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Utilizing a resource of enrichment profiles in plasma for the systematic assessment of antibody selectivity.

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28 **ABSTRACT**

29 There is a strong need for procedures that enable context and application dependent validation of
30 antibodies. Here we describe the foundation for a resource aiding more detailed assessment antibody
31 selectivity for capturing endogenous proteins from human plasma. In 414 immunoprecipitation (IP)
32 experiments with EDTA plasma, data was generated by mass spectrometry (LC-MS) with 157
33 antibodies (targeting 120 unique proteins). Out of a total of 1,313 unique proteins, 426 proteins (33%)
34 were detected in > 20% of the assays and indicate a background comprised of mainly proteins from the
35 complement system. For all proteins identified either in heat-treated or untreated EDTA plasma,
36 frequencies of occurrence were derived. We determined z-scores for each IP as a measure of
37 enrichment to annotate the antibodies into four categories (ON-target, CO-target, OFF-target and NO-
38 target). For 45% (70/157) of the tested antibodies, the expected target proteins were enriched (z-score
39 ≥ 3) above background. There were 84% (59/70) of binders that co-enriched other proteins beside the
40 intended target, either due to OFF-target binding or predicted interactions. Comparing several
41 antibodies raised against IGFBP2, the established library allowed us to describe protein complexes in
42 plasma, and we employed multiplexed sandwich immunoassays to confirm these. In summary, the
43 generated resource of plasma enrichment profiles and background proteins adds a very useful and yet
44 lacking starting point for the assessment of antibody selectivity in this clinically important body fluid.
45 The provided insights will contribute to a more informed use of validated affinity reagents and may
46 lead to further advancements of plasma proteomics assays.

47

48 **MAIN TEXT**

49 Antibodies are important tools used in a wide range of assays within life science, but there is a
50 growing awareness about the importance to assess the quality of the data generated therewith [1]. To
51 address this challenge, the recently formed International Working Group for Antibody Validation
52 (IWGAV) proposed five strategies to assess the experimental performance of antibodies [2]. However,
53 the opportunities for evaluating antibodies in the given context (= sample type) and application (=
54 assays) are limited. In particular for body fluids there are currently no tools for modulating the samples
55 to overexpress or delete expression of a target of interest. While the use of GWAS provides powerful
56 opportunities to assess the relation between plasma protein abundance and genetic information [3, 4],
57 affinity reagents are preferably still validated before the intended use. There is further need to
58 experimentally assess selectivity of the affinity reagents and to enable the development of sensitive
59 assays and technologies for proteins in plasma or serum.

60

61 Here, we aim to describe the foundation of a resource for the assessment of antibodies used to capture
62 proteins from plasma. We utilize immunoprecipitation (IP) of full-length proteins in combination with
63 mass spectrometry (MS) to systematically describe a library of identified proteins. In more than 400
64 IPs with plasma frequencies of occurrence (f) and enrichments scores (z -scores) were collected, and
65 we list those proteins that were commonly detected as plasma background. Similar efforts have been
66 applied to evaluate the performances of antibodies for IP in cell lysates [5]. Apart from few studies
67 focused on specific, smaller number of targets [6, 7] however, there are no large scale and systematic
68 studies extensively applying IP of endogenous full-length proteins and MS for antibody validation in
69 plasma. Otherwise, peptide-specific antibodies to determine protein abundance after digestion of
70 plasma proteins have been more frequently applied in combination with MS readout [8-10]. Additional
71 approaches such as iMALDI [11] and MS-based immunoassays [12] complement activities using
72 protein-enrichment before MS analysis. The composition of the plasma proteome was recently updated
73 and now lists around 3,500 proteins detectable using MS techniques [13]. Adding further targets to this
74 list, foster hence to perform deeper quantitative analysis of plasma proteins, and will require large
75 recourses of validated antibodies. For MS-based techniques, indeed one of the keys is to use
76 enrichment as a strategy to enhance the sensitivity [14], while purely affinity-based techniques will
77 greatly benefit from the utility of highly selective binder in multiplexed assay systems [15].

