. This cross-validation procedure was performed three times for the  
123 adult and pediatric cohorts separately and independently to assess the robustness of  
124 each modeling approach. In both the adult and pediatric cohorts, daGOAT's  
125 discriminative capability reached its peak around the Q1 (25<sup>th</sup>-percentile) time of  
126 severe aGVHD onset, i.e., when  $\approx 75\%$  of the severe aGVHD patients had not yet  
127 shown signs of aGVHD. For the adult cohort, AUC increased steadily from 0.65 on  
128 day 15 to 0.72 on day 23 (**Fig. 1c**). Performance for the much smaller-sized pediatric  
129 cohort was similar, with AUC steadily rising to 0.71 on day 14 (**Fig. 1d**). In both  
130 cohorts, daGOAT's peak performance surpassed StationaryFeatures by >16  
131 percentage points. daGOAT outperformed LandmarkRSF by >12 percentage points in  
132 the adult cohort (**Fig. 1c**), and its performance was more sustained in time than  
133 LandmarkRSF in the pediatric cohort (**Fig. 1d**). We failed to identify statistically  
134 significant relationships between severe aGVHD occurrence and plasma levels of  
135 suppression of tumorigenicity 2 (ST2), regenerating islet-derived 3-alpha (Reg-3 $\alpha$ ),  
136 and soluble TNF-receptor 1 (sTNFR1) at around day 7 (**Fig. 1e**).

137

138 daGOAT was tested for its usage in risk stratification of post-transplant patients: At  
139 around the Q1 time of severe aGVHD onset, hazard ratio (HR) between high-risk and  
140 low-risk patients identified by the model was 2.045 (95% confidence interval (C.I.):  
141 1.172–3.566) and 2.893 (95% C.I.: 1.057–7.915) for the adult and pediatric cohorts,

142 respectively, as can be seen by their diverging Kaplan-Meier curves (**Figs. 1f and 1g**).  
143  
144 daGOAT also allowed us to visualize how high-dimensional post-transplant dynamic  
145 profile of a patient translated to severe aGVHD risk (**Figs. 2a and 2b**). daGOAT's  
146 performance depended on both 'data diversity' (variety) and 'data richness' (quantity).  
147 For the adult cohort, it took >100 dynamic variables for the peak AUC (on day 23) to  
148 be sustained at >0.7 (**Fig. 2c**), and at least 300 cases' data were needed to train the  
149 model properly (**Fig. 2d**). Results of these numerical analysis and experiments shed  
150 light on how data should be collected for training and applying the proposed model. In  
151 addition, we found that techniques employed in daGOAT such as 'smoothing' and  
152 being 'engraftment-aware' (**Methods**) were crucial to the model's stable performance  
153 in both the adult and pediatric cohorts (**Fig. 2e**).

154

## 155 **Discussion**

156 The comparatively good performance of our modeling approach suggests that it is  
157 feasible to reliably and cost-effectively predict severe aGVHD when taking a  
158 panoramic and dynamic view of a patient's clinical profile. The average daily cost  
159 (charged to the patient) for data collection from day 1 to day 30 post-transplant to  
160 support daGOAT was ¥307 per day for one pediatric patient (covering 159 dynamic  
161 variables) and ¥425 per day for one adult patient (covering 194 dynamic variables).  
162 Despite the large number of dynamic variables included in our model, most of the  
163 data were collected in routine clinical care after transplantation and did not incur

164 additional cost. In contrast, testing a panel of 5-6 plasma biomarkers would cost  
165 ¥1000 to ¥1600 extra per sample in China.

166

167 Regrettably, due to difficulty in compiling multidimensional post-transplant data from  
168 medical records, this study was limited to data from one national hematological center  
169 in China, and additional validation at other hospitals will be needed. Deep learning-  
170 based risk scoring has been applied to longitudinal data in scenarios where available  
171 datasets were orders of magnitude larger than aGOAT (such as predicting respiratory  
172 failure in cystic fibrosis<sup>23</sup> and estimating pan-cancer patient survival curves<sup>24</sup>), and it  
173 remains to be seen if deep learning can be used to predict severe aGVHD when  
174 disparity in data sizes is eventually removed. Regardless of algorithm, the ultimate  
175 litmus test of any model would be testing whether we can reduce early mortality after  
176 transplantation by applying the model prospectively to administer prophylactic  
177 immunosuppression to a targeted subset of HLA-mismatched allo-HSCT patients who  
178 are predicted to have high risk for developing severe aGVHD.

