

Agilent Approaches for Amino Acid Analysis

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Columns and Supplies Technical Support
October 1, 2020

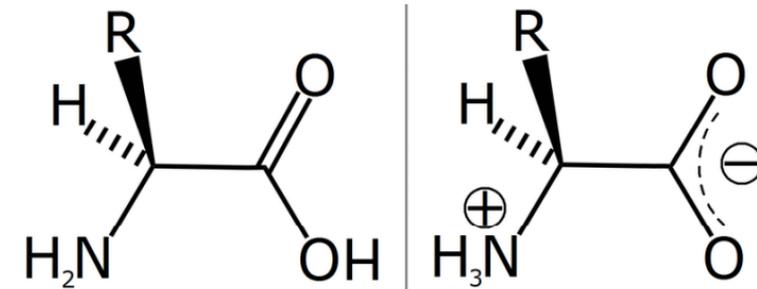


- History of Amino Acid Analysis at Agilent
- Reverse phase LC/UV analysis of derivatized amino acids
- HILIC LC/MS of underivatized amino acids and other metabolites
- Ion pairing analysis of underivatized amino acids
- Chiral analysis of amino acids

Why is Amino acid analysis important?

- Important for protein and peptide identification and quantitation
- Part of reverse-phase characterization in biopharma
- Important for monitoring cell culture media
- Used for the analysis of metabolic intermediates
- Flavor analysis

- Detection by UV or FL of amino acids is improved by derivatization
 - OPA/FMOC, Ninhydrin, Dansyl chloride, and PITC are common reagents used
- Derivatization can be done precolumn or post column
 - OPA/FMOC, Dansyl chloride, and PITC are common reagents used for precolumn
 - Ninhydrin is common for post column methods
- There are multiple methods to perform amino acid analysis:
 - GC, CE, HPAE-PAD
 - LC/UV/FL, LC/MS

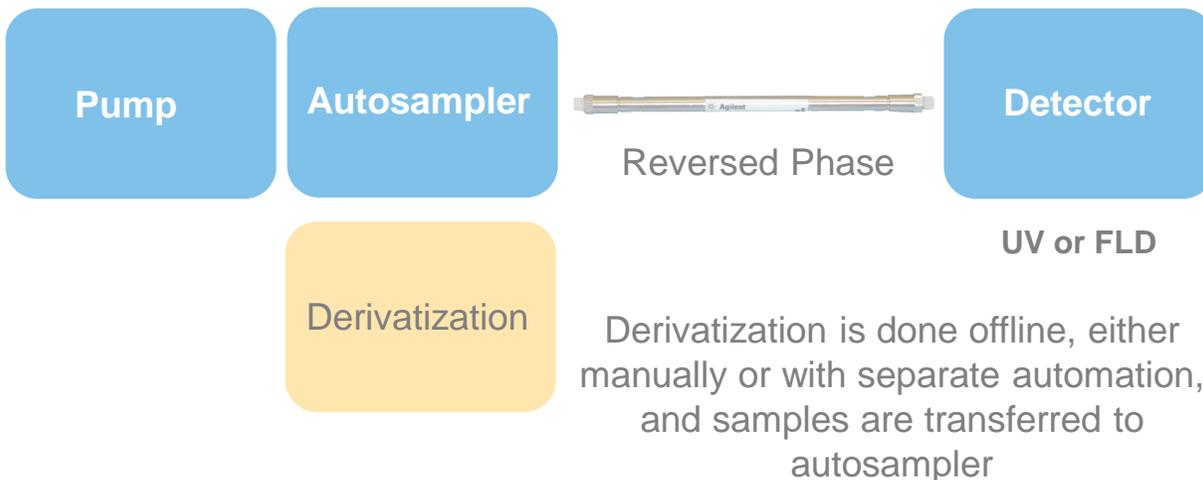


Precolumn and Postcolumn Derivatization

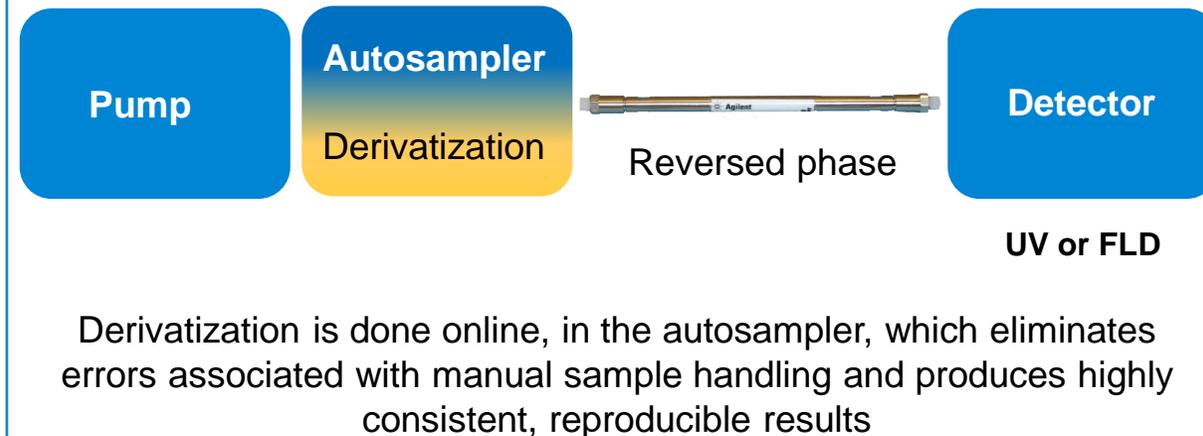
Postcolumn derivatization – the historic Gold Standard of dedicated Amino Acid Analyzers



Precolumn derivatization – offline:



Precolumn derivatization – online:



History of AAA at Agilent

AminoQuant (c. 1990)

- Extensive guide for HP 1090
- Hypersil AA ODS column

ZORBAX Eclipse AAA (c. 2000)

- User guide pub no. 5980-3088EN

ZORBAX Eclipse Plus C18 (c. 2010)

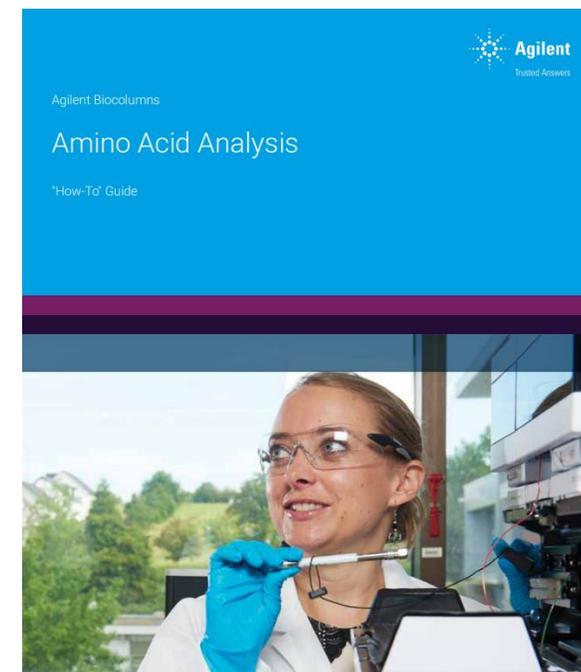
- *Improved Amino Acid Methods using Agilent ZORBAX Eclipse Plus C18 Columns for a Variety of Agilent LC Instrumentation and Separation Goals*
- Pub no. 5990-4547EN

AdvanceBio AAA (c. 2017)

- Amino Acid Analysis “How-To” Guide
- Poroshell particle
- Pub no. 5991-7694EN

AdvanceBio MS Spent Media (c. 2018)

- HILIC, MS compatible
- Pub no. 5991-8816EN



Previous Agilent AAA method

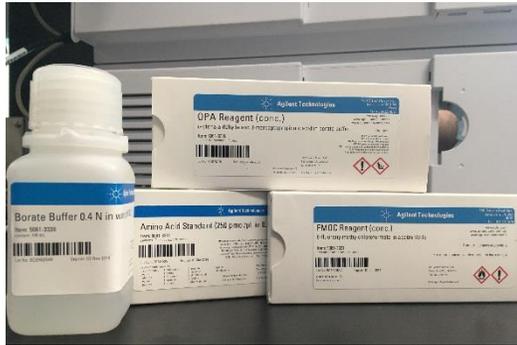
Agilent has a well-established solution for Amino Acid Analysis

- Based on automated precolumn derivatization capabilities of Agilent autosamplers
- Uses ZORBAX Eclipse AAA column
- Well established method using reagents and standards from Agilent

What's updated?

- Reagents conveniently kitted together under a single part number
- Introduced an HPH chemistry on a Poroshell particle for improved column lifetime
 - Traditional silica columns dissolve above neutral pH, but HPH chemistry stabilizes column
 - AA derivatization and separation are most efficient at higher pH
 - Poroshell particle: high efficiency, fast separations, rugged

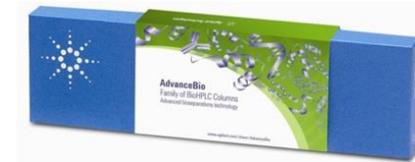
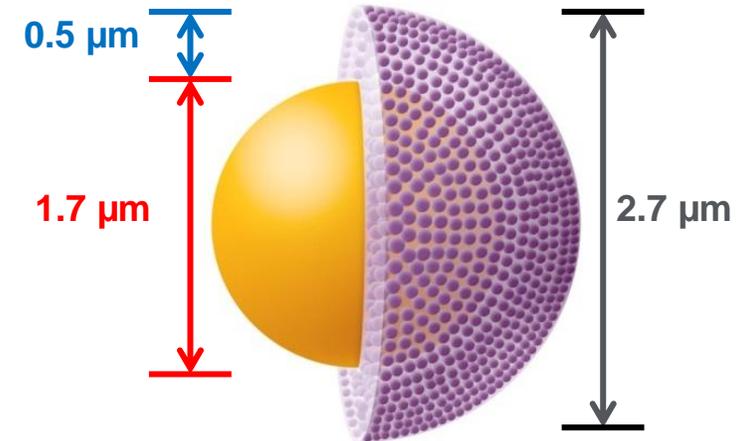
The Agilent Amino Acid Analysis Solution



Ready to use
AdvanceBio AAA kit
(standards and
reagents)



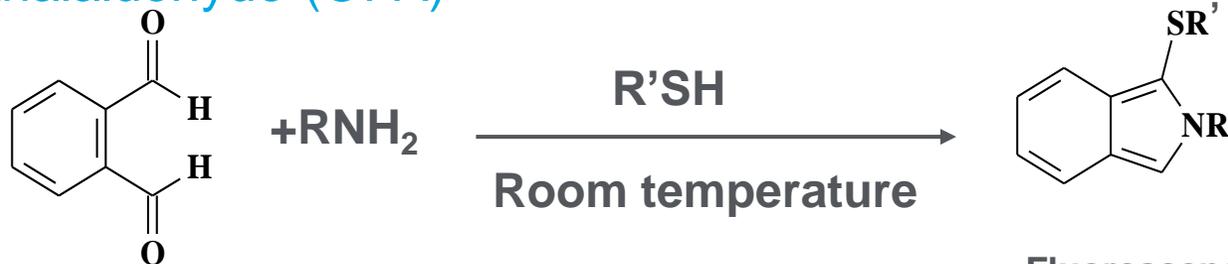
All Agilent LC
systems, including
Infinity II systems



AdvanceBio AAA columns
Poroshell particles
Fast and rugged

Automated Derivatization in the Autosampler

ortho-Phthalaldehyde (OPA)



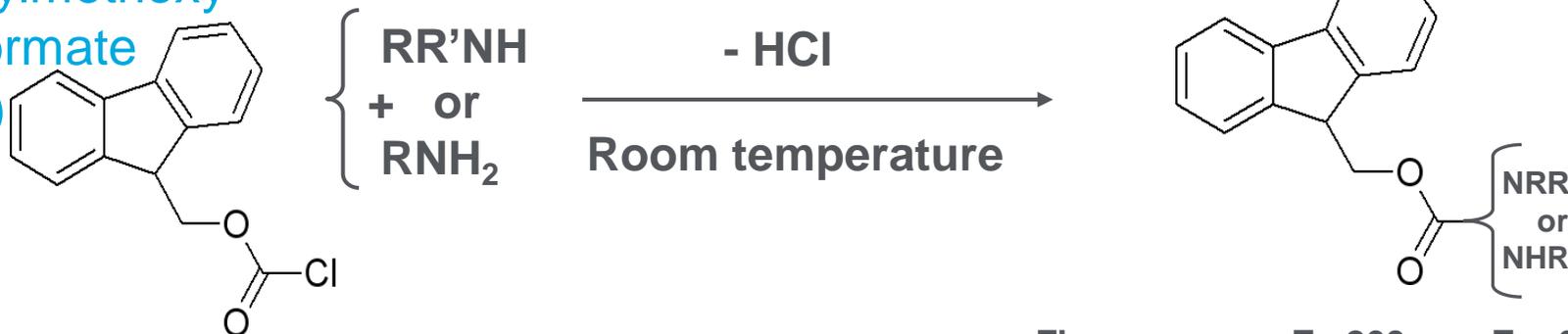
Nonfluorescent
Does not absorb at 338 nm