78

79 **Study Overview**

80 To establish a plasma-centric resource for selectivity analysis of antibodies, we applied a systematic
81 approach using 157 antibodies (targeting 120 proteins) and a workflow depicted in **Fig. 1A**. The
82 assays were built on a previously described procedure, in which antibodies are covalently coupled onto
83 magnetic polystyrene beads prior to incubation with the sample [16]. The study included binders both
84 of monoclonal and polyclonal origin and different species. In order to compare the performance of
85 different antibodies raised against a common antigen, a subset of 25 proteins (21%) were targeted by
86 more than one antibody (**Supplementary Fig. 1**). The selection of presented targets was driven by
87 giving priority to antibodies raised against proteins known to be part of the plasma proteome and to be
88 associated to a disease (**Supplementary Excel Table, sheet: "Selected Targets"**). As described in
89 **Fig. 1B**, the majority of binders (65%, N=101) were raised against target proteins detected previously
90 'in plasma' (48% N=75) or annotated as 'extracellular' (17%, N=26), and fewer proteins were
91 annotated as 'cellular' (36%, N=56). As reference for protein abundance in plasma, we considered the
92 estimated concentrations found in the 2017 build of the plasma PeptideAtlas [13].

93 **Pilot study**

94 In a pilot, we compared the experimental conditions to reach an analytical sensitivity to detect plasma
95 proteins and to assess the potential to discriminate between specifically captured or frequently
96 observed proteins (denoted plasma background). A set of antibodies obtained from commercially
97 available ELISA kits for plasma protein analysis were used to cover a plasma concentration range
98 between $\mu\text{g/ml}$ (CRP) to low pg/ml (IL1A, see **Supplementary Note 1**). We tested combinations of
99 different amounts of plasma (30-1000 μl) as well as increasing amounts of beads (30,000 - 1,000,000)
100 to assess the detectability of the targets **Supplementary Fig. 2A**. We concluded that 100 μl of plasma
101 and 500,000 beads were suitable for larger scaled investigations, enabling the detection within $\mu\text{g/ml}$
102 and high pg/mL (e.g. KLK3 was detected in a pool of plasma obtained by mixing samples from
103 healthy females and males, see **Supplementary Fig.2B**). For the detection of pg/ml plasma proteins,
104 such as IL1A, the IP may require even larger amounts of sample and beads, which was found less
105 suitable for large scale efforts (**Supplementary Fig. 2A**).The LFQ intensities from the IPs were used
106 to calculate z-scores and compare peptides from replicated assays. In the pilot, all the antibody profiles
107 barely reached an enrichment threshold ($z\text{-score} \geq 3$) when using only this limited set of assays (21) in
108 the library for data analysis. Utilizing a larger library of plasma IP data, as introduced and described
109 below, improved the number of expected target proteins with $z\text{-scores} \geq 3$ (**Supplementary Fig 2B**).

110 **Assessing the resource**

111 It is well accepted that MS provides in-depth information about the protein content of a sample,
112 however hundreds if not thousands of proteins can be identified in a single IP experiment [17]. This
113 calls for a careful assessment and interpretation of data from IP assays where many other proteins than
114 the intended target can be identified in the same range of spectral counts or precursor intensities. As

115 described in the context of cell lysates, the necessity to compare the outcome of several experiments,
116 including negative controls or unrelated antibodies is essential [5, 18, 19]. Mellacheruvu and
117 colleagues described how lists of background proteins that were obtained from control assays
118 performed in similar experimental conditions can be used to assess specific enrichments in IPs [18]. In
119 our case, all the data (not exclusively control IgG) was generated in separate experiments (refer to as
120 “experimental batches” or “batches”). These sets of data were used to build a larger library of proteins
121 and annotate these by their frequency of identification (f) and enrichment scores (z). These then serves
122 as a resource to assess enrichment profiles of the antibodies. Details on experimental batches and
123 frequencies for proteins are described in **Supplementary Excel Sheets “Experimental Batches”** and
124 **“Frequencies of identification”**.

