



Fig. S3. Desiccation assay. Pneumococcal strains EF3030, EF3030 Δ *tacL* and EF3030 Δ *tacL*▽*tacL* were cultured in THY up to mid-exponential phase. Cultures were washed two times with PBS (pH 7.4). 50 μ L of the bacterial suspension with a defined number of bacteria were transferred to glass slides and allowed to dry at room temperature for 6 h, 18 h or 24 h. Subsequently, 50 μ L of PBS (pH 7.4) was used to resuspend surviving bacteria and the amount of living bacteria was determined by serial dilution and plating on blood agar plates. Plates were incubated for at least 14 h at 37 °C and 5% CO₂. The CFU at t=0 served as a reference value to calculate the percentage survival of the bacteria. LLOD = lower level of detection; n.d.= no detection; n=10 * p < 0.05; **** p < 0.0001 (Student's unpaired t test).