179

180 As a final note, although this study focused on HSCT, our proposed approach can be  
181 generalized to other situations where there is need to integrate non-uniform  
182 multidimensional time-series data for dynamic forecasting of adverse events.

183

184 **METHODS**

185

186 **The aGOAT dataset.** We focused on modeling severe aGVHD in HLA-mismatched  
187 allo-HSCT, because HLA mismatch is the most important factor associated with  
188 aGVHD.<sup>25</sup> Post-transplant multidimensional time-series clinical data of 614 adult  
189 patients (age >16) who received HLA-mismatched allo-HSCT between 1 April 2012  
190 and 30 April 2021 and 98 pediatric patients (age ≤16) who received HLA-  
191 mismatched allo-HSCT between 1 December 2017 and 31 March 2021 at the  
192 IHCAMS were able to be electronically retrieved and curated. The adult cohort and  
193 the pediatric cohort were treated at different divisions of the IHCAMS.

194

195 Outlier values in vital signs (e.g., exorbitant values for body temperature) were made  
196 blank. Whenever a dynamic variable was measured more than once on one particular  
197 day for one patient, average measurement value of that day was used for that day for  
198 that patient. Medical record for each of the cases was reviewed by 2-3 physicians to  
199 confirm aGVHD diagnosis and grading (according to the MAGIC criteria<sup>26</sup>). To avoid  
200 ambiguity, onset of aGVHD was uniformly defined as the day of initiating aGVHD  
201 treatment. After the physicians' review, 20 cases (10 adults and 10 children) were  
202 eliminated due to failure of neutrophil engraftment within 30 days of transplantation.  
203 Additional 10 cases (4 adults and 6 children) were eliminated, because the recorded  
204 date of neutrophil engraftment (defined as 'the date of the first of three consecutive  
205 measurements spanning  $\geq 3$  days of achieving a sustained peripheral blood neutrophil  
206 count of  $>500 \times 10^6/L$ ') did not precede the recorded onset of aGVHD. One additional

207 adult patient, who had no sign of aGVHD, was also eliminated, because the patient  
208 died on day 29 after transplantation, and it was impossible to determine whether the  
209 patient would have developed severe aGVHD or not if the patient had survived.

210

211 The final dataset, aGOAT, contained 599 adult patients and 82 pediatric patients  
212 **(Supplementary Fig. 1 and Supplementary Table 1)**. 74 (12.4%) of the adult cohort  
213 and 18 (22.0%) of the pediatric cohort suffered from severe aGVHD (grade III–IV)  
214 within the first 40 days after transplantation. Eventually 10 (13.5%) of these adult  
215 severe aGVHD patients and 2 (11.1%) of these pediatric severe aGVHD patients died  
216 within 2 months after aGVHD onset. There was significant difference in 3-year all-  
217 cause mortality between the severe aGVHD patients and the other patients in the adult  
218 cohort (HR 2.929 (95% C.I.: 1.486–5.774) ( $p < 0.0001$ , log-rank test)); similar trend  
219 appeared to exist in the pediatric cohort also, although it did not pass statistical  
220 significance (HR 3.293 (95% C.I.: 0.490–22.140) ( $p = 0.096$ , log-rank test))  
221 **(Supplementary Fig. 2)**. The aGOAT dataset comprised a total of 194 dynamic  
222 variables for the adult cohort and 159 dynamic variables for the pediatric cohort  
223 **(Supplementary Table 2)**. In addition, 11 stationary (i.e., not time-varying) variables  
224 were also included in the dataset **(Supplementary Table 3)**.

