The invention claimed is:

1. An antibody or an antigen binding fragment thereof comprising a heavy chain variable region (VH) and a light chain variable region (VL), wherein

(a) CDR1, CDR2, and CDR3 of the VH comprise the amino acid sequences of DYWMH (SEQ ID NO: 7), TIDPSDQYTIYSQNFKG (SEQ ID NO: 66), and YGFAMDY (SEQ ID NO: 9), respectively; and

(b) CDR1, CDR2, and CDR3 of the VL comprise the amino acid sequences of RASQDISNFLN (SEQ ID NO: 12), YTSRLHS (SEQ ID NO: 13), and QQGHTLPRT (SEQ ID NO: 14) respectively;

wherein the antibody or the antigen binding fragment thereof specifically binds to IL-21.

2. The antibody of claim 1, wherein the antibody is a murine antibody, a humanized antibody, a chimeric antibody, or a recombinant antibody.

3. The antigen binding fragment of claim 1, wherein the antigen binding fragment is Fv, Fab, F(ab')2, Fab', dsFv, scFv, and sc(Fv)2.

4. The antibody or antigen binding fragment of claim 1, wherein

(a) the VH comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 19; and

(b) the VL comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 21.

5. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the antibody or antigen-binding fragment of claim 4, and one or more of a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, or a diluent.

6. The antibody or antigen binding fragment of claim 1, wherein the antibody or antigen binding fragment comprises an IgG constant domain.

7. The antibody or antigen binding fragment of claim 6, wherein the IgG constant domain is human IgG1.

8. The antibody or antigen binding fragment of claim 6, wherein the IgG constant domain comprises one or more amino acid substitutions that increase the antibody or antigen binding fragment half-life compared to that observed in the antibody or antigen binding fragment having a wild-type IgG constant domain.

9. The antibody or antigen binding fragment of claim 1, comprising a heavy chain amino acid sequence comprising SEQ ID NO: 16, SEQ ID NO: 20, or SEQ ID NO: 24.

10. The antibody or antigen binding fragment of claim 1, comprising a light chain amino acid sequence comprising SEQ ID NO: 18, SEQ ID NO: 22, or SEQ ID NO: 26.

11. The antibody or antigen binding fragment of claim 1, comprising (a) a heavy chain amino acid sequence comprising SEQ ID NO: 20; and (b) a light chain amino acid sequence comprising SEQ ID NO: 22.

12. The antibody or antigen binding fragment of claim 1, wherein the antibody or antigen binding fragment is conjugated to an agent selected from the group consisting of an antimicrobial agent, a therapeutic agent, a prodrug, a peptide, a protein, an enzyme, a lipid, a biological response modifier, a pharmaceutical agent, a lymphokine, a heterologous antibody or fragment thereof, a detectable label, a polyethylene glycol (PEG), and any combination thereof.

13. The antibody or antigen binding fragment according to claim 1 for use in the treatment of an autoimmune disease or disorder in a subject in need thereof, wherein the autoimmune disease is Sjogren's syndrome (SS), ANCA-associated vasculitis (AAV), giant cell arteritis (GCA) vasculitis, systemic lupus erythematosus, lupus nephritis, rheumatoid arthritis (RA), Crohn's disease, myasthenia gravis, Pemphigus vulgaris, Idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP), Type I Diabetes, IgG4-related disease, or any combination thereof.

14. Use of an effective amount of the antibody or antigen-binding fragment of claim 1 in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment ofan autoimmune disease or disorder in a subject in need thereof, wherein an effective amount of the medicament is to be administered to the subject, and wherein the autoimmune disease is Sjogren's syndrome (SS), ANCA-associated vasculitis (AAV), giant cell arteritis (GCA) vasculitis, systemic lupus erythematosus, lupus nephritis, rheumatoid arthritis (RA), Crohn's disease, myasthenia gravis, Pemphigus vulgaris, Idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura (ITP), Type I Diabetes, IgG4-related disease, or any combination thereof.

15. The use of claim 14, wherein the autoimmune disease is systemic lupus erythematosus.

16. The antibody or antigen binding fragment according to claim 1 for use in the prevention or treatment of Graft-versus-host disease in a subject in need thereof.

17. Use of an effective amount of the antibody or antigen-binding fragment of claim 1 in the manufacture of a medicament for the prevention or treatment of Graft-versus-host disease in a subject in need thereof, wherein an effective amount of the medicament is to be administered to the subject.

18. A method for detecting IL-21 expression levels in a sample comprising (a) contacting said sample with the antibody or antigen-binding fragment of claim 1; and (b) detecting binding of the antibody to IL-21 in said sample.