

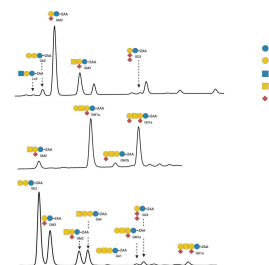
Feb 10, 2024

🌐 Analysis of glycosphingolipids from cell lines

🔗 Forked from [Analysis of glycosphingolipids from human plasma](#)

DOI

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Protocol status: Working

We use this protocol and it's working

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Abstract

Interest in the role of cellular glycosphingolipids (GSLs) in health and disease led to us developing a sensitive method to analyse the full complement of GSL structures present in mammalian cells, fluids and tissues. The original qualitative method we developed was published in 2004 and measured the oligosaccharides selectively released from glycosphingolipids using a ceramide glycanase enzyme derived from the medicinal leech. We have now updated and refined this protocol with the focus on achieving sensitive and reproducible quantitation of GSLs in cell line samples. The method uses the fluorescent compound anthranilic acid (2-AA) to label oligosaccharides prior to analysis using normal-phase high-performance liquid chromatography. The labelling procedure is rapid, selective, and easy to perform. With the inclusion of a 2AA-labelled chitotriose calibration standard, it is possible to obtain accurate and reproducible molar quantities of individual GSL species.

Guidelines

This protocol requires the use of some hazardous materials. As such, users must be appropriately trained and hazardous materials stored, used, and disposed of in accordance with your institution's health and safety policies, and approved laboratory policies, risk assessments and codes of practice.

Materials

Acetonitrile 1.00030

Gradient grade for liquid chromatography LiChrosolv[®] Reag. Ph Eur

https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/catalog/product/mm/100030?lang=en®ion=GB&gclid=EAlaIQobChMI1JyZu_Xa8AIVcwUGAB10IgVLEAAYASAAEgJHmfD_BwE

Anthranilic acid

A89855 Sigma-Aldrich

Reagent grade, ≥98%

<https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/catalog/product/sial/a89855?lang=en®ion=GB>

Bicinchoninic Acid solution

<https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/GB/en/product/sigma/b9643>

Boric acid

ReagentPlus[®], ≥99.5%

B0252 Sigma-Aldrich

https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/GB/en/product/sigald/b0252?cm_sp=Insite-_-caSrpResults_srpRecs_srpModel_boric%20acid%20reagent%20plus-_-srpRecs3-1

Chloroform

Suitable for HPLC, ≥99.8%, amylene stabilized

34854-M Sigma-Aldrich

<https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/catalog/product/sial/34854m?lang=en®ion=GB>

Copper(II) sulfate solution

<https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/GB/en/product/sigald/c2284>

Discovery[®] DPA-6S SPE Tube

[https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/GB/en/search/dpa-6s?](https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/GB/en/search/dpa-6s?focus=products&page=1&perPage=30&sort=relevance&term=DPA-6S&type=product_name)

[focus=products&page=1&perPage=30&sort=relevance&term=DPA-6S&type=product_name](https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/GB/en/search/dpa-6s?focus=products&page=1&perPage=30&sort=relevance&term=DPA-6S&type=product_name)

Gibco™ DPBS, no calcium, no magnesium

14190094

<https://www.thermofisher.com/order/catalog/product/14190094#/14190094>

Glycosphingolipid standards

<https://www.matreya.com/Departments/Product-Categories/Glycosphingolipids.aspx>

Kinesis SPE Columns: TELOS[®] C18(EC) 100mg/1ml SPE Columns

<https://kinesis.co.uk/kinesis-spe-columns-telosr-c18-ec-100mg-1ml-spe-columns-210-100m-001t.html>



Ludger - BioQuant 2AA Labelled Chitotriose Standard

Cat. #: BQ-CAA-CHI-01 Batch: B37I-02

<https://www.ludger.com/docs/products/bq/bq-caa-chi/bq-caa-chi-01-b37i-02-cofa.pdf>