Fluorescence: Ex 340 nm, Em 450 nm
DAD: 338, 10 nm; Ref. 390, 20 nm

1. Allows visualization by UV or FL
2. Helps retain very polar compounds



Fluorenylmethoxy chloroformate (FMOC)



Fluorescent
Absorbs at 262 nm and
fluoresces at 324 nm

Fluorescence: Ex 260 nm, Em 325 nm
DAD: 262, 16 nm; Ref. 324,8 nm

Optimal pH for reaction with AA: ~10.0

AdvanceBio AAA Reagent Kit

Material	Part Number
Borate buffer, 100 mL	5061-3339
Fmoc reagent, 10 ampoules, 1 mL each	5061-3337
OPA reagent/3-mercaptopropionic acid, 6 ampoules, 10 mg/mL	5061-3335
Dithiodipropionic acid (DTDPA)	5062-2479
AA standards, 1 nmol, 10/pk	5061-3330
AA standards, 250 pmol, 10/pk	5061-3331
AA standards, 100 pmol, 10/pk	5061-3332
AA standards, 25 pmol, 10/pk	5061-3333
AA standards, 10 pmol, 10/pk	5061-3334
Amino acids supplement kit, 1 g each of norvaline, sarcosine, asparagine, glutamine, tryptophan, and 4-hydroxyproline	5062-2478



Order components individually, or together as part of a kit with a single part number:

5190-9426



Online Derivatization/Injection Program

- Draw 2.5 μL from borate vial (Agilent p/n 5061-3339)
- Draw 1.0 μL from sample vial
- Mix 3.5 μL in wash port five times
- Wait 0.2 min
- Draw 0.5 μL from OPA vial (Agilent p/n 5061-3335)
- Mix 4.0 μL in wash port 10 times default speed
- Draw 0.4 μL from FMOC vial (Agilent p/n 5061-3337)
- Mix 4.4 μL in wash port 10 times default speed
- Draw 32 μL from injection diluent vial
- Mix 20 μL in wash port eight times
- Inject
- Wait 0.1 min
- Valve bypass

1290 Infinity II Multisampler



Method can be programmed into any Agilent autosampler:

- Eliminates manual labor and variability
- Enables highly precise data



1260 Infinity II Vialsampler

Online Derivatization/Injection Program

OpenLab ChemStation C.01

Setup Method

Quat. Pump HiP Sampler HiP Sampler Injector Program Column Comp. DAD FLD Instrument Curves

Use Injector Program

Function	Parameter
▶ Draw	Draw 2.5 μL from location "P1-D-1" with default speed using default offset
Draw	Draw 1 μL from sample with default speed using default offset
Mix	Mix 3.5 μL from air with default speed for 5 times
Wait	Wait 0.2 min
Draw	Draw 0.5 μL from location "P1-D-2" with default speed using default offset
Mix	Mix 4 μL from air with default speed for 10 times
Draw	Draw 0.4 μL from location "P1-D-3" with default speed using default offset
Mix	Mix 4.4 μL from air with default speed for 10 times
Draw	Draw 32 μL from location "P1-D-4" with default speed using default offset
Mix	Mix 20 μL from air with default speed for 8 times
Inject	Inject
Wait	Wait 0.1 min
Valve	Switch valve to "Bypass"

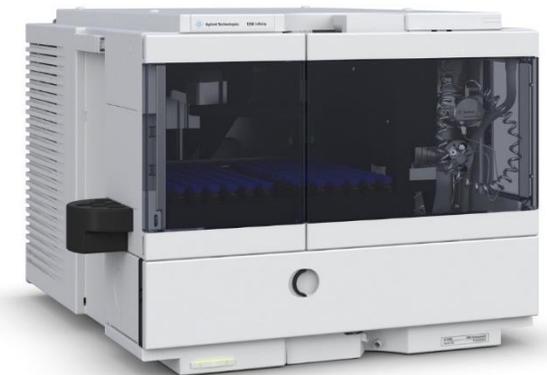
Append Insert Delete Clear all Move up
Cut Copy Paste Move down

1290 Infinity II Multisampler



Method can be programmed into any Agilent autosampler:

- Eliminates manual labor and variability
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1260 Infinity II Vialsampler

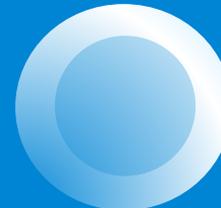
Robust Columns for AAA

A robust, high efficiency Fast LC column with resistance to elevated pH and temperature offering users performance comparable to that of sub-2 μm alternatives but with up to 50% less backpressure.

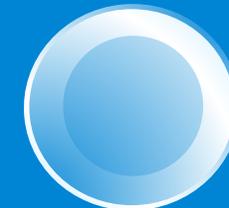
Utilizes a proprietary technology for particle synthesis



Core

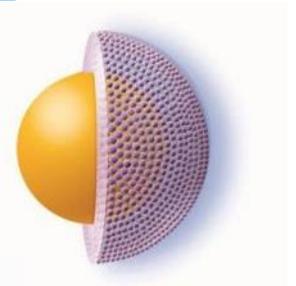


P120 Particle



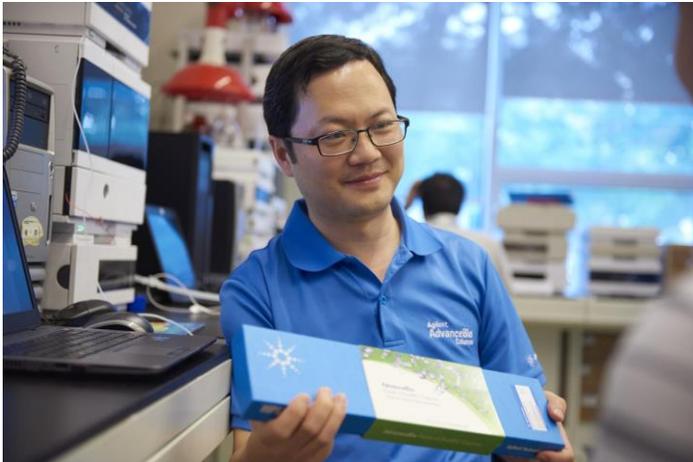
Treated P120

- 2.7 μm particles, 100 \AA pore size
- Two dimensions available: 3.0 x 100 mm, 4.6 x 100 mm
 - Guard columns also available in each id
- Each individual column is tested for efficiency
- Each batch is tested with amino acid standards to ensure performance



AdvanceBio AAA columns

Bonded Phase	id (mm)	Particle size (µm)	Length (mm)	Pore Size (Å)	Temp Limit	pH Range	Endcapping	Part Number
C18	3.0	2.7	100	100	65 °C	3.0 – 11.0	Double	695975-322
C18	4.6	2.7	100	100	65 °C	3.0 – 11.0	Double	655950-802
C18	3.0	2.7	5	100	65 °C	3.0 – 11.0	Double	823750-946 (3/pk guards)
C18	4.6	2.7	5	100	65 °C	3.0 – 11.0	Double	820750-931 (3/pk guards)



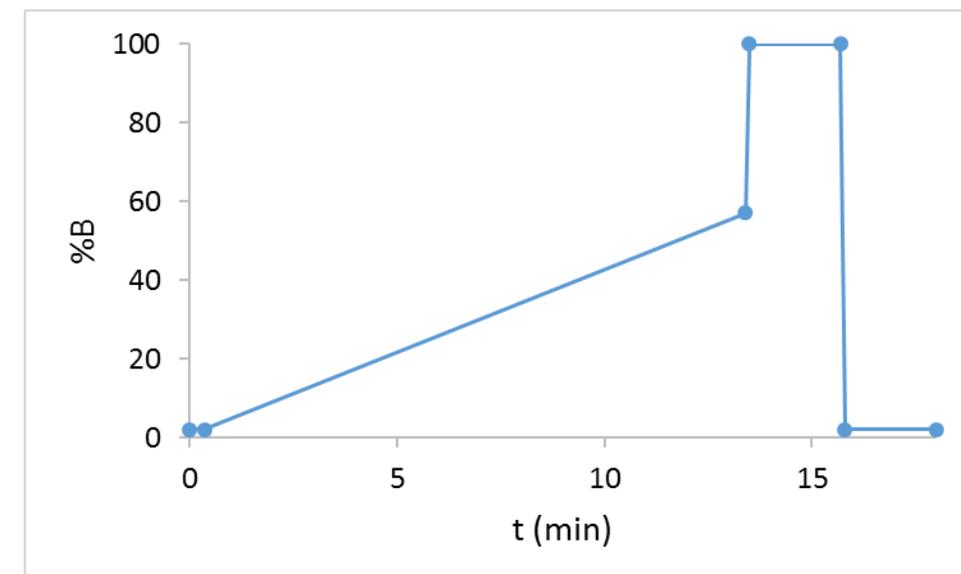
Derivatization Kit – How Many Samples?

- Once opened, the OPA and FMOC ampoules need to be used in about a week
- Typically, the OPA and FMOC reagents are opened on Monday and used for five days
- I would estimate 50 samples a day is easily accomplished, so 250 samples in a week
- The OPA comes as a pack of six ampoules (so let's estimate it's good for roughly 1500 samples)
- The FMOC comes as a pack of 10 (so roughly 2500 samples)



Chromatographic Method

AdvanceBio Amino Acid Analysis																	
Column	Agilent AdvanceBio Amino Acid Analysis																
Column Temp	40 °C																
Mobile Phase	A = 10 mM Na ₂ HPO ₄ and 10 mM Na ₂ B ₄ O ₇ , pH 8.2 B = Acetonitrile:methanol:water (45:45:10, v:v:v)																
Flow Rate	1.5 mL/min for 4.6 mm i.d. 0.62 mL/min for 3.0 mm i.d.																
Gradient Program	<table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Time</th><th>% B</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>0</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>0.35</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>13.4</td><td>57</td></tr><tr><td>13.5</td><td>100</td></tr><tr><td>15.7</td><td>100</td></tr><tr><td>15.8</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>18</td><td>stop</td></tr></tbody></table>	Time	% B	0	2	0.35	2	13.4	57	13.5	100	15.7	100	15.8	2	18	stop
Time	% B																
0	2																
0.35	2																
13.4	57																
13.5	100																
15.7	100																
15.8	2																
18	stop																
Injection volume	1 µL, with 7s needle wash at wash port																
Detection	UV – 338 and 262 nm FLD – Ex λ 340 nm, Em λ 450 nm; Ex λ 260 nm, Em λ 325 nm																



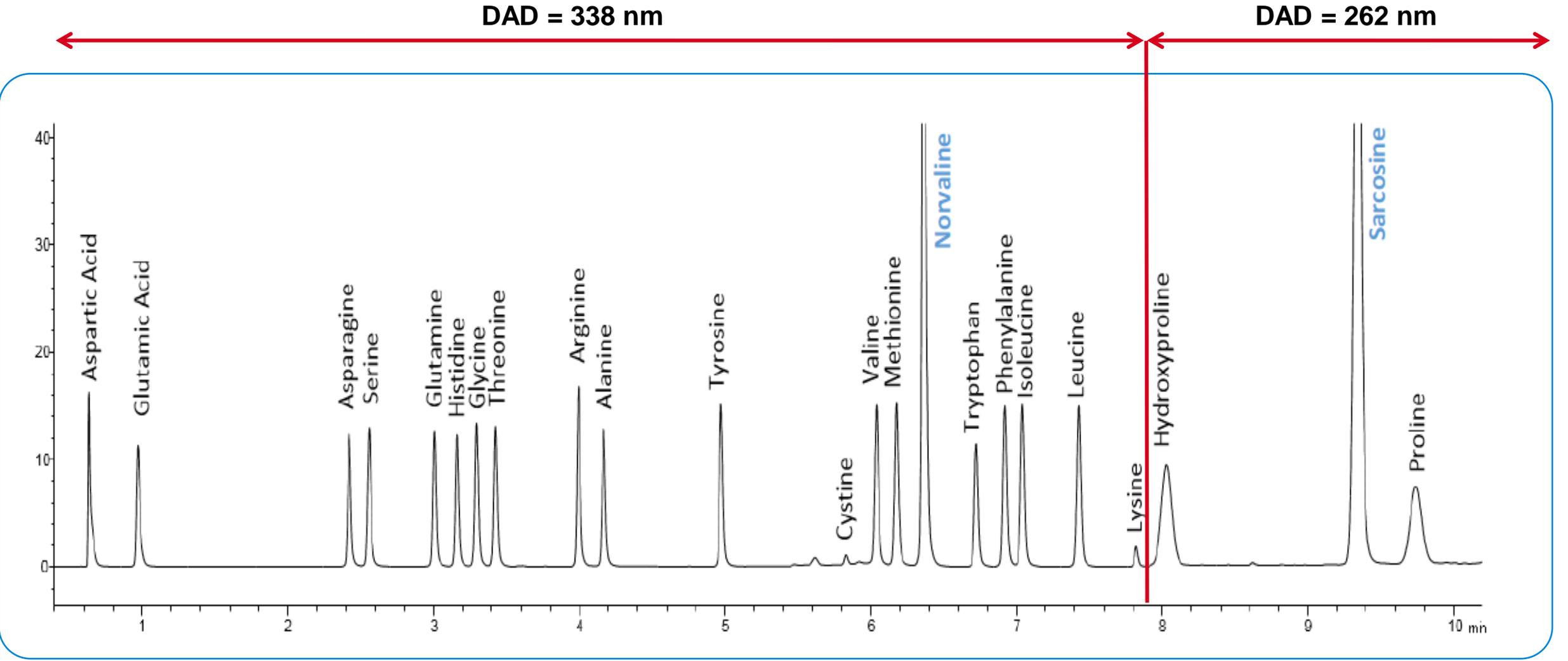
Order of Elution for OPA and FMOC derivatives