125
126 We applied MaxLFQ label free quantification to 414 plasma IPs (pIP), a total of 1,313 unique proteins
127 were identified, excluding variable domains of immunoglobulin for heavy and light chains. The
128 complete list of proteins can be found in **Supplementary Excel Sheet: “Frequencies of
129 identification”**. Per IP, about 290 proteins were detected on average. Data was collected from
130 experiments performed under heat treatment versus not heat conditions, as further discussed below, we
131 found that the average number of identifications per experiment were slightly higher in heat-treated
132 plasma (300 ± 97 in 276 pIPs) compared to untreated plasma (283 ± 97 in 138 pIPs). For both sample
133 types, the majority of proteins (66%) were detected in $f < 20\%$ of all assays (**Fig 1C** and
134 **Supplementary Excel Sheet: “Frequencies of identification”**). Combining the frequencies of how
135 many times a protein occurred in each IP, proteins found in $f > 20\%$ of all assays (denoted ‘frequent’)
136 were compared with those found in $f < 20\%$ (denoted as ‘less frequent’). The resulting GO analysis
137 revealed that terms related to the complement activation and wound healing (GO:0002576,
138 GO:0006956, GO:0050817, GO:0009611, GO:0007596) were enriched for the frequent proteins
139 (**Supplementary Excel Sheet: “GO enrichment analysis”**). Other enriched terms for the frequent
140 proteins were related to lipoprotein and their complexes (GO:1990777, GO:0032994, GO:0034358) as
141 well as vesicles (GO:0031983, GO:0060205). Further investigations also found a significant
142 association ($p\text{-value} < 2 * 10^{-16}$) relation between the frequencies and estimated protein abundance in
143 plasma [13], as well as to sequence coverage (**Fig 1D, Supplementary note 3** and **Supplementary
144 Figure 3A-B**). Further details on frequency of identification and intensities variates along the
145 experimental batches can be found in the **Supplementary Figure 4A-B** and **Supplementary Excel
146 Sheet: “Batches Kruskal Wallis test”**.

147 **Differences between untreated and heat-treated plasma**

148 Previously, we have shown that after heat treatment of plasma samples at 56°C , improved the limit of
149 detection in plasma profiling assays using antibody bead array [20]. Heat treatment of plasma may
150 indeed retrieve epitopes and making proteins more accessible to antibody binding, however heat may

151 also affect the sample's composition by causing aggregation and proteins to precipitate. As shown for
152 all IPs in **Fig. 1C and Supplementary Figure 4A**, heat treatment may influence which proteins are
153 listed among the common contaminants and their frequencies. When we consider LFQ intensities
154 instead of frequencies, we observed that in heat-treated samples particularly fibrinogens (FGA, FGB
155 and FGG) were more abundant (**Supplementary Fig. 5**). Previous observations state that denaturation
156 of fibrinogen starts at 55°C (two transitions peaks at 57.7°C and 96°C) and particularly affects the D
157 fragment [21]. In heat-treated samples, the affinity of fibrinogens to plastic surfaces has also been
158 reported to increase [22]. Via a similar mechanism, fibrinogen's unspecific binding to surfaces of
159 magnetic beads or to heavy chains of IgG antibodies on the beads may be enhanced [23, 24]. Hence,
160 heat-induced denaturation of fibrinogen may alter the frequency with which proteins of this family are
161 identified. Other plasma proteins such as albumin, apolipoproteins (APOB, APOC2, APO2, APOE),
162 Keratines (KRT1, KRT2, KRT10), Fibulin, Fibronectin 1 or IgM were less frequent among the
163 common contaminants (see also **Supplementary Excel Sheet: "Frequencies of identification"**).

164 **Classification**

165 Extending the use of the library containing common contaminants and frequencies, we aimed at
166 classifying the antibodies based on their enrichment profiles in plasma. Considering a protein as being
167 enriched when the LFQ intensity was z -score ≥ 3 , all antibodies were annotated according to the
168 following categories (**Fig. 3A**):

- 169 • ON-target: when a $z \geq 3$ was only assigned to the expected target.
- 170 • CO-target: other proteins besides the expected targets were detected with $z \geq 3$. Here we will
171 discuss three sub-categories related to the origin of the additional target.
- 172 • OFF-target: proteins other than the expected targets were enriched with $z \geq 3$.
- 173 • NO-target: all detected proteins were classified with $z < 3$.

174 Knowing that common plasma background proteins may differ between assays using untreated and
175 heat-treated plasma, data from the respective assays was analyzed separately and the resulting z -scores
176 were combined for the global assessment. For the 157 antibodies, we made 1173 identifications for
177 681 unique proteins with $z \geq 3$. In each of the 414 IPs, we detected about 550 proteins, of which 6-9
178 proteins were enriched above the threshold. The combined outcome of the analyses is shown in **Table**
179 **1**, where the classification of 70 out of 157 antibodies (45%) was found supportive by falling into the
180 ON- or CO-target category. When assessing only those antibodies targeting proteins previously
181 annotated in plasma, the fraction increased to 61% (46/75). It is noteworthy that annotating antibodies
182 in non-supportive categories could be due to limited affinity of the antibody, limited assay sensitivity
183 or absence of the target in the used pools of plasma derived from healthy donors, as well as limited
184 peptide detectability.

