

Lipids Analysis

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3-5-15

Lipids

- **Lipids are mostly very hydrophobic**
- **Most are conjugates of fatty acids of a variety of chain lengths, which have different degrees of unsaturation, cis-trans isomers, and chiral centers**
- **The conjugating frame to which the fatty acids binds can be quite hydrophilic**
- **This results in a very wide (evergrowing) number of lipid species**

Analysis of fatty acids

- Fractional crystallization
- Thin layer chromatography (TLC)
 - Argentation TLC (to separate according to number of double bonds)
- Gas liquid chromatography
 - Packed columns
 - Capillary columns
- LC-MS
- SWATH-MS
- Differential ion mobility
- DESI-MS

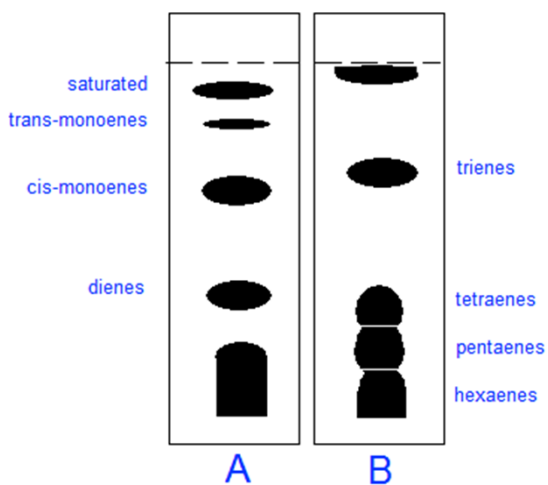
Fractional crystallization

- Still used in industry
- Crystallization is used to determine whether adulteration of butter fat by other lower quality fats has occurred
- Unsaturated fats are more soluble at lower temperatures
 - Division into “stearins” and “oleins”
 - For fatty acids, make lead salts and cool in diethyl ether or ethanol – the saturated FAs crystallize out first

Thin-layer chromatography

- Fatty acids or methylated fatty acids separated on alumina or silica gel TLC
- When AgNO_3 is incorporated into the silica slurry before making the TLC plate, the observed separation is dependent on the degree of unsaturation (π -bonding)
 - Saturated
 - Mono-unsaturated
 - Di-unsaturated, etc.

Ag^+ ion TLC of fatty acids

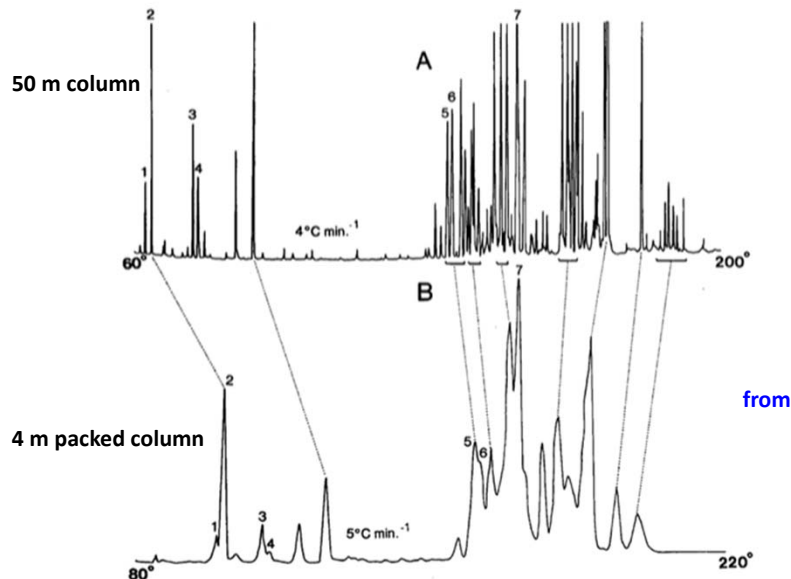


It is a class separation

Gas-liquid chromatography

- 1952 Martin and James start GC by separating volatile fatty acids (C_1 - C_6)
 - Quickly extended it to long chain FAs by methylating them
 - 5-6 feet x ¼ inch glass or stainless steel packed columns
- 1955 Patent for capillary, open tubular columns awarded
 - Did not enter commercial use until the mid-1970s