Peak #	AA Name	AA Abbreviation	Derivative Type
1	Aspartic Acid	Asp	OPA
2	Glutamic Acid	Glu	OPA
3	Asparagine	Asn	OPA
4	Serine	Ser	OPA
5	Glutamine	Gln	OPA
6	Histidine	His	OPA
7	Glycine	Gly	OPA
8	Threonine	Thr	OPA
9	Arginine	Arg	OPA
10	Alanine	Ala	OPA
11	Tyrosine	Tyr	OPA
12	Cysteine	Cys-Cys	OPA
13	Valine	Val	OPA
14	Methionine	Met	OPA
15	Norvaline	Nva	OPA
16	Tryptophan	Trp	OPA
17	Phenylalanine	Phe	OPA
18	Isoleucine	Ile	OPA
19	Leucine	Leu	OPA
20	Lysine	Lys	OPA
21	Hydroxyproline	Hyp	FMOC
22	Sarcosine (IS)	Sar	FMOC
23	Proline	Pro	FMOC

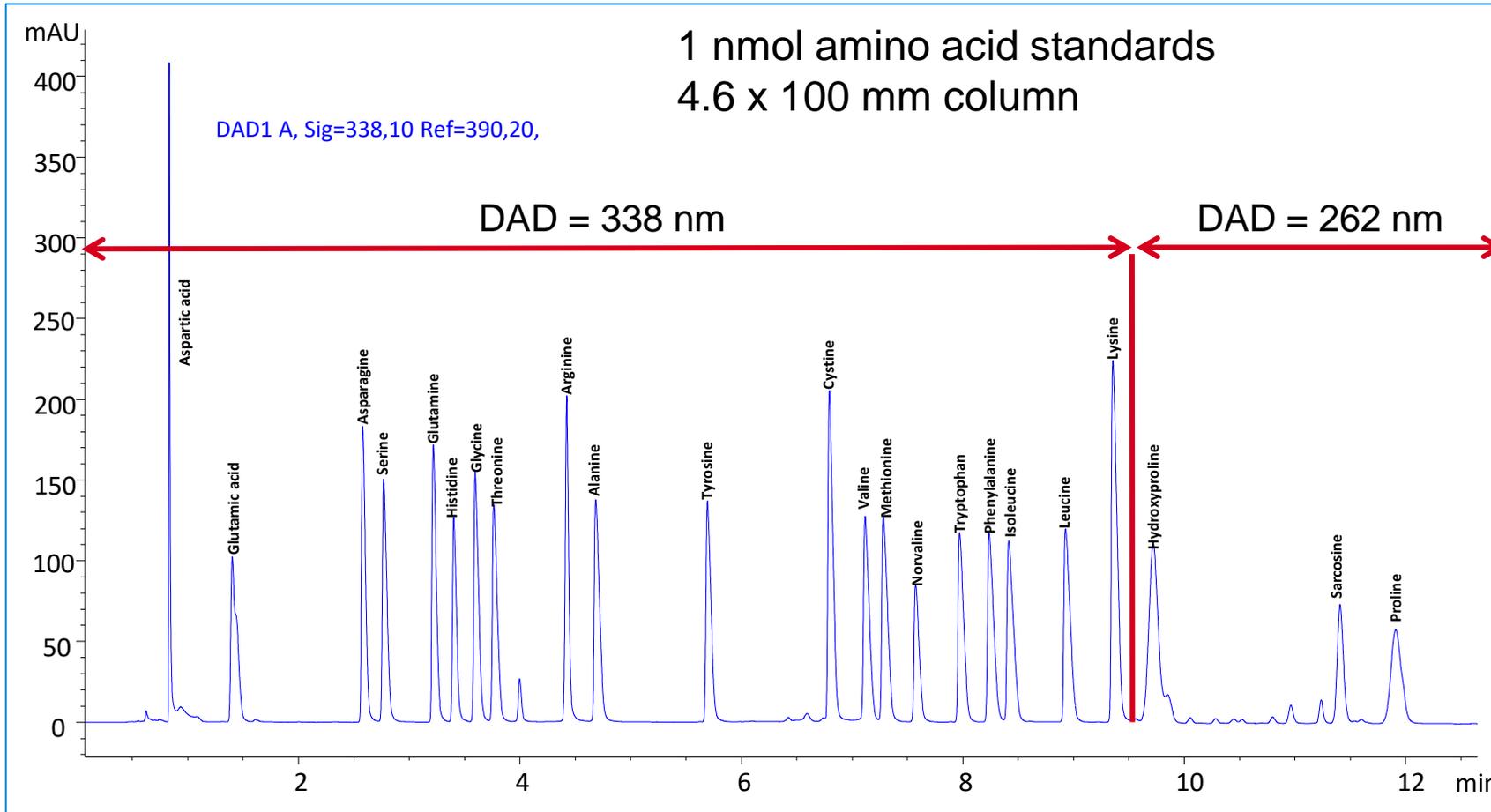
Primary AA

Secondary AA

Fast and Rugged Amino Acids Separation



Reproducible Separations

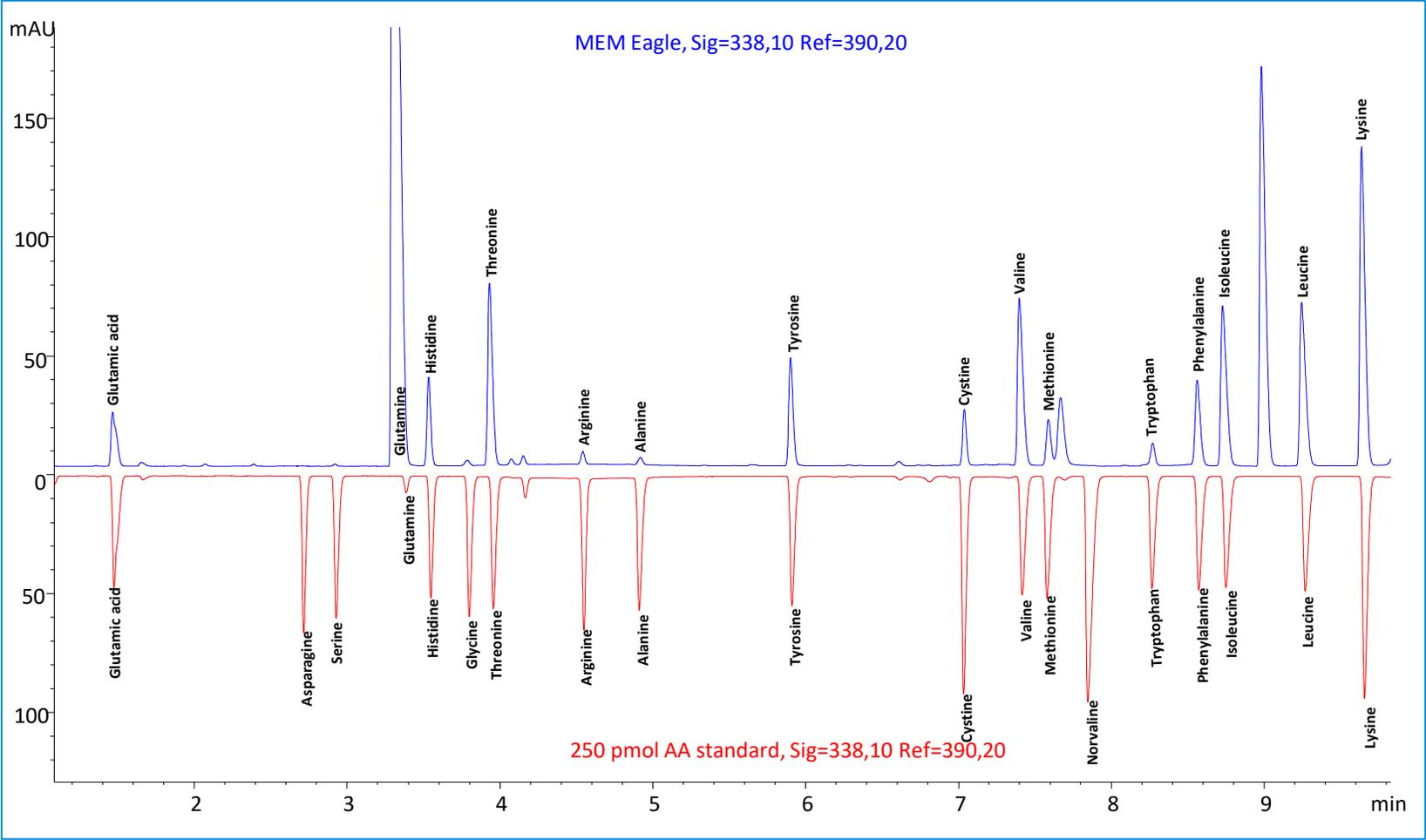


Amino Acids	RT RSD (%)	Area RSD (%)
1. Aspartic acid	1.270	1.066
2. Glutamic acid	0.973	1.85
3. Asparagine	0.605	1.79
4. Serine	0.629	1.82
5. Glutamine	0.470	1.56
6. Histidine	0.430	1.22
7. Glycine	0.477	1.92
8. Threonine	0.440	1.95
9. Arginine	0.251	2.15
10. Alanine	0.280	3.06
11. Tyrosine	0.128	1.65
12. Cystine	0.067	1.9
13. Valine	0.084	2.47
14. Methionine	0.073	1.82
15. Norvaline	0.073	1.72
16. Tryptophan	0.054	1.57
17. Phenylalanine	0.051	1.66
18. Isoleucine	0.047	1.72
19. Leucine	0.03	1.7
20. Lysine	0.028	1.66
21. Hydroxyproline	0.021	4.13
22. Sarcosine	0.026	1.15
23. Proline	0.021	4.36

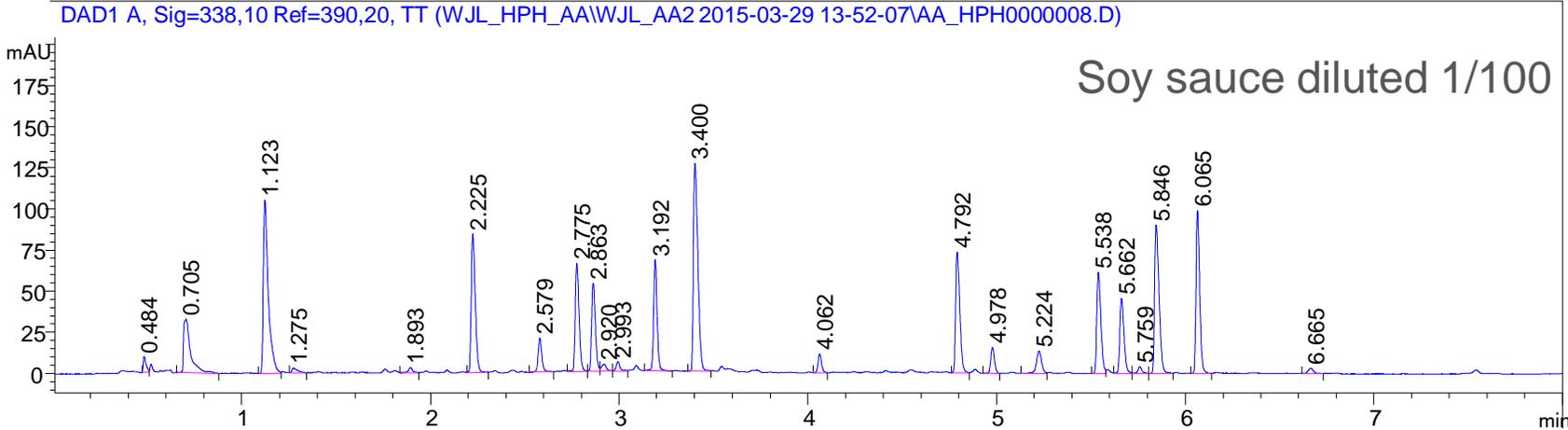
- Retention time %RSD mostly under 1%
- Peak area %RSD mostly under 3%