Ludger - 2-AA Labeled Glucose Homopolymer Ladder

Cat. # CAA-GHP-30

<https://www.glycoprofiling.com/docs/products/caa/ludger-caa-ghp-30-guide.pdf>

Methanol

34860 Sigma-Aldrich

Suitable for HPLC, ≥99.9%

https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/catalog/product/sigald/34860?lang=en®ion=GB&cm_sp=Insite-_-caSrpResults_srpRecs_srpModel_methanol%2034860-_-srpRecs3-1

rEGCase I: recombinant Endoglycoceramidase custom-synthesized by GenScript

<https://www.genscript.com/>

Sarstedt 1.5 ml Micro tubes with screw cap and seal

Product reference number 72.692

<https://www.sarstedt.com/en/products/laboratory/screw-cap-micro-tubes-reaction-tubes/screw-cap-micro-tubes/product/dmsarproducts/specificationPdf/Product/72.692.005/>

Sodium acetate trihydrate

S1304 Sigma-Aldrich

Meets USP testing specifications

https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/catalog/product/sial/s1304?lang=en®ion=GB&gclid=CjwKCAjwJ2FBhAuEiwAIKu19jp2DL5CW1Ke85Y0Ksb5boyV-5zKyUkzv3uVVuZXV3abjGZbVruJhoCescQAvD_BwE

Sodium cyanoborohydride

Reagent grade, 95%

156159 Sigma-Aldrich

<https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/catalog/product/aldrich/156159?lang=en®ion=GB>

TSKgel® Amide-80 HPLC Column

<https://www.sigmaaldrich.com/GB/en/product/supelco/813071>



Safety warnings

- ⚠ This protocol requires the use of some hazardous solvents, reagents and chemicals. Refer to the Safety Data Sheets (SDS) provided by supplier and applicable Control of Substances Harmful to Health (COSHH). The correct personal protective equipment must be worn, and incidents reported in line with your institution's policy and procedures.

Before start

Check that you have the required reagents, solvents, chemicals, equipment and PPE.



GSL preparation from cell lines

- 1 Lyse and homogenise cell pellet ($\geq 1 \cdot 10^6$ cells) in  200 μL ddH₂O through three cycles of freeze-thawing with vortexing after each cycle. 
- 2 Measure protein concentration using the Bicinchoninic acid assay (BCA) method in triplicate at 4 fold dilution (repeat if triplicate values are not in agreement).
- 3 Using determined protein concentrations, prepare sample as  200 μg protein in  200 μL ddH₂O in a 1.5 ml screw-cap tube. 
- 4 Add  0.8 mL of chloroform/methanol (1:2, v/v) to give (C/M/W 4:8:3 final). 

Safety information

Chloroform and methanol are very toxic, and methanol is flammable. Refer to the Safety Data Sheets.

- 5 Leave  Overnight at  4 °C . 
- 6 Vortex.
- 7 Centrifuge at 16,000 x g for  00:10:00 at  Room temperature . 

- 8 Transfer supernatant (about  1 mL) to new tube and separate into two phases: by adding  0.2 mL PBS and then  0.2 mL chloroform. 
- 9 Vortex.
- 10 Centrifuge at 16,000 x g for  00:10:00 at room temperature. 



- 11 Remove very carefully the lower phase to a new tube and retain the upper phase.
- 12 Dry down the lower phase under a stream of (oxygen-free) nitrogen in heating block ( 42 °C).
- 13 When dry, re-suspend the lower phase in  20 µL chloroform/methanol (1:3).
- 14 Add upper phase to lower phase and vortex.
- 15 Pre-equilibrate C18 columns (telos, Kinesis, UK) with 4 x  1 mL methanol and 3 x  1 mL deionised water.
- 16 Load lower/upper phase mix onto column, let drip through gravity flow.
- 17 Rinse sample tube with  1 mL water, apply to column to wash. 
- 18 Wash column with 3 x  1 mL water. 
- 19 Elute GSLs into a new tube with:
 - 19.1  2 mL chloroform/methanol (98:2). Push through first  0.5 mL . You can use syringe with adapter that fits into top of column.
 - 19.2  2 mL chloroform/methanol (1:3).
 - 19.3  1 mL methanol.