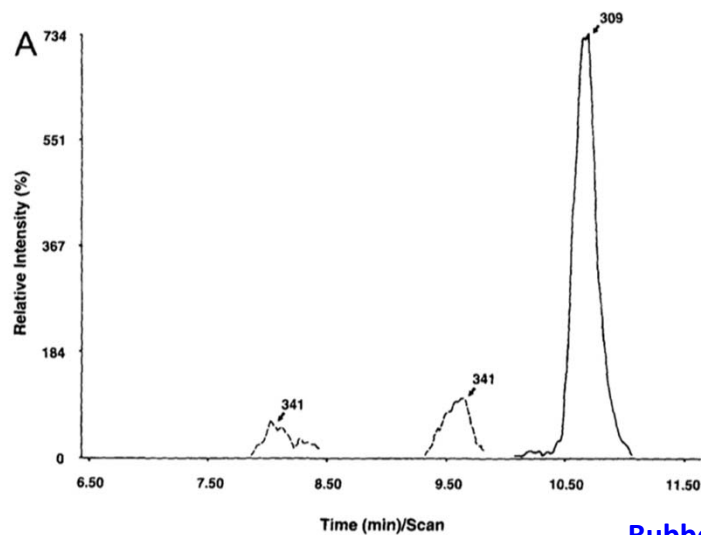
Packed vs Capillary GC of FAME



(HP)LC

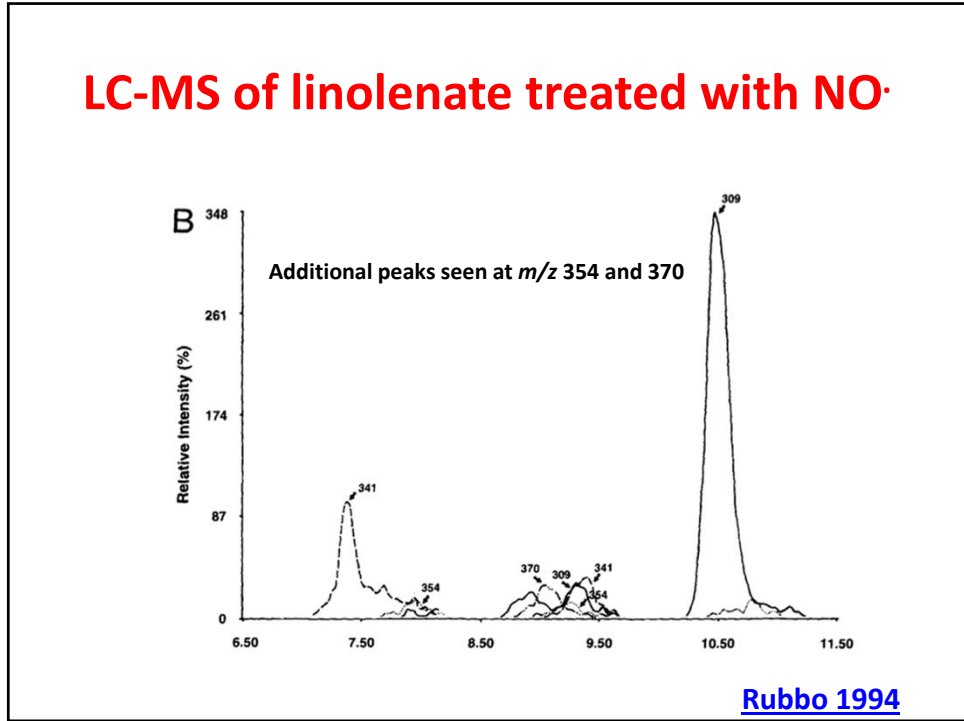
- Reverse-phase LC
 - Can be used for lipid class separation based on hydrophobicity
 - Again, Ag^+ can be introduced into the medium to enhance the separation of unsaturated fatty acids
 - Very difficult to detect lipids spectroscopically
 - LC-MS is the preferred method