225

226 We applied the ‘time-limited sample-and-hold’ approach commonly used in intensive  
227 care unit data analysis<sup>18</sup> to augment the aGOAT dataset (holding time set to 3 days  
228 after sampling), based on the hypothesis that most measurements were valid for 3

229 additional days. This augmented dataset was still very sparse in multiple categories of  
230 dynamic variables (**Fig. 1b**). When fitting daGOAT, no other missing-data imputation  
231 procedure was conducted to address the problem of non-uniform data measurement.

232 When testing the LandmarkRSF model (using all dynamic variables at one designated  
233 time point to fit a random survival forests model<sup>22</sup>), missing data were imputed using  
234 the random forest algorithm implemented in the R package ‘randomForestSRC’.

235

236 **The daGOAT model.** Our Bayesian-inspired model integrated multidimensional  
237 time-series data to calculate risk for severe aGVHD after HLA- mismatched allo-  
238 HSCT according to:

239

$$240 \varphi_i(t) = \sum_{k,t} (I_{ikt} \cdot \theta_k(x_{ik}(t), t)),$$

241

242 where  $x_{ik}(t)$  was the value of the  $k$ -th “dynamic” variable for the  $i$ -th patient at time  
243  $t$ ;  $I_{ikt} = 0$  when  $x_{ik}(t)$  was missing value for the  $i$ -th patient or (when the model  
244 was run in the ‘engraftment-aware’ mode) before neutrophil engraftment), and  $I_{ikt} =$   
245 1 otherwise;  $\theta_k(x_{ik}(t), t)$  was the contribution of  $x_{ik}(t)$  to the log-odds ratio of  
246 the  $i$ -th patient developing severe aGVHD.  $\theta_k(\cdot)$  was constrained to be ‘smooth’<sup>27</sup>  
247 with respect to time  $t$ .

248

249 We fit daGOAT as follows: First, for every  $k$  and  $t$ , we computed the cutoff value  $c_{kt}$   
250 that maximized Shannon’s mutual information between the  $k$ -th dynamic variable at

251 time  $t$  and severe aGVHD occurrence; then we set  $l_k(t)$  and  $u_k(t)$  to be the 25th  
 252 and 75th percentile value among  $c_{k,\max\{t_0, t-\Delta\tau\}}, \dots, c_{k,\min\{T, t+\Delta\tau\}}$ , respectively. (We  
 253 set  $\Delta\tau$  to be  $\infty$ .) This step computed the optimal cutoff values  $\{l_k(t), u_k(t)\}$  to  
 254 discretize the  $k$ -th dynamic variable at time  $t$ . Second, for every  $k$  and  $t$ , we computed  
 255  $\rho_{1kt}^{(L)} = P(x_{ik}(t) < l_k(t) \mid i\text{-th patient developed severe aGVHD} \leq 40 \text{ days})$ ,  
 256  $\rho_{1kt}^{(H)} = P(x_{ik}(t) > u_k(t) \mid i\text{-th patient developed severe aGVHD} \leq 40 \text{ days})$ ,  
 257  $\rho_{0kt}^{(L)} = P(x_{ik}(t) < l_k(t) \mid i\text{-th patient did not develop severe aGVHD} \leq 40 \text{ days})$ ,  
 258 and  
 259  $\rho_{0kt}^{(H)} = P(x_{ik}(t) > u_k(t) \mid i\text{-th patient did not develop severe aGVHD} \leq 40 \text{ days})$ ;  
 260 then, we computed  $\hat{\rho}_{1k}^{(L)}(t)$ ,  $\hat{\rho}_{1k}^{(H)}(t)$ ,  $\hat{\rho}_{0k}^{(L)}(t)$ , and  $\hat{\rho}_{0k}^{(H)}(t)$  as ‘smoothed’ versions of  
 261  $\rho_{1kt}^{(L)}$ ,  $\rho_{1kt}^{(H)}$ ,  $\rho_{0kt}^{(L)}$ , and  $\rho_{0kt}^{(H)}$ , respectively, through smoothing-spline fitting (smooth  
 262 with respect to  $t$ ). This step computed the discretized probability distribution of the  $k$ -  
 263 th dynamic variable that was smooth along the time axis. Finally, we defined