AAA of Cell Culture Media – MEM

L-Arginine, L-Cystine, L-Glutamine, L-Histidine, L-Isoleucine, L- Leucine, L-Lysine, L-Methionine, L- Phenylalanine, L-Threonine, L-Tryptophan, L- Tyrosine, L-Valine, L-Glutamic acid



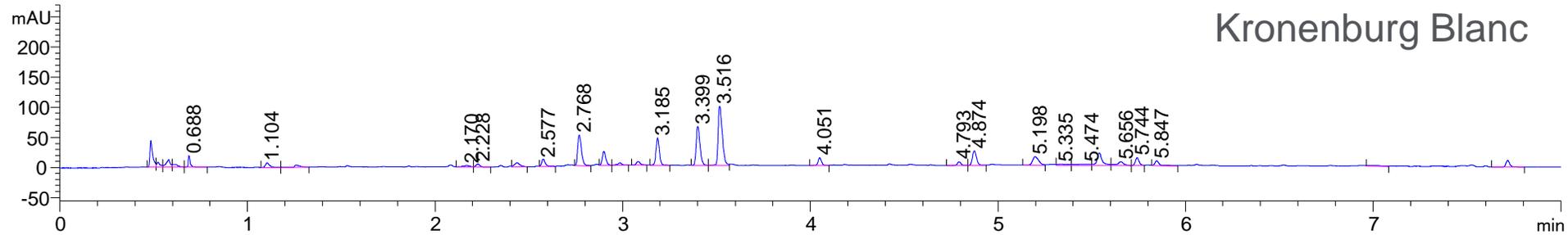
Amino Acid Analysis in Fermentation Applications



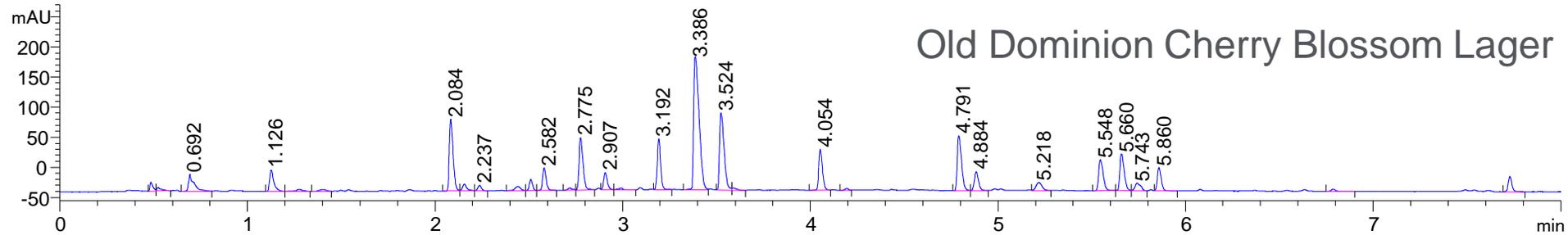
Many other foods (such as soy sauce) and pharmaceuticals that are produced using fermentation processes are monitored by AAA

Amino Acids Analysis for Batch Comparison

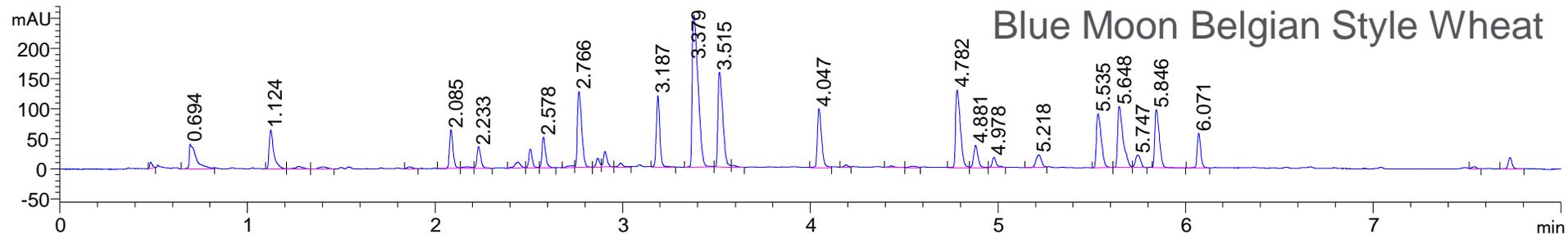
DAD1 A, Sig=338,10 Ref=390,20, TT (WJL_HPH_AAWJL_AA2 2015-03-29 13-52-07\AA_HPH0000002.D)



DAD1 A, Sig=338,10 Ref=390,20, TT (WJL_HPH_AAWJL_AA2 2015-03-29 13-52-07\AA_HPH0000004.D)



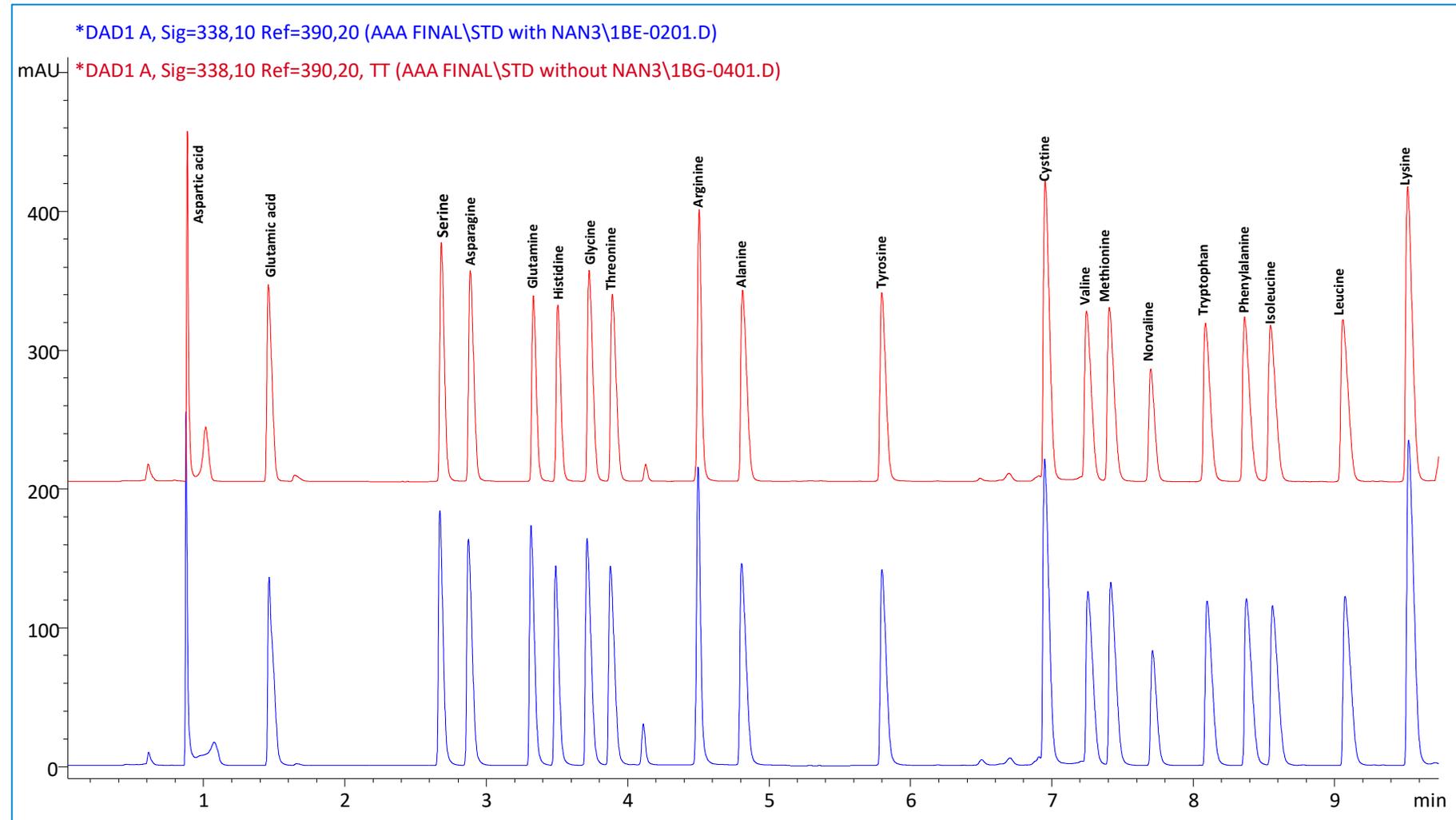
DAD1 A, Sig=338,10 Ref=390,20, TT (WJL_HPH_AAWJL_AA2 2015-03-29 13-52-07\AA_HPH0000006.D)



Quantity and diversity of amino acids is evident. Can be used to monitor and compare batches.

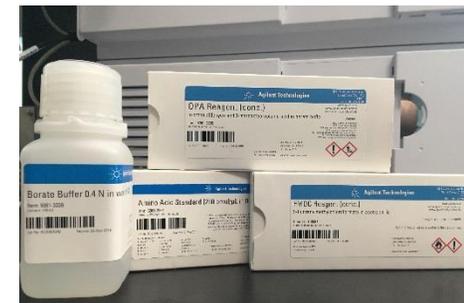
Elution Profile With and Without Sodium Azide

- Historically NaN_3 has been added to aqueous mobile phase to reduce bacterial growth
- NaN_3 is highly toxic
- No effect on the separation
- Highly recommend filtering mobile phases (0.45 or 0.2 μm) to reduce bacterial growth



Tips and Tricks – Maintenance

- Replace derivatization reagent, borate buffer, amino acid standard daily
- Recalibrate for retention times and response factors weekly
- Check column and guard column performance by following specs (Rs for two pairs of AA)
- Replace mobile phase A and B with fresh ones every other day
- Exchange guard column if high backpressure develops
- Avoid using max mixing speed during sample derivatization
 - The max speed on newer LCs is much faster than older LCs (1100/1200)
 - Can cause excessive wear on the autosampler



Tips and Tricks – Troubleshooting

Poor chromatographic resolution?

- Cell culture media does not require any sample preparation, however appropriate dilutions must be made to suit detector response
- In all cases, use the low-volume heat exchanger with short red tubing to minimize extra column volume
- Ensure proper connections
- Damaged guard or analytical column

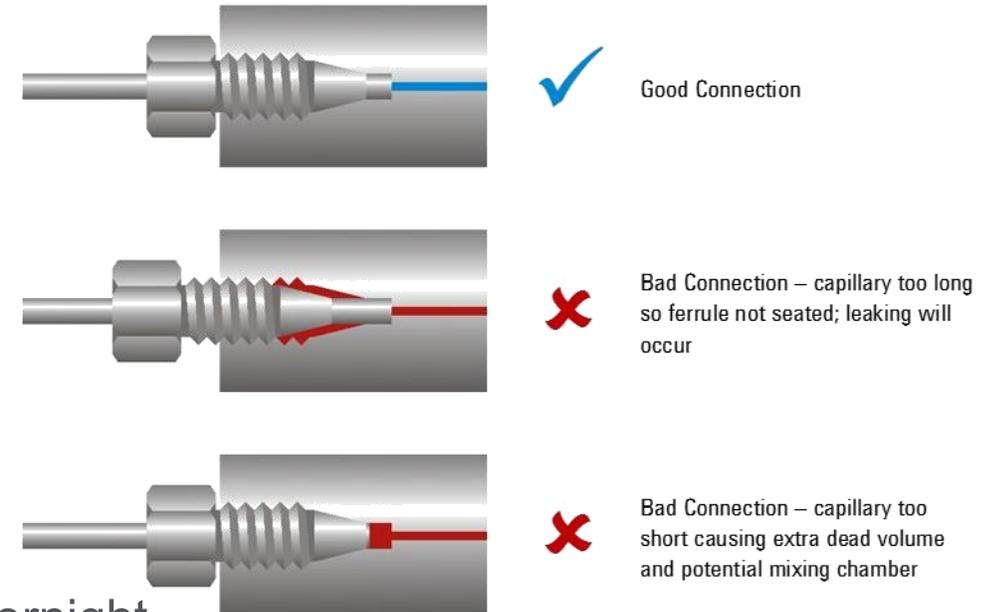
Low intensity chromatogram?