LC-MS of oxidized linolenate

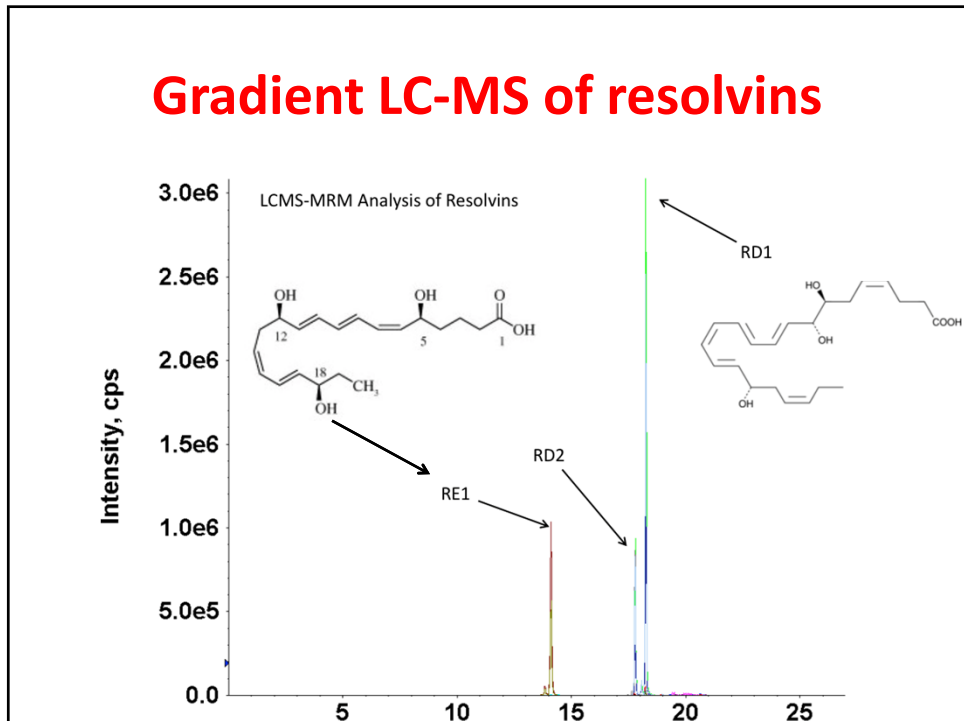


[Rubbo 1994](#)

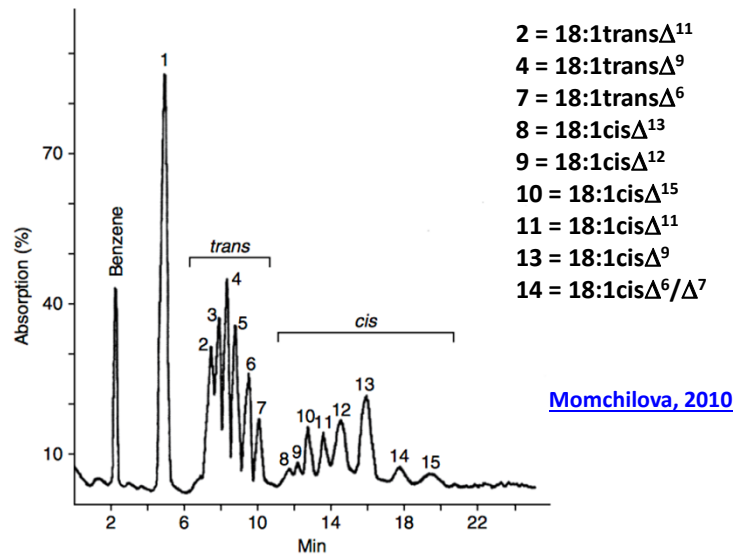
LC-MS of linolenate treated with NO



Gradient LC-MS of resolvins

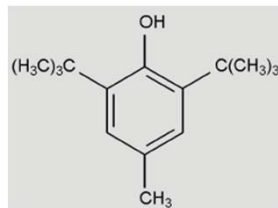


Silver ion-HPLC of unsaturated fatty acids



Modern lipidomics

- Use of the SWATH-MS approach
- Preceded by total lipid extraction using a two-phase partition by adding $\text{CHCl}_3:\text{MeOH}$
 - Blich-Dyer and Folch extractions
 - Crucial to do so in an atmosphere of argon and in the presence of butylated hydroxytoluene to prevent oxidation



SWATH-MS

- **Based on an infusion strategy on a 5600 TripleTOF**
 - Ions are filtered 1.2 m/z at a time in the quadrupole over a m/z range of 200-1200
 - The filtered ions are collisionally dissociated and fragment ions analyzed by the TOF analyzer
 - MSMS spectra collected for 500 msec for each m/z , i.e., infusion for 500 sec (8.33 min)