20 Vortex and leave Overnight at 4 °C or carry on to enzymatic digestion.



GSL digestion with EGC'ase I

16h

21 Vortex (5 mL , C18) and dry down samples under a stream of nitrogen in heating block (42 °C).



22 When about 150 µL sample remaining, transfer to 1.5 mL screw-cap tube.

23 Rinse sample tube with 200 µL C:M 2:1, vortex and combine with the rest of the sample in the screw-cap tube.



24 Rinse sample tube with 200 µL chloroform, vortex and combine with the rest of the sample in the screw-cap tube.



25 Dry down, under a slow stream of nitrogen in heating block (42 °C).

26 Re-suspend in 50 µL C:M 2:1, vortex, dry down under a very slow stream of nitrogen.

Note

NB It is essential that ALL the sample is dried in the bottom of the tube.

27 Add 90 µL enzyme/buffer to each sample and vortex:



27.1 rEGCase : 5 µL enzyme (stored in freezer) plus 85 µL buffer per sample.



Note

rEGCase buffer (stored at 4°C): 0.6% (v/v) Triton in $50\text{ millimolar (mM)}$ sodium acetate pH 5.2.

27.2 rEGCase buffer (stored at 4°C): 0.6% Triton in $50\text{ millimolar (mM)}$ sodium acetate pH 5.2.

28 Incubate at 37°C for $16:00:00$.

16h

Note

rEGCaseI: recombinant Endoglycoceramidase I was custom synthesised by GenScript.



2AA labelling of glycans released from GSLs

1h 30m

29



Note

Labelling mix: 30 mg/mL 2AA and 45 mg/mL sodium cyanoborohydride, in labelling buffer
Labelling buffer: 4% sodium acetate and 2% boric acid in methanol

Dissolve 2AA in labelling buffer first with vortexing, then add the sodium cyanoborohydride and vortex.

Safety information

Sodium cyanoborohydride is very toxic. Refer to the Safety Data Sheet.

30 Add $310\text{ }\mu\text{L}$ labelling mix to the $90\text{ }\mu\text{L}$ sample (digest) in 1.5 mL screw-cap tube.



31 Incubate in oven at 80°C for $01:00:00$, vortexing at $00:30:00$.

1h 30m



32 Allow to cool to Room temperature .

33 Add 1 mL acetonitrile:water (97:3).



34 Transfer from screw-cap tube to 15 mL tubes.

35 Rinse screw-cap tube with 2 x 1 mL acetonitrile:water (97:3) and add to 15 mL tube.

36 Pre-equilibrate 50 mg Discovery® DPA-6S SPE Tube (supplied by Sigma-Aldrich) with:

1 mL acetonitrile

2 x 1 mL water

2 x 1 mL acetonitrile

37 Apply samples (3.4 mL) to equilibrated DPA-6S columns, let drip through gravity flow.

38 Wash columns with acetonitrile:water (95:5) → add 1 mL into the 15 mL tubes to wash and add to columns, and then add 3 x 1 mL acetonitrile:water (95:5) directly onto the columns.



39 Elute with 600 µL water into new tubes.



40 Add 60 µL : 140 µL (sample:acetonitrile) to HPLC vials and vortex.



41 For HPLC, inject 5 µL - 50 µL .

42 DPA-6S eluate is stable stored at -20 °C .

HPLC protocol

1h

- 43 Purified 2AA-labeled oligosaccharides are separated and quantified by normal-phase high-performance liquid chromatography (NP-HPLC) as previously described (Neville *et al.*, 2004, see the reference below).

Note

Analysis of fluorescently labeled glycosphingolipid-derived oligosaccharides following ceramide glycanase digestion and anthranilic acid labeling

DCA Neville, V Coquard, DA Priestman, DJM te Vrugte, DJ Sillence, Raymond A Dwek, Frances M Platt, Terry D Butters
Analytical biochemistry 331 (2), 275-282, (2004).
doi: 10.1016/j.ab.2004.03.051.

- 44 The HPLC system consists of a Waters Alliance 2695 separations module and an in-line Waters 2475 multi λ -fluorescence detector set at Ex λ 360 nm and Em λ 425 nm.
- 45 The solid phase used is a 4.6 $\times$ 250 mm TSK gel-Amide 80 column maintained at  30 °C (Anachem, Luton, UK).
- 46 The chromatographic flow rate is 0.8 mL/min, and run time was 60 min. The total run time is  01:00:00 .