185 **ON-target enrichment**

186 Applying IP-MS analysis has been reported to improve the sensitivity of protein quantification [8, 12,
187 25]. Hence, IP-MS may also be used to detect lower abundant proteins, adding to those that presently
188 remain more challenging for other MS protocols. Our investigations lead to the identification of 9
189 extracellular proteins (e.g. CXCL8, TGFA) and 15 cellular proteins (e.g. TP53, CASP2) in plasma, that
190 were not listed in the plasma PeptideAtlas at the time of our study **Supplementary Excel Sheet:**
191 **“Antibodies experim. annotation”**. For almost 50 % of the polyclonal antibodies annotated as ON-
192 or CO-target in our studies, the identified peptides aligned with the sequence of the protein fragments
193 used to generate the antibodies or Protein Epitope Signature Tags (PrEST) (**Supplementary Fig.1B**).
194 As previously discussed [26], affinity purification of polyclonal antibodies may bare the risk of co-
195 eluting the target used as bait on the columns and detecting these by MS. Such passenger proteins or
196 peptides may consequently simulate the enrichment of an endogenous target. In our case, this would
197 lead to a false classification of the antibody and may hamper downstream applications. To address this
198 concern, we analyzed beads with immobilized antibodies for the presence of the protein fragment
199 antigen that could cause passenger peptides to appear. Out of 42 tested antibodies (among ON-target
200 or CO-target), only 11 showed the potential presence of passenger proteins (**Supplementary note 4,**
201 **Supplementary Fig. 6**).

202 **CO-target enrichment and sub-categories**

203 Evaluating antibodies in terms of target selectivity, we observed the possibility to study co-
204 enrichments of proteins (**Figure 3**). This category includes those ON-target enrichments where other
205 proteins were either enriched due to an interaction with the ON-target or as an OFF-target being
206 captured by the antibodies alongside the intended target. For the second sub-category, sequence
207 homology and abundance of the OFF-target could serve as reasons for co-enrichments.

208 **CO-target enrichment stemming from related proteins**

209 Besides IGFBP2 discussed further below, examples of the CO-target enrichments with sequence
210 homology included examples for anti-CCL16 (HPA042909) and anti-SERPINA4 (HPA002869).
211 These binders respectively enriched additional members of their protein family, CCL18 and
212 SERPINA6, both sharing sequence homology with the intended target (**Supplementary note 7**). The
213 proteins CCL16 and CCL18 are estimated to be present at 29 ng/ml and 2 ng/ml levels in human
214 plasma (Peptide Atlas, 2017), hence the estimated abundance differs from the degrees to which
215 HPA042909 captured CCL16 ($z = 10.7$) and CCL18 ($z = 10.1$). Both proteins were otherwise rarely
216 observed in other pIPs ($f < 4\%$), have not been predicted to interact directly (**Supplementary Fig. 7A**)
217 but share sequence to a 27% homology (**Supplementary Fig. 7B**). In the case of HPA002869, the
218 antibody enriched SERPINA4 ($z = 8.2$) and SERPINA6 ($z = 8.1$) in heated plasma. Serpins are a large
219 family of blood proteins highly homolog proteins and no direct integration has been predicted
220 (**Supplementary Fig. 7C**). SERPINA4 and A6 are estimated to be present at 17 and 41 $\mu\text{g/ml}$ levels

221 and share a 40% sequence similarity (**Supplementary Fig. 7D**). Both were observed in 91%
222 (SERPINA4) and 59% (SERPINA6) of all conducted pIPs with heat-treated plasma (less frequent in
223 untreated plasma). A research performed on PIPs, a database of predicted human protein-protein
224 interactions (<http://www.compbio.dundee.ac.uk/www-pips/index.jsp>, [27]), revealed a predicted
225 interaction between SERPINA4 and SERPINA6 (total interaction score = 128.0). Further antibodies
226 with independent epitopes are needed to confirm or to exclude the possibility of interactions between
227 these proteins, as we did not find literature supporting a physical interaction between them.