$$264 \quad \theta_k(x, t) = \begin{cases} \log\left(\frac{\max\{0, \hat{\rho}_{1k}^{(L)}(t)\} + \gamma}{\max\{0, \hat{\rho}_{0k}^{(L)}(t)\} + \gamma}\right) & \text{if } x < l_k(t) \\ \log\left(\frac{\max\{0, 1 - \hat{\rho}_{1k}^{(L)}(t) - \hat{\rho}_{1k}^{(H)}(t)\} + \gamma}{\max\{0, 1 - \hat{\rho}_{0k}^{(L)}(t) - \hat{\rho}_{0k}^{(H)}(t)\} + \gamma}\right) & \text{if } l_k(t) \leq x \leq u_k(t), \\ \log\left(\frac{\max\{0, \hat{\rho}_{1k}^{(H)}(t)\} + \gamma}{\max\{0, \hat{\rho}_{0k}^{(H)}(t)\} + \gamma}\right) & \text{if } u_k(t) < x \end{cases}$$

265 where  $\gamma \geq 0$  was a hyperparameter which we set to be 0.1. (When the model was  
 266 run in the ‘no smoothing’ mode,  $\hat{\rho}_{1k}^{(L)}(t)$ ,  $\hat{\rho}_{1k}^{(H)}(t)$ ,  $\hat{\rho}_{0k}^{(L)}(t)$ , and  $\hat{\rho}_{0k}^{(H)}(t)$  were not  
 267 calculated, and  $\rho_{1kt}^{(L)}$ ,  $\rho_{1kt}^{(H)}$ ,  $\rho_{0kt}^{(L)}$ , and  $\rho_{0kt}^{(H)}$  were used instead for calculating  
 268  $\theta_k(x, t)$ .) We set the date  $t_0$  at which log-odds ratio terms started to be cumulated to  
 269 be day 15 and day 1 post-transplant for adult and pediatric cases, respectively, as the  
 270 children in the aGOAT dataset tended to have much earlier aGVHD onset than the



271 adult cases. In addition, when the model was run in the 'engraftment-aware' mode, a  
272 patient in the validation set did not enter cross-validation until after the patient's  
273 neutrophil engraftment. The pediatric cohort's data size was too small to support the  
274 'engraftment-aware' mode; therefore, daGOAT was set to be not 'engraftment-aware'  
275 for the children cases.  
276

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349

350 **Data availability**

351 Upon acceptance of the manuscript for publication, the aGOAT dataset will be  
352 deposited at the PRC National Genomics Data Center database  
353 (<https://ngdc.cnbc.ac.cn/>) that will be accessible to the research community.

354

355 **Code availability**

356 R code used in this study is available in Supplementary Information.

357

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363

364 **Contributions**

365 JR.C., EL.J., and XF.Z. supervised the study. JR.C., EL.J., and XF.Z. designed the  
366 study, with contributions from Y.G. and YG.C.. XO.L. coordinated the study, with  
367 contributions from S.Z. and Z.S.. YG.C., Y.G., MY.W., LY.Z., X.C., SZ.F., MZ.H.,  
368 EL.J., and XF.Z. contributed to data collection. XO.L., YG.C., Y.G., XW.G., YH.F.,  
369 MY.W., and WW.G. compiled, reviewed, and curated the dataset, with contributions  
370 from NN.Z., XQ.S., XT.Z., and X.C.. JR.C. designed the algorithm, with  
371 contributions from Y.W., MX.C., and LFL.. JR.C., Y.W., and MX.C. performed the  
372 computation, with contributions from YH.F., XW.G., QJ.S., and XO.L.. J.R.C. wrote

373 the manuscript, with contributions from Y.W., XO.L., MX.C., XW.G., YG.C., EL.J.,  
374 and XF.Z..