1h

Time (min)	0	6	35	37	39	41	42	54	60
Flow (mL/min)	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.2	1.2	0.8
% Solvent A	71.6	71.6	52.8	23.0	23.0	71.6	71.6	71.6	71.6
% Solvent B	8.4	8.4	27.2	57.0	57.0	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4
% Solvent C	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0

Gradient conditions for Normal Phase HPLC. All chromatography was controlled and data were collected and processed using Waters Empower software.



- 47 The mobile phases are acetonitrile (solvent A), de-ionised water (solvent B) and 100 millimolar (mM) ammonium acetate, pH 3.85 (solvent C).
- 48 Starting conditions are 71.6% solvent A. 8.4% solvent B and 20% solvent C at 0.8 mL/min constant flow-rate for 6 mins. 00:06:00 6m
- 49 The gradient is developed from 6 min to 35 min by increasing solvent B from 8.4% to 27.2% with concomitant decrease in solvent A from 71.6% to 52.8 %. 00:29:00 29m
- 50 From 35 to 37 min solvent B is increased to 57% and solvent A reduced to 23%, then maintained for 2 min up until 39 min. 00:04:00 4m
- 51 Between 39 and 41 min the solvent ratios are returned to the starting conditions and then maintained for 1 min. 00:03:00 3m
- 52 At 42 mins the flow-rate is increased to 1.2 mL/min and maintained for 12 min up to 54 min. 00:12:00 12m
- 53 Between 54 and 60 min the flow-rate is gradually returned to 0.8 mL/min. 00:06:00 6m
- 54 Individual GSL species are identified by their glucose unit values (GUs), calculated with the HPLC Empower software using a homopolymer dextran ladder (Fig. 1). 
- 54.1 To help identify GSL peaks in the samples, compare the GUs of the peaks in the samples with those in a GSL standard mix.
- 54.2 Prepare a mixture of commercially available authentic GSLs in a screw-cap tube: 
-  50 µL Matreya Neutral GSL mix Cat No 1505 (Glc-Cer, Lac-Cer, Gb3, Gb4)
1.0 mg/ml
-  100 µL Matreya Ganglioside mix Cat No 1510 (Lac-Cer, GM3, GD3)
0.5 mg/ml
-  100 µL Matreya Ganglioside mix Cat No 1511 (GA1, GM1a, GD1a, GD1b, GT1b) 0.5
mg/ml



🧪 30 μ L Matreya GM2 Ganglioside Cat No 1502 (GM2)

0.5 mg/ml

🧪 30 μ L Sigma Asialo-GM2 Cat No G9398 (GA2)

1.0 mg/ml

54.3 Dry down the mixture under nitrogen and then digest, label and clean up as done for the samples in steps 25-41.

54.4 Aliquot and store at 🧊 -20 °C .

54.5 In order to calculate molar quantities from integrated peaks in the chromatogram, inject a calibration standard containing 2.5 pmol 2AA-labelled chitotriose (Ludger) with each sample set (not shown).

Figures 1- 3: HPLC profile and sugar structures for GSLs in cell lines together with the GSL biosynthetic pathway