228 **CO-target enrichment stemming from frequent proteins**

229 In another sub-category, we observed that potential protein-protein interactions may also be described
230 from more frequently observed proteins that tend to present with z-scores < 3 . Below, we discuss two
231 examples found for IGM, a protein known to be abundant in plasma. The first example is given by
232 CD5 antigen-like (CD5L, HPA026432) and its known interactor IGM. Here, CD5L was detected
233 alongside several immunoglobulins (IGH, IGJ, IGK, IGL, IGM). It is known that CD5L takes part in
234 inflammatory responses during infections or during the process of atherosclerosis, hence binds to the
235 Fc region of IgM through its SRCR domains [30]. Further, the immunoglobulin J chain (IGJ) is known
236 to be required to stabilize the binding of CD5L to IGM, but a direct interaction has not been
237 experimentally observed [31]. Our data supports the idea that association between CD5L, IGM and
238 IGJ can occur: Besides CD5L ($[c] = 5.9 \mu\text{g/ml}$; $z = 5.1$), immunoglobulin light chain lambda (IGHV3-
239 23; $z = 3.4$), kappa (IGKC; $z = 3.4$), IGM ($z = 2.7$) and IGJ ($z = 2.8$). A lower z-score of the co-targets
240 may also possibly indicate that the antibody is more selective for CD5L and less for the additionally
241 identified proteins. Considering the abundance of IGM at around 1 mg/ml and that IGM frequently
242 occurred as contaminant ($f = 98\%$), an increased z-score of IGM in this particular IP may point to a
243 specific enrichment. The second example is given for a monoclonal antibody raised against fibulin 1
244 (FBLN1) [32]. This antibody was used in both sample types and enriched 22 proteins in heated and 12
245 in untreated plasma. Even though FBLN1 is a frequent protein ($f = 65\%$) and abundant protein ($[c] =$
246 $34 \mu\text{g/ml}$), it was only enriched in heated plasma ($z = 3.7$), while other targets such as CAPZA2,
247 IL36G and PLK4I were detected in both preparations (**Supplementary Excel Sheet: “Antibodies
248 against same protein”**). Interestingly, CD5L and IGHM were again found in the same assays, with
249 comparable enrichment values in heated ($z = 3.4$ and 3.3) compared to untreated plasma (both $z = 2.9$).
250 This could serve as another indication that CD5L and IGHM are present in a complex in plasma.
251 Further analyses are though needed to determine the mode of co-enrichment, meaning, if the co-target
252 was enriched due to directly interacting with the on-target or due to be serving as an off-target.

253 **Studying protein interaction with paired antibodies**

254 The biologically most interesting sub-category within the CO-target category refers to proteins that co-
255 identified because they presumably interact with the intended target. We chose a limit in $z \geq 3$ and
256 LFQ intensity $\geq 10^7$ to call potential protein interactions. In general, we observed that most of the

257 consistent identifications (identified in several replicates) were found for LFQ precursor intensities
258 above this level (**Supplementary Fig. 10**). One such example is given by the pIP using three
259 antibodies raised against the insulin growth factor binding protein 2 (IGFBP2: HPA077723,
260 HPA045140, HPA004754) of which the latter two were raised against the same antigen. As shown in
261 **Fig. 3B** for untreated plasma, HPA077723 and HPA045140 both enriched IGFBP2 ($[c] = 1.1 \mu\text{g/ml}$;
262 $f=21\%$) as well as previously known interactors insulin growth factor 1 (IGF1: $[c] = 0.46 \mu\text{g/ml}$; $f =$
263 18% ;) and IGF2 ($[c] = 1.6 \mu\text{g/ml}$; 8%). In addition, the plasma proteins butyrylcholine esterase (BCHE:
264 $[c] = 11.0 \mu\text{g/ml}$; $f = 18\%$;) and the deoxyribose-phosphate aldolase (DERA: $[c] = 0.5 \text{ ng/ml}$; $f = 7\%$)
265 were detected. For BCHE and IGF1, an interaction was indeed previously hypothesized [28, 29]. For
266 the third binder (HPA004754), IGFBP2 was only enriched upon prior heat treatment plasma (**Fig. 3B**).
267 This differential performance of antibodies raised against the same antigen (HPA045140,
268 HPA004754) confirms the necessity to investigate each of the different batches and lots of polyclonal
269 antibodies.