- OPA/FMOC reagent deteriorated
- Air bubble in vial insert

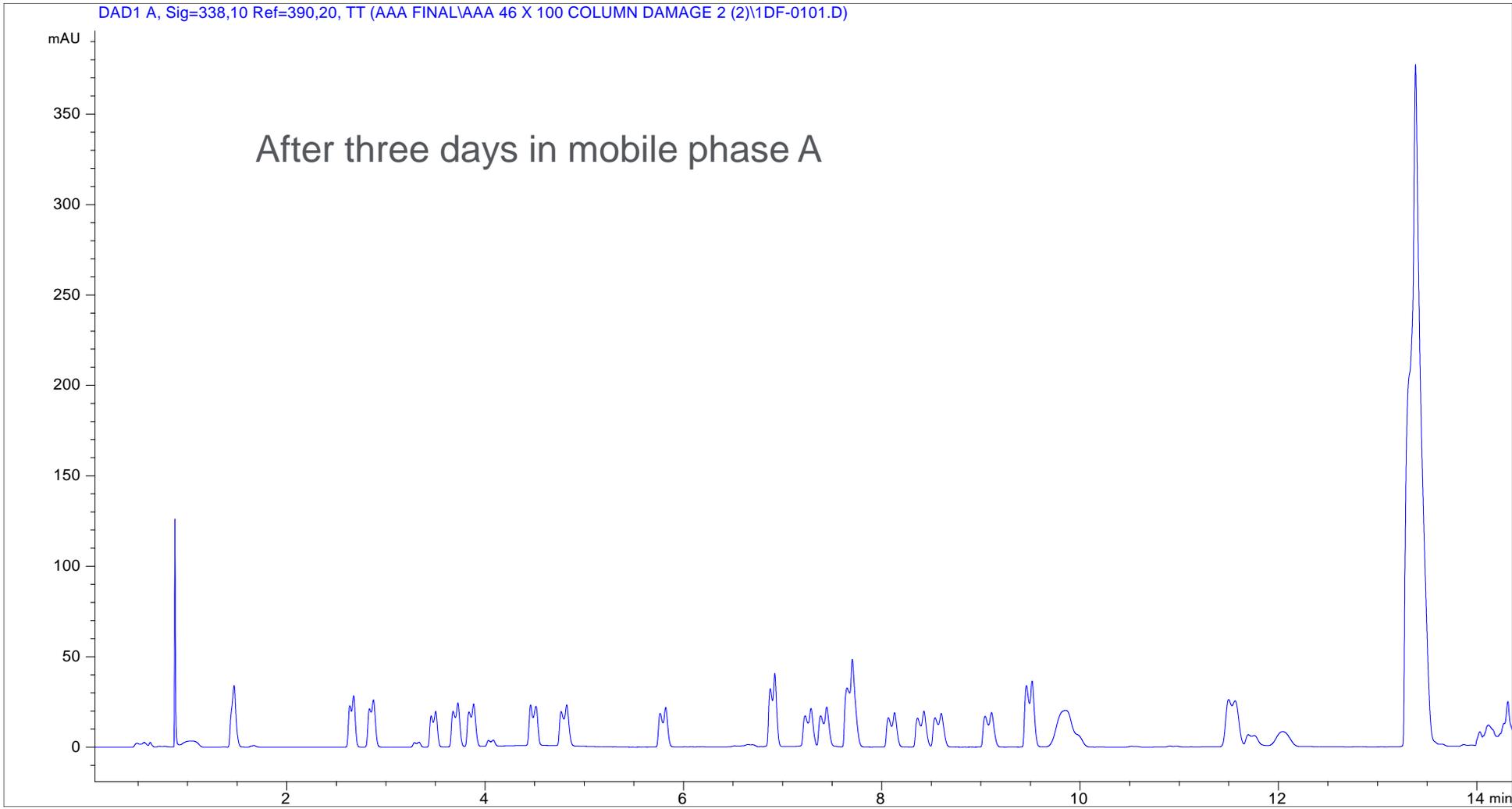


Column storage?

- Never leave the column in mobile phase A even if it's just overnight
- For short term always store the column in mobile phase B
- For long term, store column in 50/50 acetonitrile/H₂O



Damaged Column



- History of Amino Acid Analysis at Agilent
- Reverse phase LC/UV analysis of derivatized amino acids
- HILIC LC/MS of underivatized amino acids and other metabolites
 - Hydrophobic Interaction Liquid Chromatography
 - Stationary phase is more polar than reversed phase
 - Acetonitrile is weak solvent, water is strong solvent (and typically a volatile buffer)
 - AdvanceBio MS Spent Media column
- Ion pairing analysis of underivatized amino acids
- Chiral analysis of amino acids

Method – Amino Acids by HILIC

Suggested Starting Conditions – LC/MS

Column Agilent AdvanceBio MS Spent Media, 2.1 x 100 mm, p/n 675775-901

Column Temp 30 °C

Low pH, Positive Ion Mode MS Detection:

A = 10% 200 mM ammonium formate in water pH 3, 90% water

B = 10% 200 mM ammonium formate in water pH 3, 90% acetonitrile

Final salt concentration is 20 mM.

Mobile Phase

High pH, Negative Ion Mode MS Detection:

A = 10% 100 mM ammonium acetate in water pH 9, 90% water

B = 10% 100 mM ammonium acetate in water pH 9, 90% acetonitrile

Final salt concentration is 10 mM.

We recommend preparing mobile phases from a concentrated buffer stock to ensure robust and consistent mobile phases.

Flow Rate 0.5 mL/min

	Time	% B
Gradient Program	0	100
	15	80
	15.5	100
	20	100

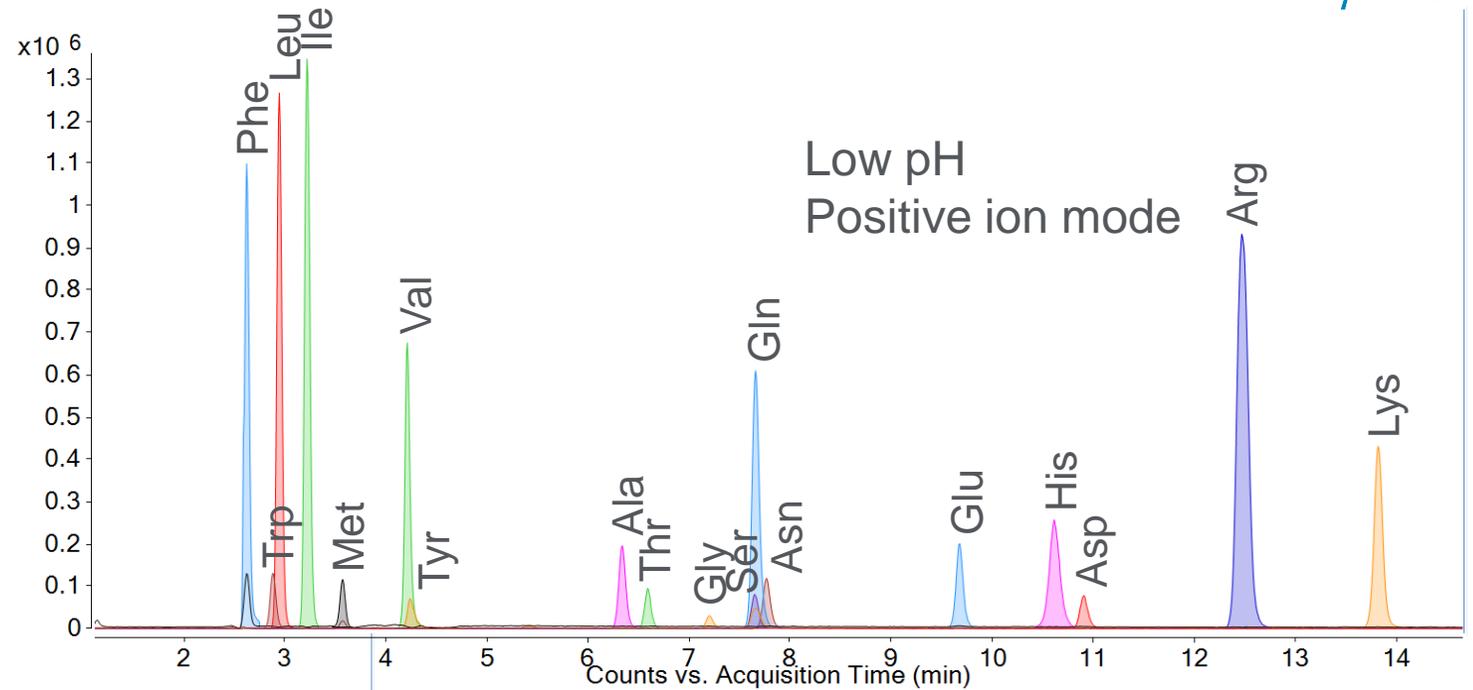
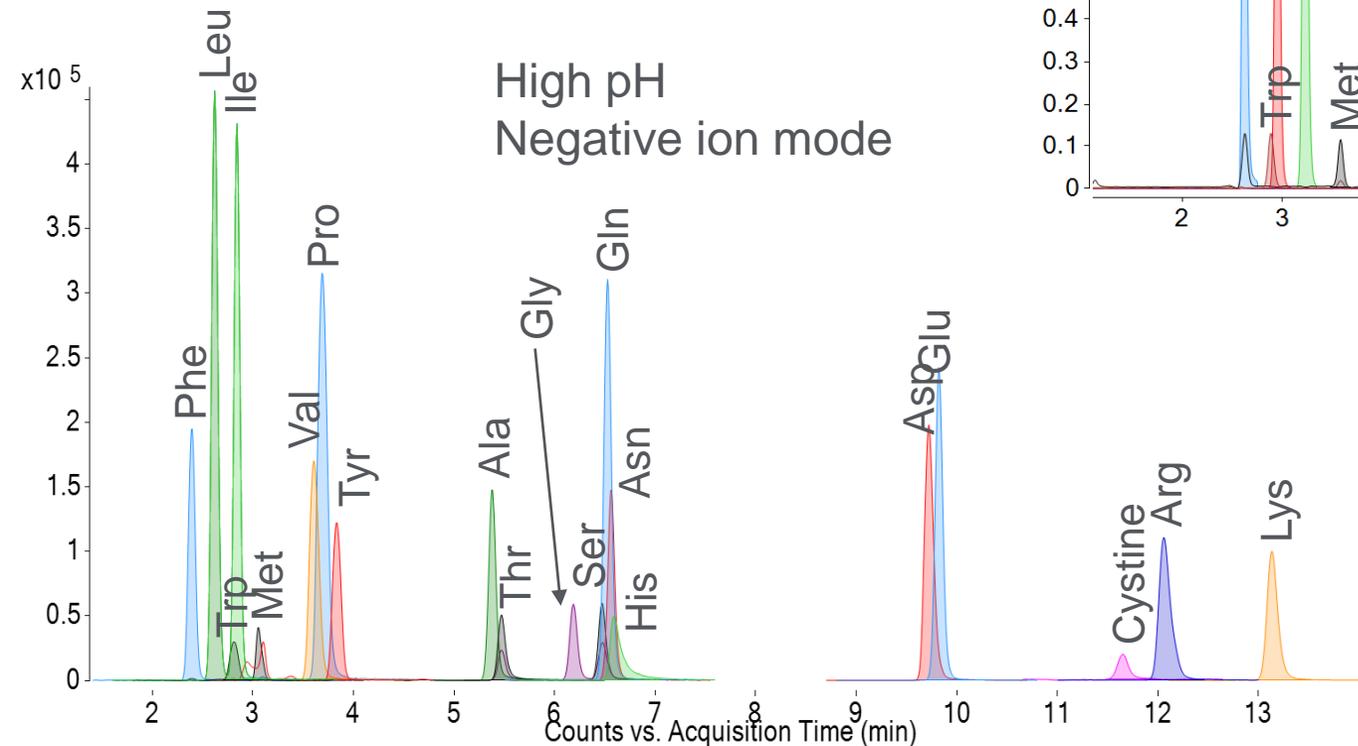
Sample Cell culture media, diluted 5-fold with Mobile Phase B

