

Simultaneous Determination of Fat-Soluble Vitamins in Beverages Using a Triple Quadrupole Mass Spectrometer

Nozomi Maeshima (nozomi_m@shimadzu.co.jp), Manami Kobayashi

Shimadzu Corporation, Kawasaki, Kanagawa, Japan

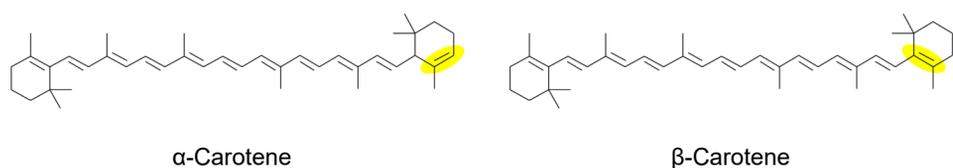
Summary

- Rapid and simultaneous determination of 13 fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K.
- High-sensitivity analysis using a triple quadrupole mass spectrometer.
- Individual quantification of α -carotene and β -carotene were achieved.

1. Introduction

Vitamins play an important role for maintaining human body functions in good condition and need to be obtained from food because they cannot be synthesized in the body. Vitamins A, D, E, and K, which are not soluble in water, are called fat-soluble vitamins. Vitamin A mainly refers to retinol, which has the function of keeping eyes and skin healthy and enhancing immunity. On the other hand, α -carotene and β -carotene are called provitamin A because they are converted to retinol in the body. The conversion rates of those two compounds are different, and the bioavailabilities of α - and β -carotene are estimated to be 1/24 and 1/12 compared to that of retinol, respectively¹⁾. To evaluate the activity of vitamin A, individual quantification of α - and β -carotene are necessary. It is difficult to separate these compounds with LC-MS/MS in the past since these are isomers and therefore have very similar structures (Figure 1).

In this poster, we introduce simultaneous quantification of fat-soluble vitamins including α - and β -carotene by optimizing LC conditions. We performed individual quantification of α - and β -carotene and recovery tests on vegetable juice using this method. As α - and β -carotene do not have ester compounds, alkaline hydrolysis treatment, which is usually needed in sample preparation, can be omitted. Good recovery rates were obtained with a simple extraction operation.

Figure 1. Structure of α - and β -carotene

2. Experimental

2-1. sample preparation

5 g of anhydrous sodium sulfate was added to 1 g of commercially available vegetable juice, then ethanol was added and the mixture was shaken for 5 minutes to be subjected to centrifugation at 4,000xg for 5 minutes, then obtained supernatant was collected. The above extraction process was repeated twice with the remaining sediment. The collected supernatants were combined and made up to 40 mL with ethanol. After diluting the extraction solution 100 times with ethanol, the supernatant was collected as the extraction sample after centrifuging at 15,000 rpm for 10 minutes.

2-2. LC-MS/MS analysis conditions

The analysis was carried out using a system that combined a triple quadrupole mass spectrometer LCMS-8050 and an ultra-high-speed liquid chromatograph Nexera™ X3. The LC-MS/MS analytical conditions and MRM conditions are shown in Tables 1 and 2, respectively.



Table 1. LC-MS/MS conditions

[HPLC conditions] Nexera X3

Column	: Kinetex XB-C18 (100 mm x 3.0 mm I.D., 1.7 μ m)		
Mobile phase A	: Methanol		
Mobile phase B	: Ethanol		
Flow rate	: 0.5 mL/min		
Gradient program	: B conc. 15% (0-7 min) - 100% (7.01-12 min) - 15% (12.01-14 min)		
Column temp.	: 40°C		
Injection volume	: 5 μ L		

[MS conditions] LCMS-8050

Ionization	: APCI	DL temp.	: 200°C
Nebulizing gas	: 3 L/min	Interface temp.	: 300°C
Drying gas	: 10 L/min	Heat block temp.	: 200°C

Table 2. MRM conditions

Compound	Ret. Time (min)	Polarity	Transition	CE (V)
Retinol	1.16	+	269.20> 77.10	-53
α -Carotene	6.35	+	537.45>123.15	-21
β -Carotene	6.71	+	537.45>119.10	-39
β -Cryptoxanthin	2.57	+	553.45>119.00	-33
Ergocalciferol	1.75	+	397.35> 69.00	-24
Cholecalciferol	1.80	+	385.35>259.20	-14
α -Tocopherol	1.98	-	429.30>163.10	30
β,γ -Tocopherol	1.81	-	415.35>149.10	27
δ -Tocopherol	1.66	-	401.25>135.00	30
Phylloquinone	2.96	+	451.45>187.10	-27
Menaquinone-4	2.03	+	445.40>187.10	-22
Menaquinone-7	5.94	+	649.60>187.10	-30

3. Result

3-1. Simultaneous analysis of 13 fat-soluble vitamins

The quantification range and repeatabilities of the standard solution of the 13 fat-soluble vitamins are shown in Table 3, and typical MS chromatograms are shown in Figure 2, 3. The calibration curves for α - and β -carotene are presented in Figure 4. Accurate and wide-range quantification was achieved.