270
271 In order to provide further evidence for an interaction between the identified proteins, we conducted
272 multiplexed sandwich assays. Here, recombinant IGFBP2, IGF1, IGF2 and BCHE were first analyzed
273 in a concentration dependent manner to confirm assay functionality and target specificity (**Table 2**).
274 First, EDTA plasma was analyzed in a concentration dependent manner, confirming the selectivity of
275 the matched antibody pairs (**Supplementary Fig. 11**). Then, we investigated if antibody pairs with
276 different selectivity revealed plasma concentration dependent results. As shown in **Fig 4**, we found
277 pairs of antibodies mixed specificity in the following capture-detection configurations: IGFBP2-IGF2,
278 IGF2-IGFBP2 as well as BCHE-IGFBP2. For IGF1 and IGF2 antibody pairs, it was not possible to
279 obtain a dilution curve with the respective recombinant proteins in solution, but they were functional
280 in plasma (**Supplementary Fig. 11 C,D,M,N,and P**). Also, IGF2-IGFBP2 and IGFBP2-IGF1
281 confirmed the presence of the previously known complex IGFBP2-IGF2 (**Table 2, Fig 4 B-C**).
282 Antibody pairs for IGFBP2 and BCHE described a sample dilution depended trend with their
283 corresponding intended recombinant proteins as well as in plasma (**Table 2 and Supplementary Fig.**
284 **11 A, E,F,H and I**). Since no cross-reactivity was observed towards these two proteins with other
285 antibodies in the assay (**Table 2**), the functional antibody pair BCHE-IGFBP2 supports the indications
286 provided by IP that a physical interaction between the two proteins in plasma (**Fig 4A**). An inverted
287 configuration IGFBP2-BCHE and an assay including also the other IGFBP2 antibody indicating an
288 interaction (HPA077723, **Fig. 3B**) would further support this observation. However, we acknowledge
289 that not all antibodies allowed building mixed sandwich pairs and using the chosen assay protocol, and
290 indeed, HPA004754 and HPA077723 were raised against two different regions of IGFBP2. This could
291 explain their different performance as capture and detection, above all in the presence of complexes
292 containing IGFBP2. HPA004754 was though functional as capture and detection antibody both using
293 heat-treated and untreated plasma for the detection of IGFBP2 and in combination with anti-BCHE

294 **(Supplementary Fig. 11. B and G)**. HPA077723 was though not functional with anti-BCHE either as
295 a capture or detection antibody, suggesting that the binding of either antibody hinders the other
296 antibody binding to IGFBP2-BCHE complex. Further investigations are needed to investigate if this
297 hindrance is due to a proximity of the two binding sites or other steric effects such as epitope
298 accessibility of a captured complex.

299 More examples of potential protein interactions are provided by those cases in which multiple
300 antibodies were raised against the same target protein using different antigens. Enriching common
301 ON-target and CO-targets provides evidence for protein complexes rather than artefacts. Examples are
302 antibodies targeting FBLN1, or IGF1R (see **Supplementary Excel Sheet: “Antibodies against same
303 protein”**).

304 **OFF-target enrichment category**

305 As a last category, we investigate off-target enrichments. Here, we see the plasma abundance of the
306 off-target over the intended analyte as a main reason for failing to enrich the expected target. As the
307 community is starting to acknowledge the fact that the performance of antibodies is indeed sample
308 context and application dependent, certifying off-target interactions may still allow generating novel
309 hypotheses given that these are followed-up and thoroughly validated by appropriate targeted analysis.
310 One example for selective off-target interactions in plasma is presented by the antibody HPA004920,
311 raised against MMP1 (Matrix metalloproteinase 1). We classified this antibody as OFF-target in
312 untreated plasma because it enriched Mannose-binding protein C (MBL2; $z = 8.3$; $f=12\%$) as well as
313 MMP3 ($z = 6.8$; $f=6\%$) in the IP assays (Figure 2C). As described above for CCL16 and SERPINA4,
314 also here a 53% sequences similarity between the intended target (MMP1) and the off-target (MMP3)
315 **(Supplementary Fig. 7F)** exists and an interaction between these two proteins has been predicted
316 **(Supplementary Fig. 7E)**. The other off-target MBL2 and MMP1 have only a 10% sequence
317 similarity **(Supplementary Fig. 7G)**. MBL2 is though estimated to be present at 1.7 $\mu\text{g/ml}$ in
318 circulation, it is almost 1000x more abundant than MMP1 ($[c] = 1.1 \text{ ng/ml}$) and MMP3 ($[c] = 0.5$
319 ng/ml) [14]. MBL2 has also been described in to reside in a complex with the serine protease MASP
320 (MBL-associated serine protease) [31], and its collagen-like domain may serve as a substrate for
321 matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs) to nest in. Studies on MBL mutations suggest that MMPs may be
322 involved in physiological regulation of MBL levels [32]. This could eventually explain the presence of
323 MBL2-MMP3 complexes in plasma.