Detection Agilent 6230 TOF LC/MS



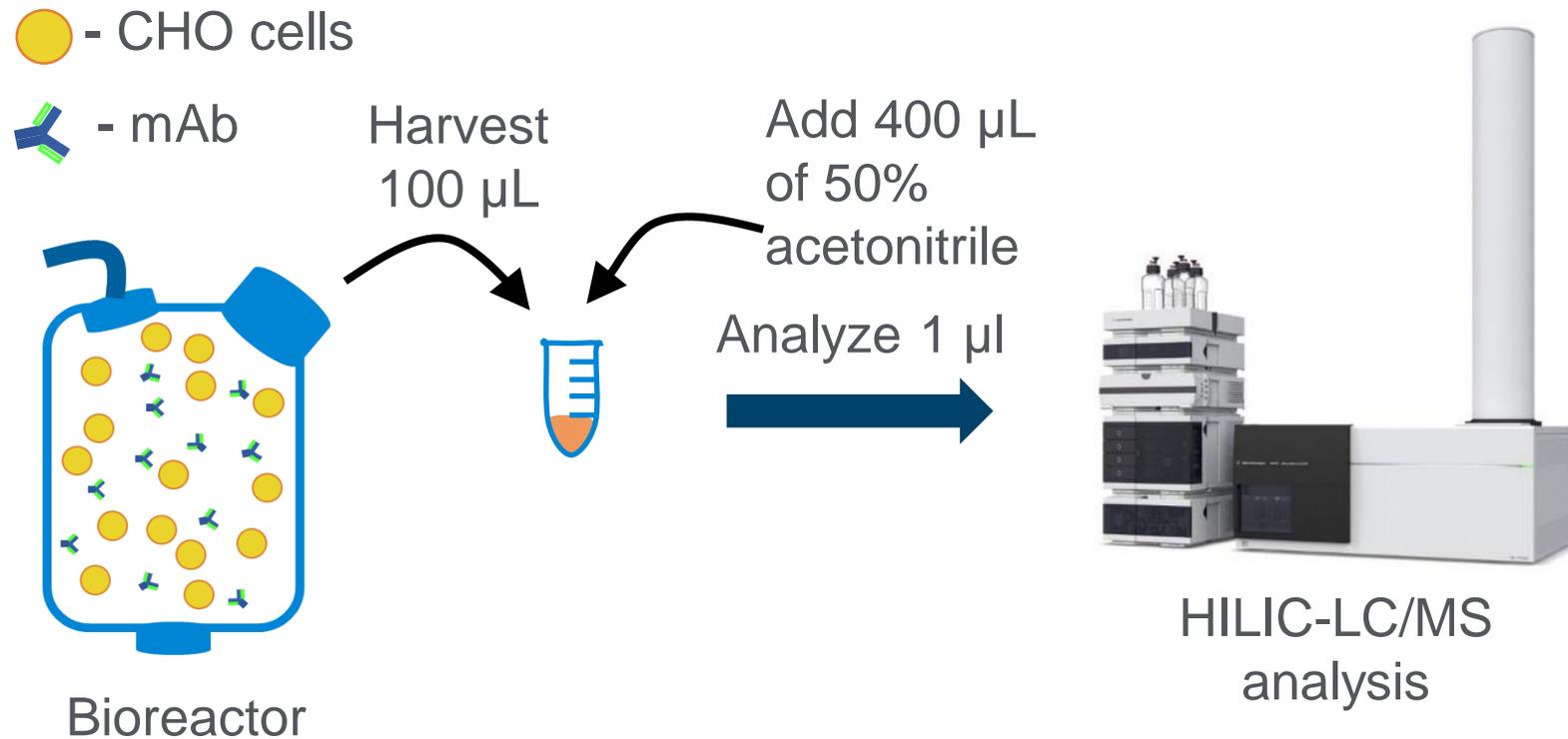
Standard Amino Acids

Amino acids can be analyzed in either positive or negative ion mode since they are zwitterionic.

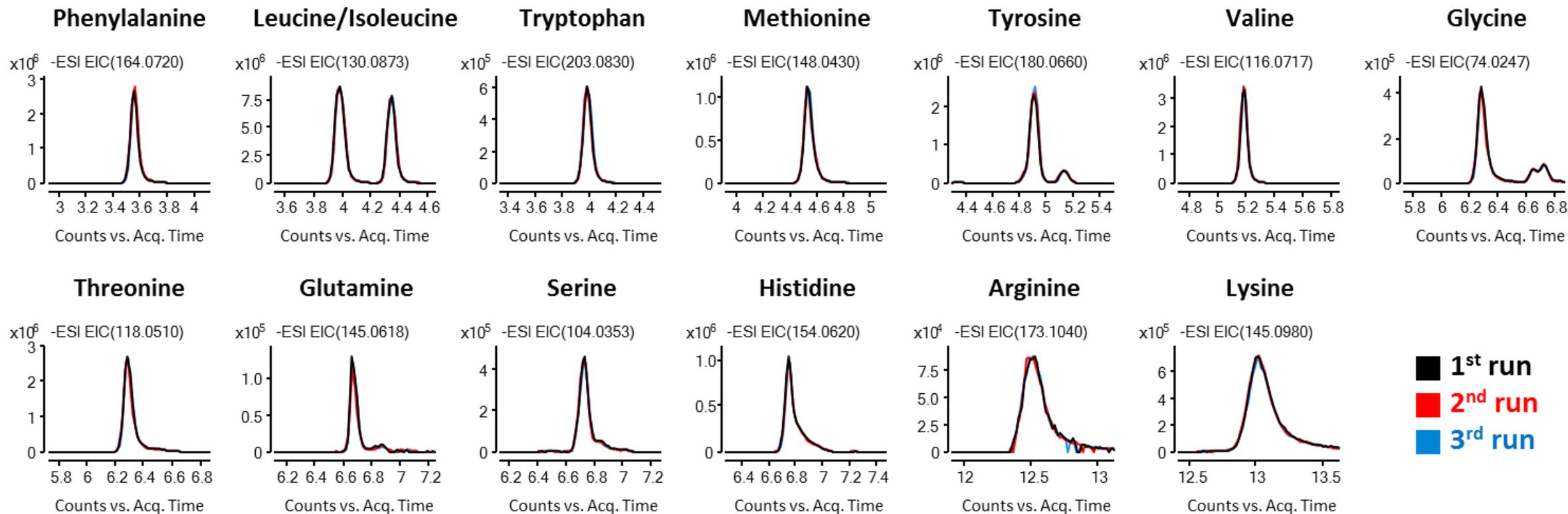


Generally positive ion mode will be more sensitive, though which mode is used may also depend on what other analytes need to be monitored simultaneously.

A Fast and Simple Approach to Profiling Cell Culture Media

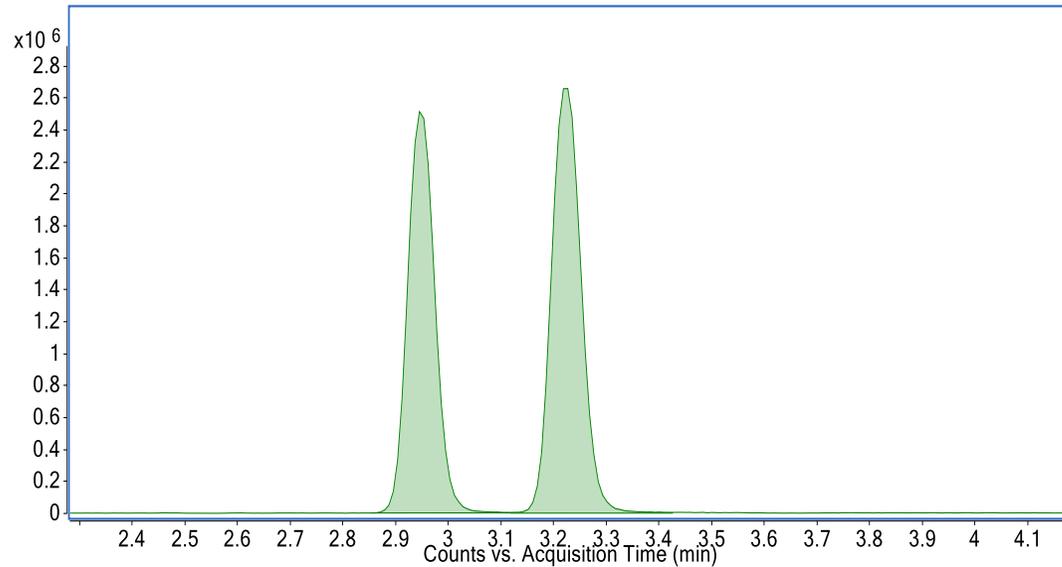


Reproducibility Test



Leu/Ile Resolution

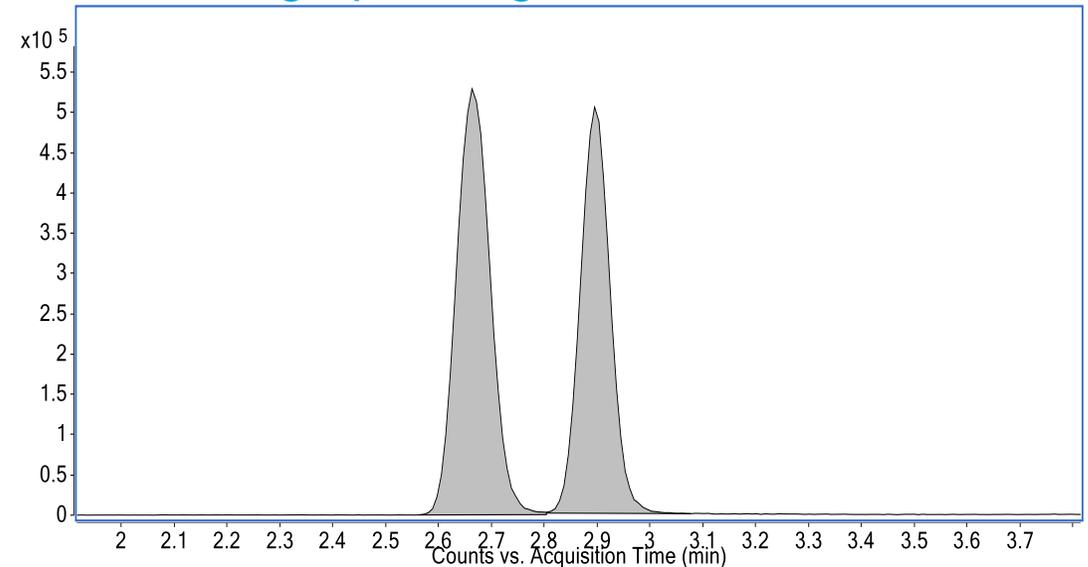
Low pH, positive ion mode



System Suitability

RT	Area	Height	Symmetry	Width	Plates	Resolution
2.946	9080018.68	2511695.61	0.71	0.265	17910	66.9
3.224	10510201.33	2657458.46	1	0.306	16575	3

High pH, negative ion mode

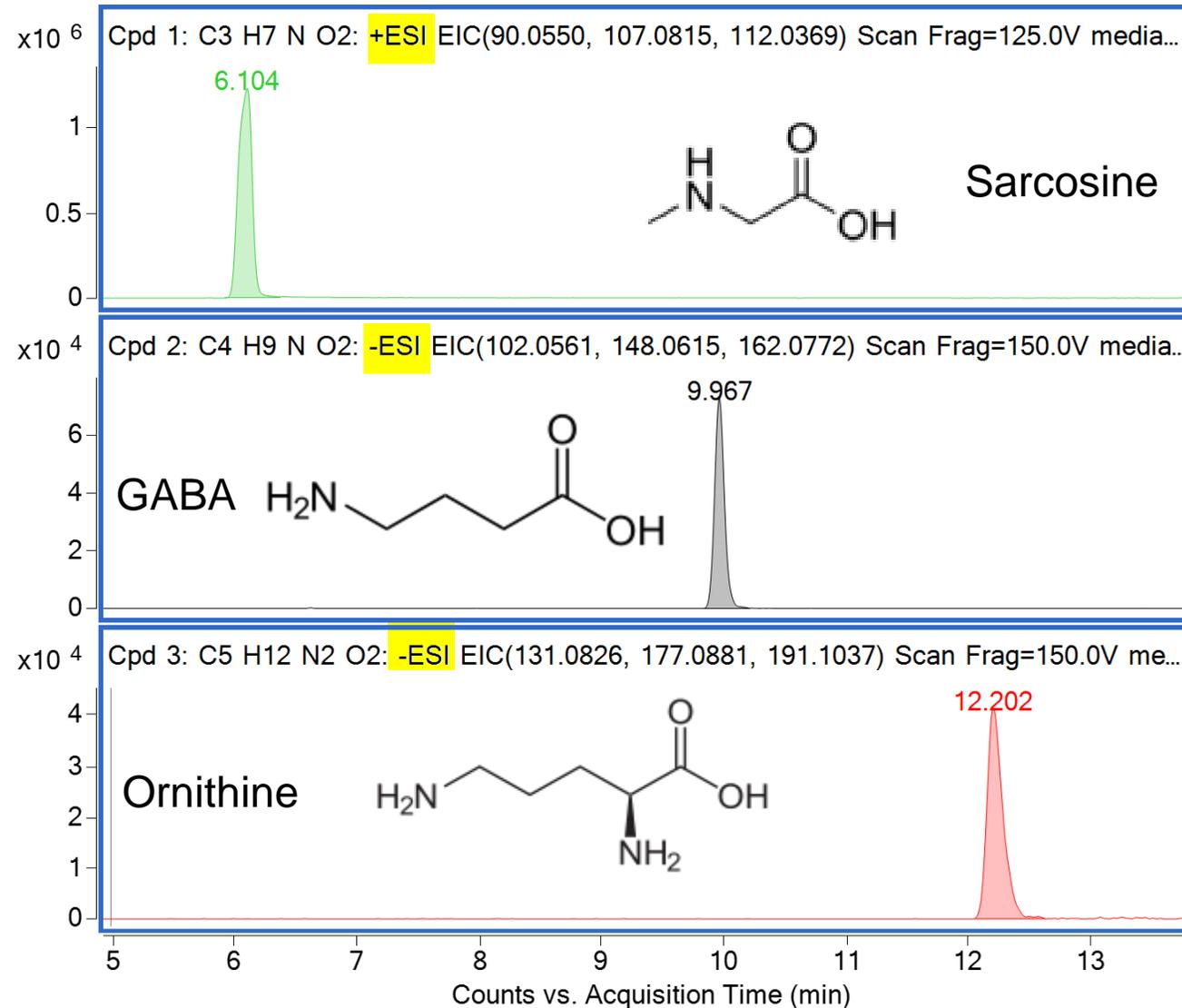


System Suitability

RT	Area	Height	Symmetry	Width	Plates	Resolution
2.664	2371609.84	529034.04	0.88	0.24	8347	45.7
2.896	1997455.1	504458.71	1	0.273	14420	2.2