Other MS methods for lipids

- SWATH-MS is comprehensive – no stone unturned
- However, many lipids overlap in mass and there are also isomers with the same mass
- To observe more individual lipids, it is necessary to resolve lipids before analyzing them in the mass spectrometry
- Even then, isomers can be a problem
- A form of ion mobility may be the answer to this

Selexlon™

•Differential Mobility Spectrometry (DMS) is the term used for planar geometry

Separation waveform (SV):
Radially displaces ions towards one or the other electrode, depending upon high and low field mobility characteristics

Compensation voltage (COV):
Restores the trajectory for a given ion to allow them to transmit through the DMS device and enter the mass spectrometer

AB Sciex

Liquid modifiers and SelexION™

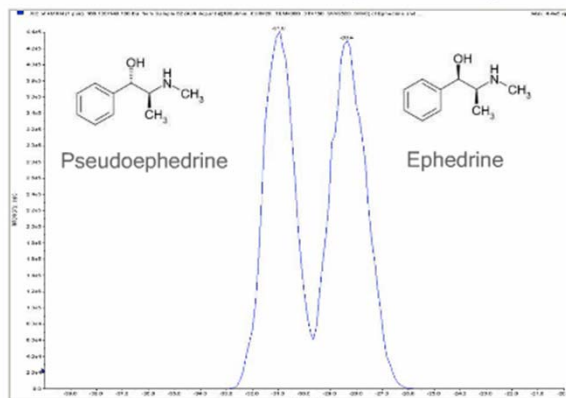
- Liquid modifiers can be added to the curtain gas flow
- Improves separations
- More options for separation in difficult cases

AB Sciex

11 compounds: methylthiazine, nimoxidil, ephedrine, norfentanyl, acyclovir, clemastrol, tramadol, quinoxaline, pantoquin, fenofibrate, bintropium
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Separating isobaric isomers

Separation of Isomers - Pseudoephedrine/Ephedrine

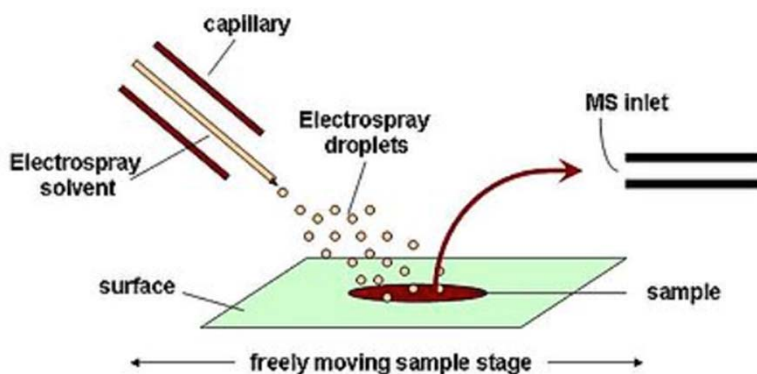


•Separation of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine with SelexION™