55

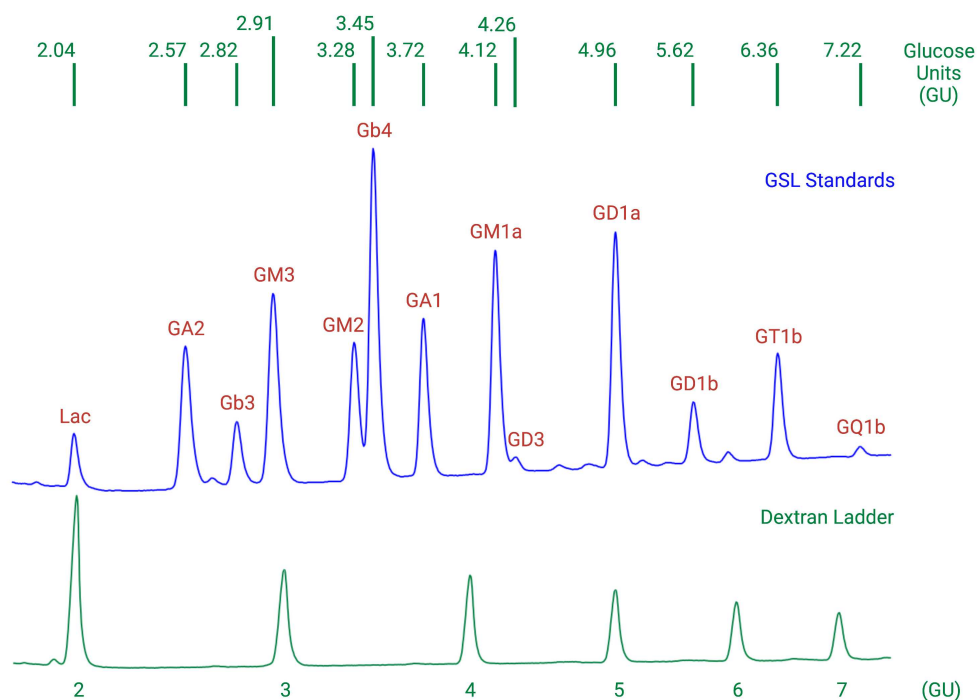


Figure 1 HPLC profiles for GSL standards and 2AA-labelled homopolymer dextran ladder. Glucose Units were calculated using the retention times of a 2AA-labelled homopolymer dextran ladder and are shown for each of the GSL standard peaks.

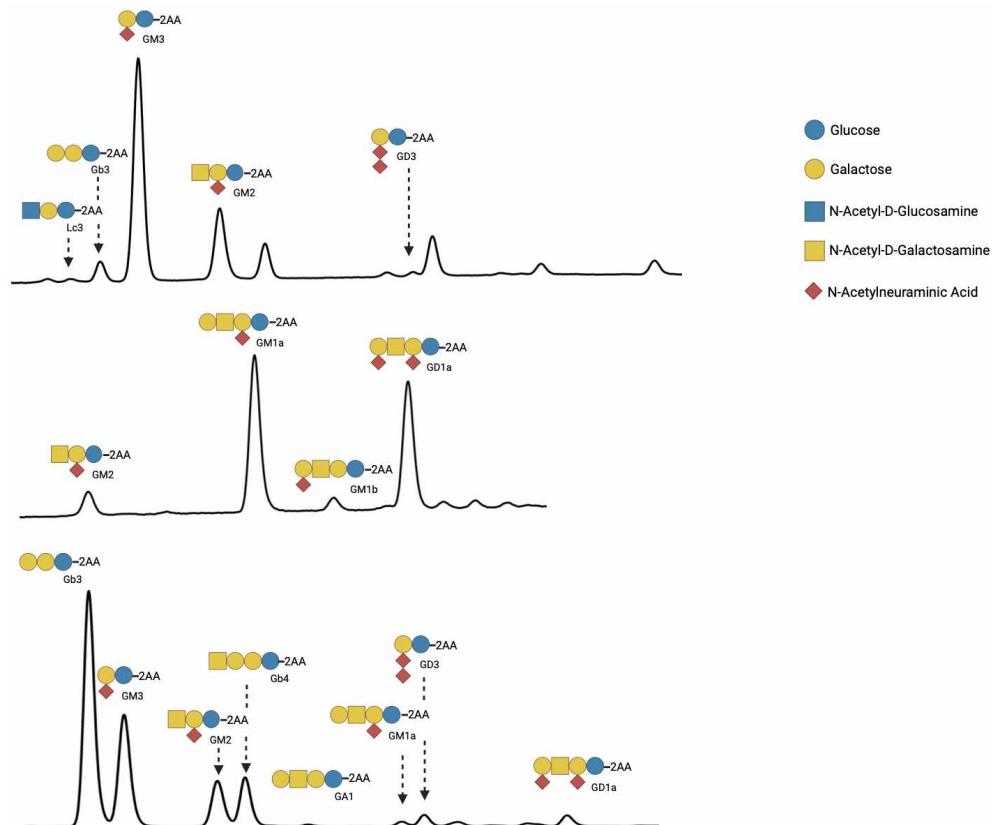


Figure 3 Typical HPLC profile for 2AA-labelled glycans released from RAW (top panel), HEK (middle panel), and human fibroblasts (bottom panel) glycosphingolipids with sugar structures indicated for each peak. In order to calculate values for GSL concentrations, the peaks are integrated and compared with a quantitative standard of known concentration.

Note

Figures created with [BioRender.com](https://www.biorender.com/)