Resolution > 1.5
(European Pharmacopeia requirement)

Nonstandard Amino Acids in Cell Culture Media





Analysis of Underivatized Amino Acids by LC/MS for Bioreactor Cell Culture Monitoring

Pub no. 5991-8816EN

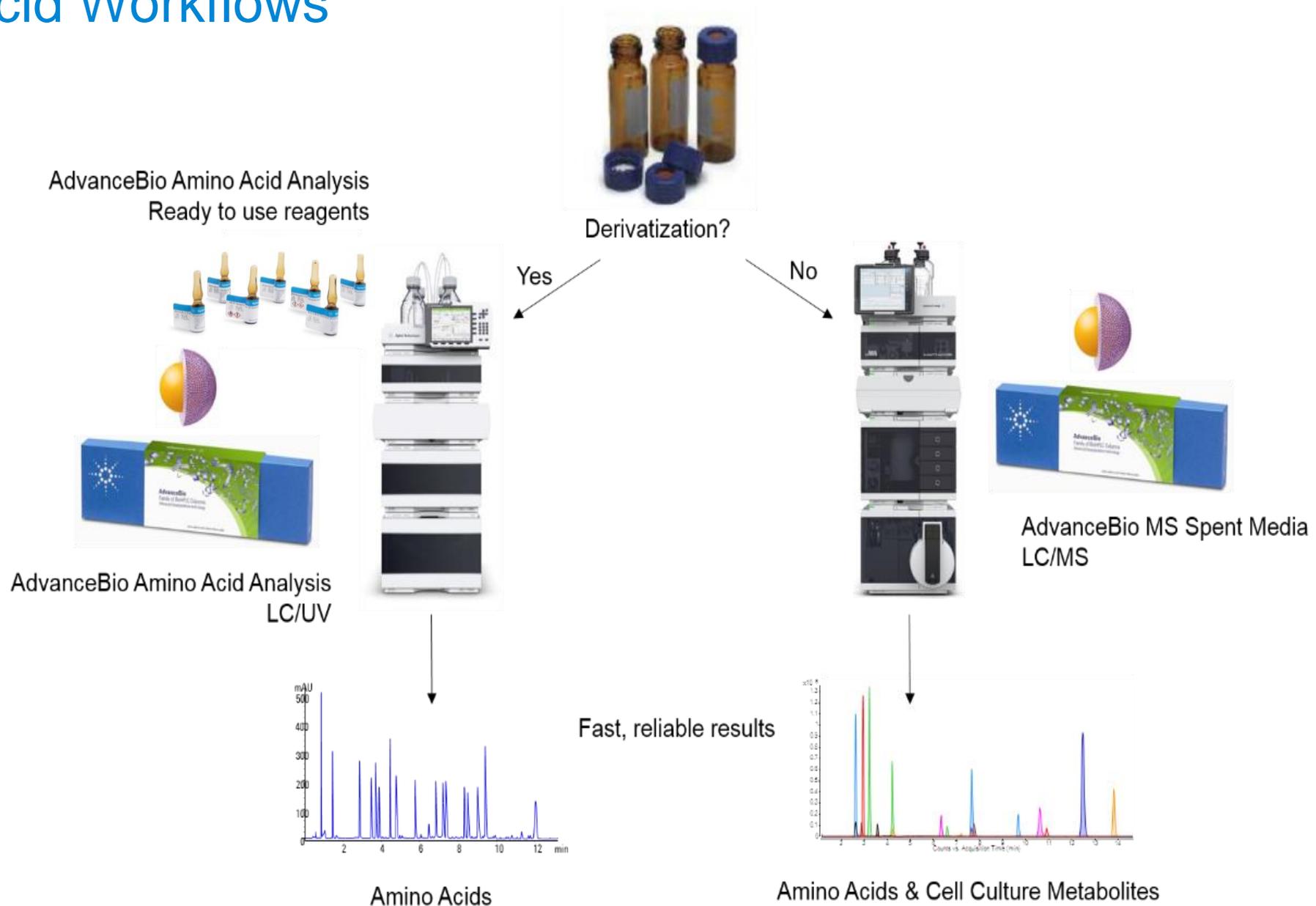
Authors

Jordy Hsiao, Te-Wei Chu,
Andrew Kennedy,
Adam Bivens, and
Anne Blackwell

Abstract

This Application Note presents a solution for LC/MS analysis of amino acids in fermentation media. The polar nature of amino acids makes analysis by reversed-phase liquid chromatography challenging, so derivatization is often used to improve retention. However, hydrophilic interaction chromatography (HILIC) is capable of retaining and separating complex amino acid mixtures without derivatization, while still offering a similar workflow to traditional reversed-phase. The combination of HILIC and mass spectrometry offers a particularly simple and powerful solution for underivatized amino acid analysis.

Amino Acid Workflows



Cell Culture Media Analysis – Choosing an Approach

Derivatized amino acid analysis: LC/UV

- Industry standard, widely used
- Any Agilent LC
- Minimal instrumentation and expertise investment
- Reverse phase separation – very robust



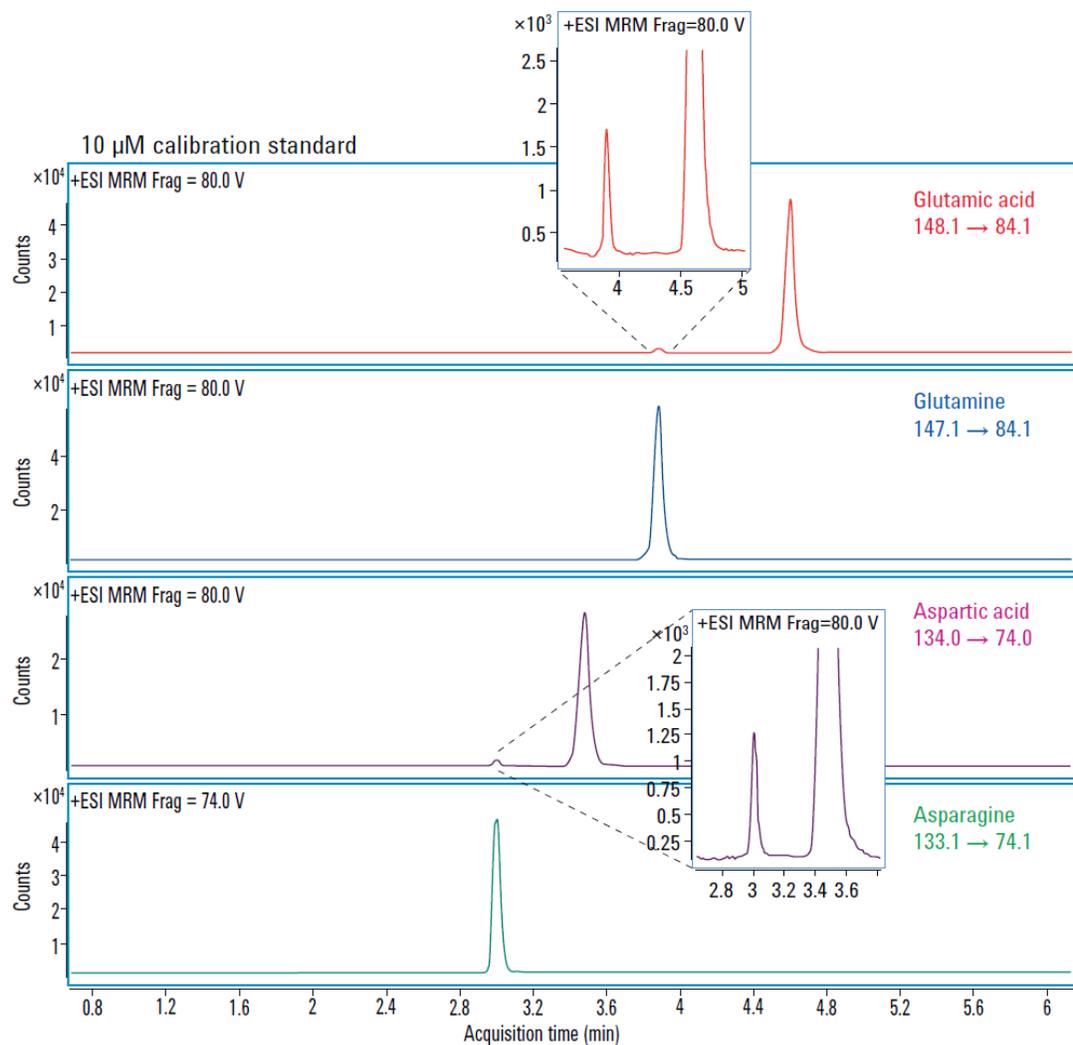
Underivatized amino acid analysis: LC/MS

- Any LC/MS
- More expertise required, at least initially
- HILIC separations less familiar
- Higher sensitivity
- Savings:
 - No time spent derivatizing
 - No reagents to purchase
 - Combine assays for amino acids and other metabolites into a single method
 - *Possibly* - faster method since baseline chromatographic resolution isn't necessary with MS
 - Must still resolve isomers (Leu/Ile)



- History of Amino Acid Analysis at Agilent
- Reverse phase LC/UV analysis of derivatized amino acids
- HILIC LC/MS of underivatized amino acids and other metabolites
- Ion pairing analysis of underivatized amino acids
- Chiral analysis of amino acids

Amino Acids by Ion Pairing



LC Conditions

Column Agilent ZORBAX SB-C18 RRHT column, 3.0 x 150 mm, 1.8 μ m, part number 829975-302

Column temperature 25 $^{\circ}$ C

Injection volume 1 μ L

Autosampler temperature 4 $^{\circ}$ C

Needle wash 10 seconds in wash port

Mobile phase A = 0.5 % formic acid and 0.3 % HFBA in water
B = 0.5 % formic acid and 0.3 % HFBA in acetonitrile