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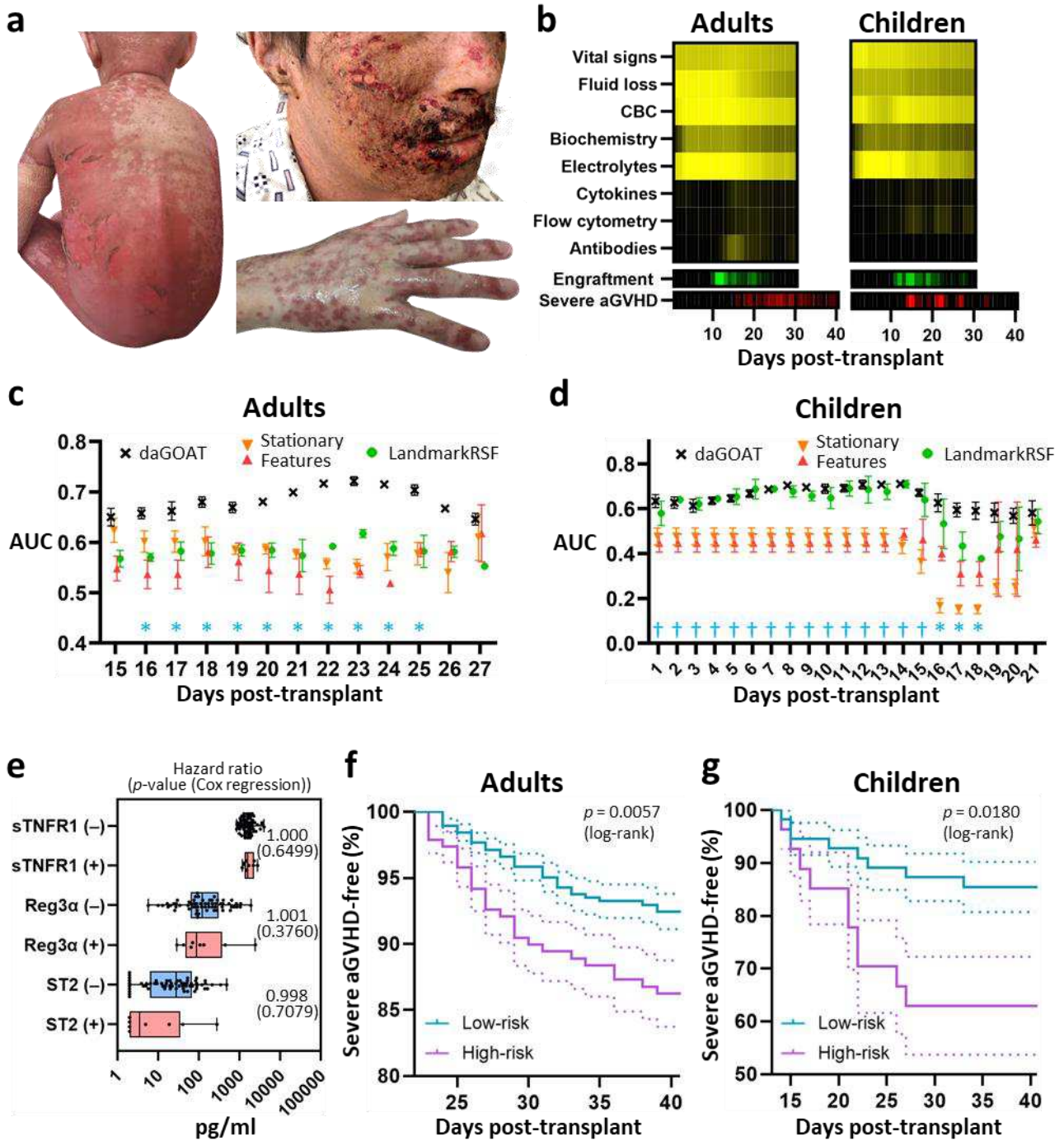
378

379 **Ethics declarations**

380 This retrospective study was initiated in October 2020 and became part of a larger-  
381 scope research program, which was approved by the IHCAMS Clinical Research  
382 Academic Committee on 11 January 2021 (IIT2021006) and by the IHCAMS Ethics  
383 Committee on 7 February 2021 (IIT2021006-EC-1). To avoid biased healthcare or  
384 research decisions, patients who received HSCT later than 1 November 2020 (65 adult  
385 cases and 15 pediatric cases in the aGOAT dataset) were not included in this study  
386 until after 7 February 2021.

