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#### Method Article

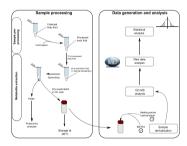
# Metabolic profiling of body fluids and multivariate data analysis



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#### GRAPHICAL ABSTRACT



Quantitative multi-component analysis of body fluids with GC-MS. After sample collection, the samples are preprocessed and used for metabolite extraction. After this, GC-MS analysis and subsequent data processing and analysis are performed.

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#### ABSTRACT

Metabolome analyses of body fluids are challenging due pre-analytical variations, such as pre-processing delay and temperature, and constant dynamical changes of biochemical processes within the samples. Therefore, proper sample handling starting from the time of collection up to the analysis is crucial to obtain high quality samples and reproducible results. A metabolomics analysis is divided into 4 main steps: 1) Sample collection, 2) Metabolite extraction, 3) Data acquisition and 4) Data analysis.

Here, we describe a protocol for gas chromatography coupled to mass spectrometry (GC–MS) based metabolic analysis for biological matrices, especially body fluids. This protocol can be applied on blood serum/plasma, saliva and cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) samples of humans and other vertebrates. It covers sample collection, sample preprocessing, metabolite extraction, GC–MS measurement and guidelines for the subsequent data analysis.

Advantages of this protocol include:

- Robust and reproducible metabolomics results, taking into account pre-analytical variations that may occur during the sampling process
- Small sample volume required
- Rapid and cost-effective processing of biological samples
- Logistic regression based determination of biomarker signatures for in-depth data analysis
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#### Method details

#### Materials

- 50 μL body fluid (for analysis in triplicates), such as plasma, serum, saliva or CSF (fresh or stored at -80 °C)
- Methanol (High purity, LC-MS grade) at −20 °C
- Internal standard [U-<sup>13</sup>C]Ribitol (Omicron Biochemicals, ALD-062)
- Sample collection tubes, such as sterile collection tubes (for CSF and saliva), EDTA and serumseparating tubes (for blood)
- Wet ice
- Methoxyamine hydrochloride 98% (Sigma-Aldrich, 226904)
- Pyridine 99.8% (Sigma-Aldrich, 270970)
- N-methyl-N-trimethylsilyl-trifluoroacetamide (Macherey-Nagel, 701270.110)
- Alkane standard mixture for performance tests of GC-systems (Sigma-Aldrich, 68281-10ml-F)
- GC glass vials with micro insert (gastight) 5–250 µL (various suppliers)
- (Magnetic) caps for GC glass vials (various suppliers)

All aqueous solutions used throughout this protocol should be prepared with MilliQ or deionized water (18.2 M $\Omega$  cm, <3 ppb TOC).

Note: The proper selection of the collection tubes is highly relevant for GC–MS based metabolomics analyses. In Section Choice of collection tubes we review and recommend several types of collection tubes for the different body fluid types. In general, we recommend the use of sterile tubes to reduce the risk of sample contamination.

#### **Equipment**

- Reaction tube centrifuge, such as Eppendorf 5424R
- Refrigerated rotary vacuum evaporator, such as CentriVap Concentrator refrigerated (Labconco)

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