Table 3. Quantification range and repeatability

Compound	Quantification range (ng/mL)	Repeatability (% , n=5)	
		1 ppb	5 ppb
Retinol	0.1 - 1000	9.8	3.1
α -Carotene	0.5 - 1000	6.9	2.7
β -Carotene	0.5 - 0500	8.5	3.7
β -Cryptoxanthin	0.5 - 1000	3.1	1.6
Ergocalciferol	0.1 - 1000	4.2	1.7
Cholecalciferol	0.5 - 1000	9.6	4.0
α -Tocopherol	0.5 - 1000	6.9	1.5
β,γ -Tocopherol	0.1 - 1000	2.0	3.8
δ -Tocopherol	0.1 - 1000	7.5	5.5
Phylloquinone	0.5 - 1000	3.3	1.7
Menaquinone-4	0.5 - 1000	9.5	2.9
Menaquinone-7	0.1 - 1000	3.2	2.0

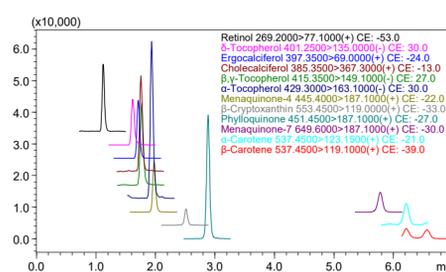
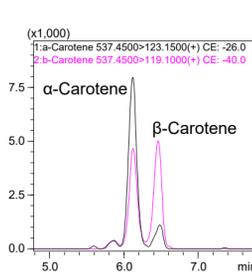
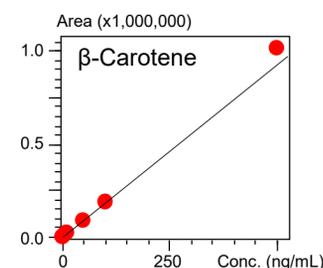
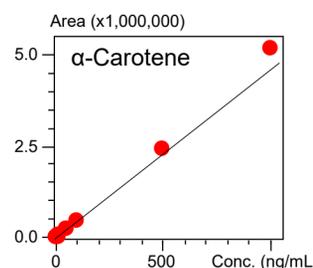


Figure 2. Simultaneous analysis of 13 fat-soluble vitamins

Figure 3. MS chromatogram of α - and β -caroteneFigure 4. Calibration curves of α - and β -carotene

3-2. Quantification of α - and β -carotene

Quantification of α - and β -carotene in two types of commercial vegetable juice was performed. The results are shown in Table 4. The obtained concentrations were within the range of the nutritional information declared by the manufacturer.

Table 4. Determination of α - and β -carotene in vegetable juice

Compound	Vegetable juice a (μ g/mL beverage)	Vegetable juice b (μ g/mL beverage)
α -Carotene	20.3	15.7
β -Carotene	40.5	56.3

3-3. Ion suppression effect of α - and β -carotene

Quantification of α - and β -carotene was performed by adding them into the extracted solution of two types of commercial vegetable juice, and ion suppression effect was investigated. The results are shown in Tables 5 and 6. Good recovery rates were obtained for α - and β -carotene in both types of vegetable juice.

Table 5. Recovery rate (%) of α - and β -carotene in vegetable juice a

Compound	Spiked conc. (μ g/mL in vial)		
	2	5	10
α -Carotene	96.8	98.7	103.1
β -Carotene	112.9	97.4	99.9

Table 6. Recovery rate (%) of α - and β -carotene in vegetable juice b

Compound	Spiked conc. (μ g/mL in vial)		
	2	5	10
α -Carotene	103.0	109.6	108.3
β -Carotene	68.5	101.1	102.9

4. Summary

Simultaneous quantification of 13 fat-soluble vitamins was performed using LC-MS/MS. This method enables individual quantification of α - and β -carotene. Ion suppression effect was examined, and good recovery rates were obtained.

<Reference>

1) Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare "Dietary Reference Intakes for Japanese (2020)"