387

**Fig. 1**



389 **Fig. 1: Dynamic forecasting of severe aGVHD using the proposed algorithm,**  
390 **daGOAT.**

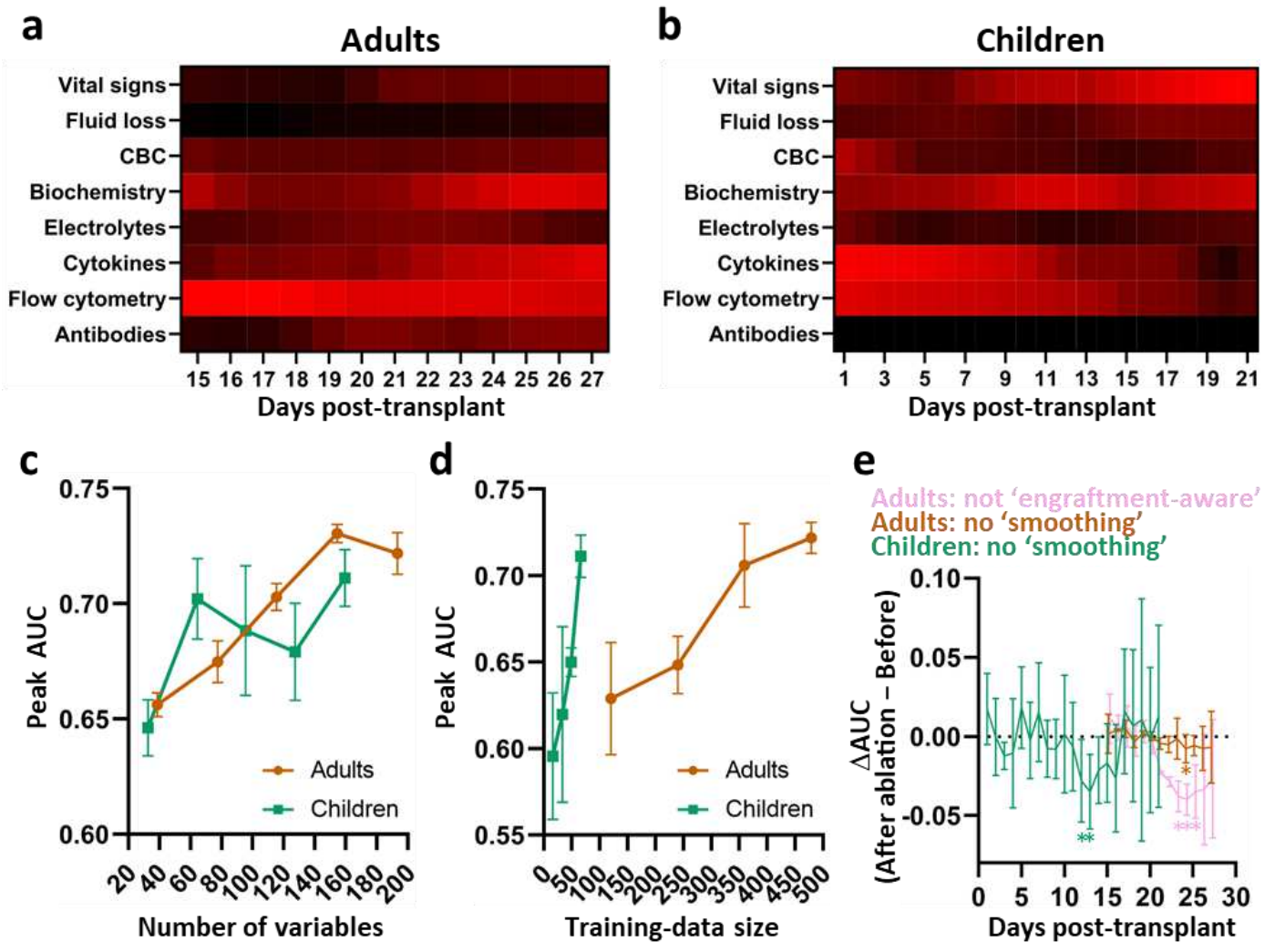
391 **a**, Skin manifestations of severe aGVHD, a life-threatening complication after  
392 transplantation. **b**, Data density and event distributions in the aGOAT dataset. Top:  
393 Data density of dynamic variables after transplantation in the adult and pediatric  
394 cohorts in the aGOAT dataset (after ‘time-limited sample-and-hold’ data imputations  
395 (**Methods**)). Bottom: Temporal distributions of neutrophil engraftment and severe  
396 aGVHD onset. Median onset time of severe aGVHD was day 27 post-transplant (Q1:  
397 day 23; Q3: day 31) for the adult cohort and day 21 post-transplant (Q1: day 15; Q3:  
398 day 24) for the pediatric cohort, respectively. (Brighter colors in the heat maps  
399 indicate higher densities.) **c,d**, Performance of daGOAT in the adult (**c**) and pediatric  
400 (**d**) cohorts and comparisons with benchmarks. All models were evaluated by 5-fold  
401 cross-validation (with identical randomization for all the models). This procedure was  
402 performed three times for the adult and pediatric cohorts separately and  
403 independently. In both cohorts, daGOAT was run with ‘smoothing’. In the adult  
404 cohort, daGOAT was set to be ‘engraftment-aware’ in addition. The pediatric cohort’s  
405 data size was too small to run daGOAT in the ‘engraftment-aware’ mode. Black:  
406 daGOAT; Orange and Red: StationaryFeatures, fitted with Naïve Bayes and Random  
407 Forest, respectively; Green: LandmarkRSF, fitted using the R package  
408 ‘randomForestSRC’. (\*: daGOAT outperformed all three benchmarks at  $p < 0.05$   
409 (paired one-sided t-test). †: daGOAT outperformed both StationaryFeatures models at  
410  $p < 0.05$  (paired one-sided t-test).) **e**, Distributions of plasma biomarker levels during