Flow rate 0.4 mL/min

Gradient program

Time (min)	A (%)	B (%)
Initial	100	0
5.00	95	5
5.01	10	90
6.00	10	90
6.01	100	0

Post time 1 min

Triple quadrupole MS source conditions

Ion mode Positive

Drying gas temperature 275 $^{\circ}$ C

Drying gas flow 9 L/min

Sheath gas temperature 325 $^{\circ}$ C

Sheath gas flow 12 L/min

Nebulizer pressure 40 psi

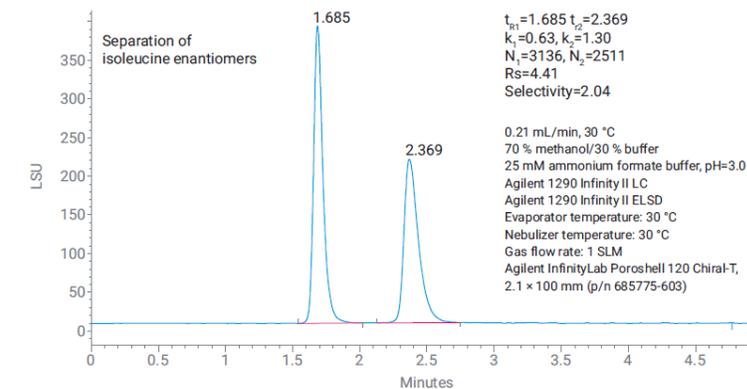
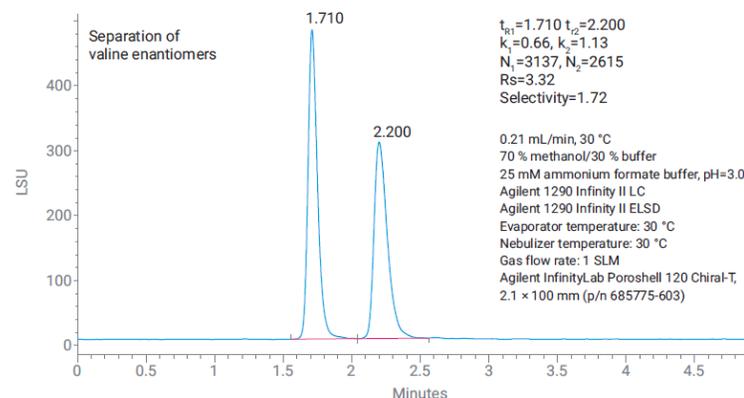
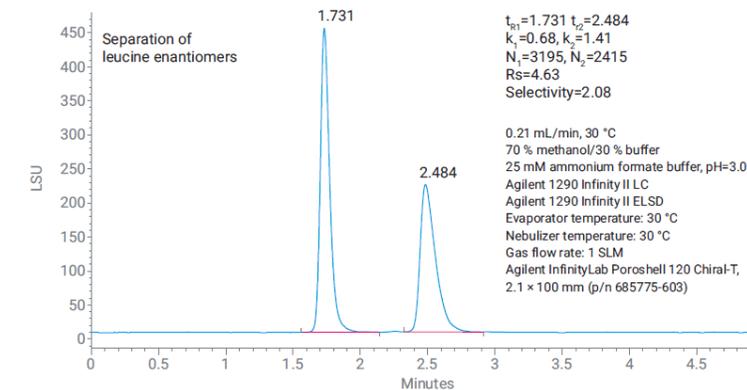
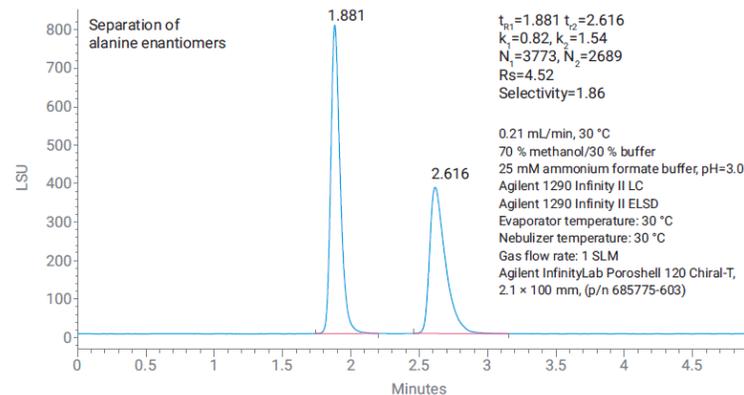
Capillary voltage 3750 V

Nozzle voltage 0 V

Delta EMV 0 V

Chiral Analysis of Amino Acids (Chiral Column)

Parameter	Value
Column	Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 Chiral-T, 2.1 × 100 mm, 2.7 μm (p/n 685775-603)
Mobile phase	Premix 70/30 methanol/ammonium formate, pH 3.0, 25 mM
Flow rate	0.21 m/min
Temperature (column)	30 °C
Injection volume	1 μL
Sample concentration	2 mg/mL in water



Application Note
Pharma & Biopharma



Chiral Analysis of Hydrophobic Amino Acids with Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 Chiral-T Column

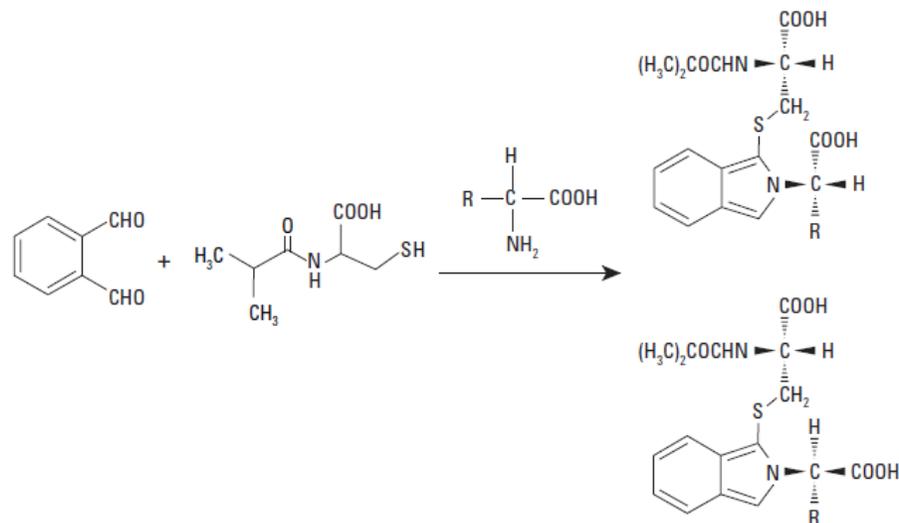
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Abstract

The chiral separation of a series of underivatized aliphatic amino acids was performed using an Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 Chiral-T column using a methanol/ammonium formate buffer mobile phase. The separation of these D- and L-enantiomers is monitored using an ELSD detector. The L-enantiomer elutes first in all four cases.

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Chiral Analysis of Amino Acids (By Derivatization)

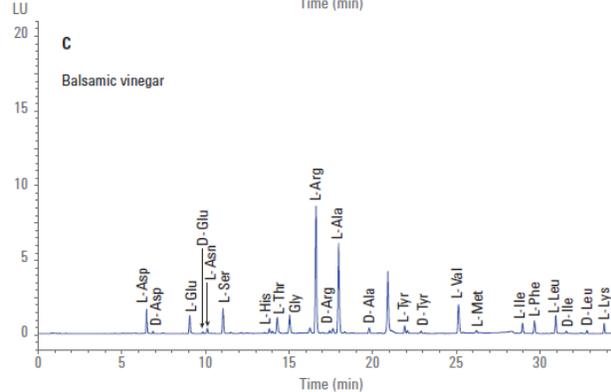
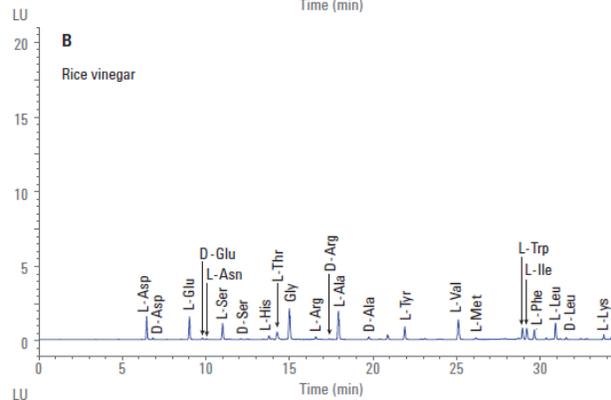
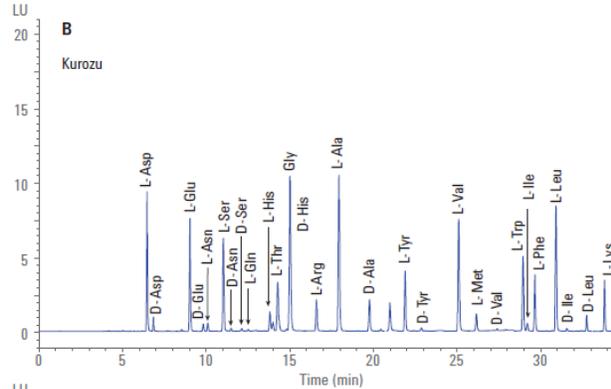
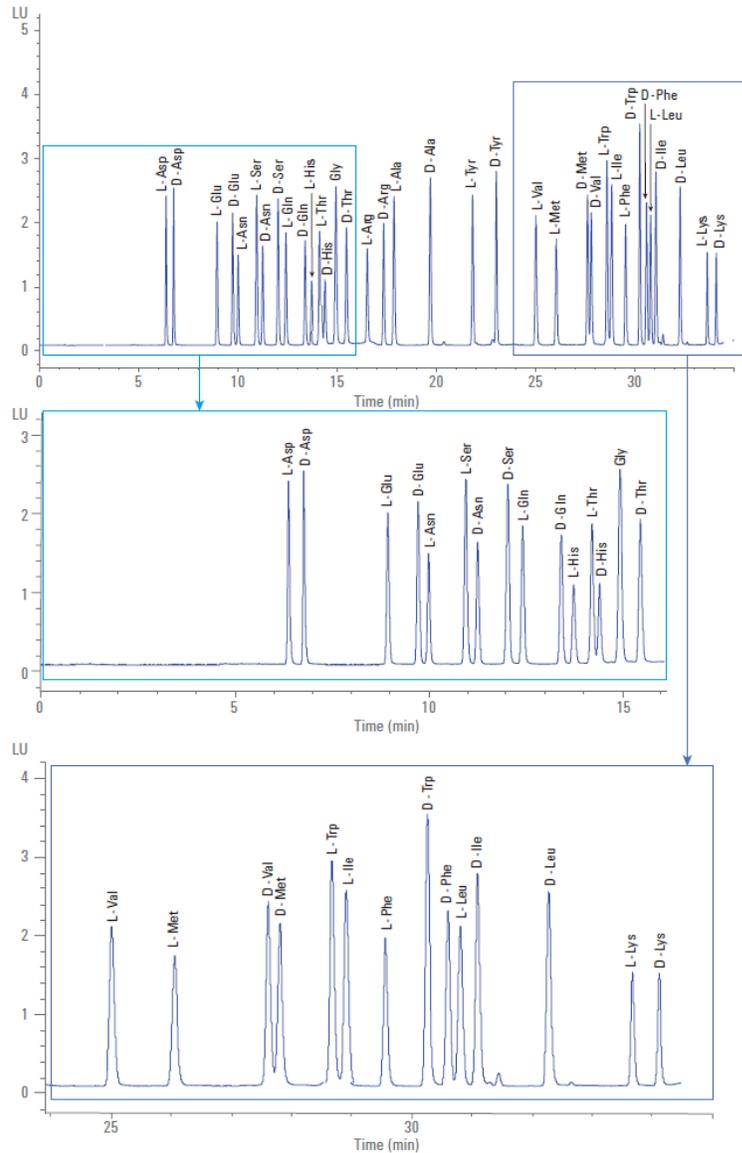


- Diastereomers can often be analyzed by reversed phase on a C18 column
- Derivatized with OPA and N-isobutyryl-L-cysteine in borate buffer
- Similar program for the online derivatization

Parameter	Value
Column	Agilent Poroshell HPH-C18, 3.0 × 150 mm, 2.7 μm (p/n 693975-502)
Mobile phase	A) 50 mM sodium acetate (pH 6.0) B) Acetonitrile/methanol/water 45/45/10
Flow rate	0.7 mL/min
Gradient Pump	0 to 2.0 minutes, 4 %B 2.0 to 4.0 minutes, 10 %B 4.0 to 15 minutes, 20 %B 15 to 27 minutes, 35 %B 27 to 35 minutes, 50 %B 35 to 37 minutes, 100 %B 37 to 42 minutes, 100 %B
Post time	10 minutes at 4 %B
Column temperature	30 °C
Injection	See injector program
Needle wash	40 °C
Detection	Ex. 230 nm, Ex. 450 nm

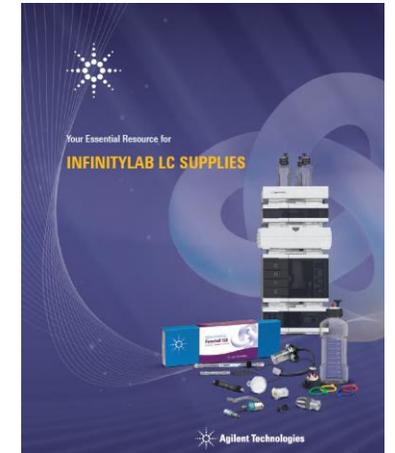
Step	Mode	Action
1	Draw	Draw 2.5 μL from location 1 with default speed
2	Draw	Draw 0.5 μL from sample
3	Wash	Wash needle in flush port with S1 for 3 seconds with 100 μL /min
4	Mix	Mix 3.0 μL from air at maximum speed 10 times
5	Wait	Wait 0.5 minutes
6	Draw	Draw 0.25 from location 2 with 100 μL/min speed
7	Mix	Mix 3.25 μL from air at maximum speed 20 times
8	Wait	Wait 0.5 minutes
9	Draw	Draw 15 μL from location 3 with default speed
10	Mix	Mix 20 μL from air at maximum speed 10 times
11	Wait	Wait 0.1 minutes
12	Inject	Injection
13	Wait	Wait 0.5 minutes
14	Valve	Switch valve to Bypass

Chiral Analysis of Amino Acids (By Derivatization)



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