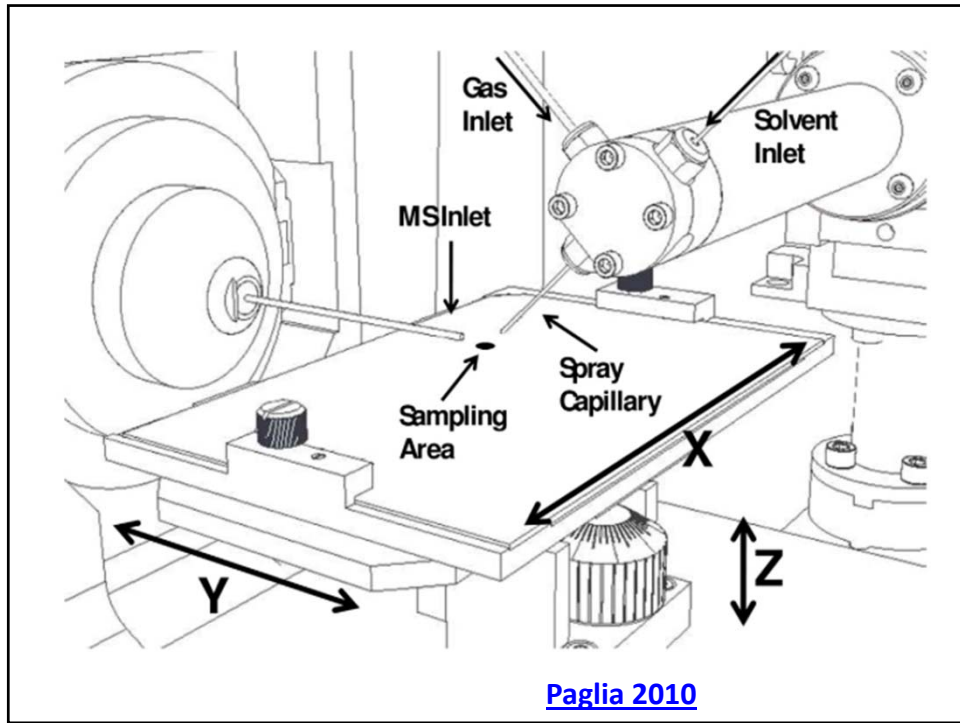
•Indistinguishable by MS or MS/MS

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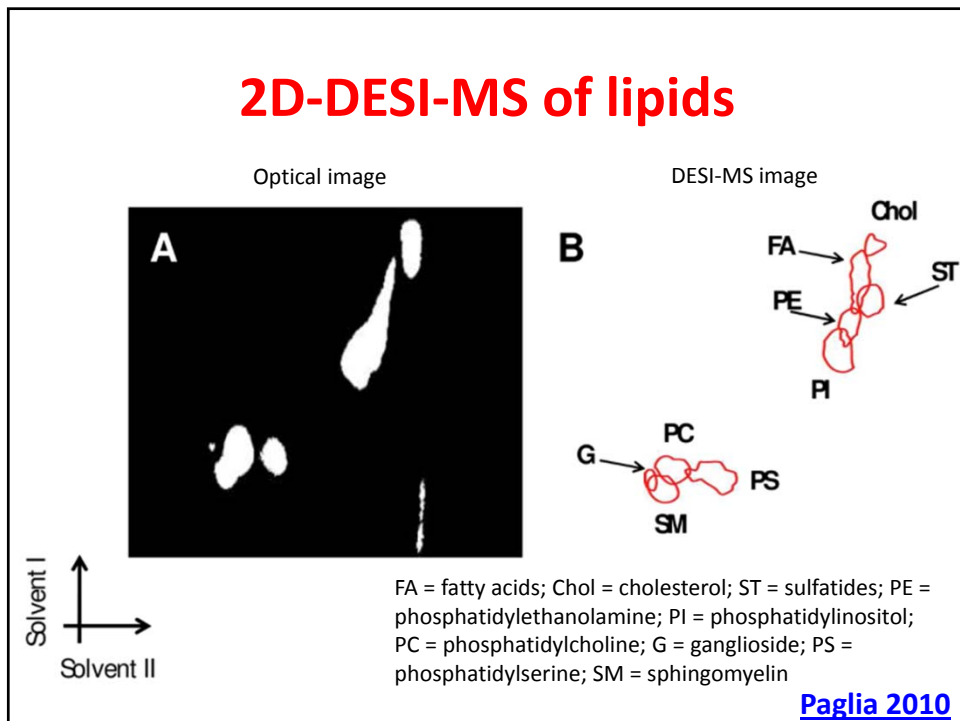
DESI-MS TLC of lipids



Desorption electro spray ionization mass spectrometry of the lipids on the TLC plate without extraction



2D-DESI-MS of lipids



References

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- Paglia G, Ifa DR, Wu C, Corso G, Cooks RG. Desorption electrospray ionization mass spectrometry analysis of lipids after two-dimensional high-performance thin-layer chromatography partial separation. *Anal Chem*. 2010 Mar 1;82(5):1744-50.
- Momchilova SM, Nikolova-Damyanova BM. Separation of isomeric octadecenoic fatty acids in partially hydrogenated vegetable oils as p-methoxyphenacyl esters using a single-column silver ion high-performance liquid chromatography (Ag-HPLC). *Nat Protoc*. 2010 Mar;5(3):473-8.
- [AB Sciex Webinar](#) on SelexION technology