411 days 6–8 post-transplant in the adult cohort. ‘+’ denotes those patients who later  
412 developed severe aGVHD, and ‘–’ denotes those who did not. *p*-values were  
413 calculated according to Wald test in Cox regression (formula: ‘outcome ~  
414 biomarker’). This analysis was not performed in the pediatric cohort due to the very  
415 small size of its biomarker data. **f,g**, Risk stratification of adult (**f**) and pediatric (**g**)  
416 patients using daGOAT. High-risk: top 1/3 of the patients according to model output  
417 at the time of risk stratification (day 23 and day 14 for the adult and pediatric cohorts,  
418 respective); Low-risk: bottom 2/3. (Dotted lines: standard errors.)

419



**Fig. 2**



421 **Fig. 2. Interpretation and characteristics of the daGOAT model.**

422 **a,b**, Temporal patterns of feature importance identified by daGOAT for the adult (**a**)

423 and pediatric (**b**) cohorts. For each category  $C$  of dynamic variables (listed in

424 **Supplementary Table 2**), its importance at time  $t$  was calculated as

425  $\max_{k \in C} \left( \max_x (\theta_k(x, t)) - \min_x (\theta_k(x, t)) \right)$ . The brighter a cell is in the heat maps, the

426 more important the corresponding category of dynamic variables at the corresponding

427 time point was for predicting severe aGVHD in the aGOAT dataset. **c**, Relationship

428 between daGOAT's performance and 'data diversity' (variety). Data diversity was

429 measured in the number of variables (randomly selected here) included in model-

430 fitting. **d**, Relationship between daGOAT's performance and 'data richness'

431 (quantity). Data richness was measured in the number of patients (randomly selected

432 here) included in the training set. **e**, Ablation study of the daGOAT model. daGOAT's

433 performance was compared with itself after either 'smoothing' or 'engraftment-aware'

434 was turned off. (\*:  $p < 0.05$  (paired one-sided t-test).) The pediatric cohort was too

435 small to run daGOAT in the 'engraftment-aware' mode.

## Supplementary Files

This is a list of supplementary files associated with this preprint. Click to download.

- [code.txt](#)
- [supplementaryinfo.pdf](#)