324 **Conclusion**

325 In summary, this study describes a resource that was built from our interest in the verification of
326 antibodies selectivity in plasma. The antibodies analyzed in this study include polyclonal and
327 monoclonal that was used for exploratory bead arrays and the development of immunoassays, where
328 either heat-treated or untreated plasma may serve as samples. We have conducted > 400 IP assays in
329 plasma and built a library of proteins with their frequencies of identification in plasma. Constructed on

330 the systematic analysis of 157 antibodies, we described the occurrence of common proteins, denoted
331 plasma background, which allowed us to determine the selectively captured endogenous plasma
332 proteins by mean of z-scores analysis. Our approach, which we also compared with Western blot
333 (**Supplementary note 5** and **Supplementary Table 1**), could serve as a valuable method to narrow
334 large numbers of antibodies determining which ones could enrich the endogenous protein of interest
335 and to further investigate assay selectivity as well as proteins interactions.

336

337 This concept may though not yet elucidate (i) if the antibodies bind to proteins at full-length or
338 fragments, (ii) if the antibodies will be functional in pairs in sandwich assay, (iii) how potential protein
339 interactors and off-targets would compete with on-target binding, (iv) how contaminations from
340 passenger antigens affect the assay's selectivity and sensitivity. For ON-target and CO-target
341 antibodies, thus further investigations are required to clarify the technical aspects mentioned above and
342 to expand on the biological implication of protein interactions in plasma. Nevertheless, pIP is an
343 informative first test for the identification of pair antibodies with different target proteins to study
344 protein complexes in plasma by sandwich assays. While, targeted fit-for-purpose experiment should
345 then include dose response curve in dilutions of plasma, preferentially coupled to quantitative mass
346 spectrometry analysis for a set of identified peptides including potential co-targets and/or
347 contaminants.

348

349 The provided resource builds one foundation towards a more detailed assessment of antibodies for
350 plasma proteomics assays, and may contribute to the development and application of more specific,
351 robust and reliable immunoassays that can use mass spectrometry or other means of detection [1].

352

353

354 **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

355 Methods are available in the online version of the paper.

356 **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS**

357 CF and JMS initiated, designed, and led the study with the scientific contribution and support from all
358 co-authors. CF designed the IP experiments and performed the data analysis. CF, SB, LSR and MI
359 executed the IP experiments with support from DT and RMB. LSR conducted the immunoassays. JL
360 provided MS infrastructure. The study was supervised by PN, JL and JMS. CF and JMS wrote the
361 manuscript with input from all authors.

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376 **COMPETING FINANCIAL INTERESTS**

377 The authors have no conflicts of interest.

378

379

380 **ABBREVIATIONS:**

381	HPA	Human Protein Atlas
382	LFQ	label free quantification
383	PrEST	Protein Epitope Signature Tags
384	Z	z-score
385	<i>f</i>	frequency of occurrence

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388

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501

FIGURES & TABLES

Figure 1A: Workflow and study overview: A set of 157 antibodies targeting 120 genes were covalently coupled to magnetic beads and incubated one-by-one with EDTA plasma. Two to four replicate incubations were performed for each antibody. Following target enrichment, washing and digestion on beads, the obtained data files from LC-MS were searched and normalized by MaxLFQ, z-score analysis was performed to rank proteins specifically enriched by each antibody. Using the resource generated by > 400 IP assays, antibodies were classified based on their enrichment profiles: (1) ON-TARGET, only the target protein was enriched showing a z-score $\times 3$; (2) CO-TARGET, the target protein was enriched together with other proteins also associated to a z-score $\times 3$; (3) OFF-TARGET, only proteins other than the expected target were enriched; as well as (4) NO-TARGET, in case no protein was enriched (z-scores < 3).

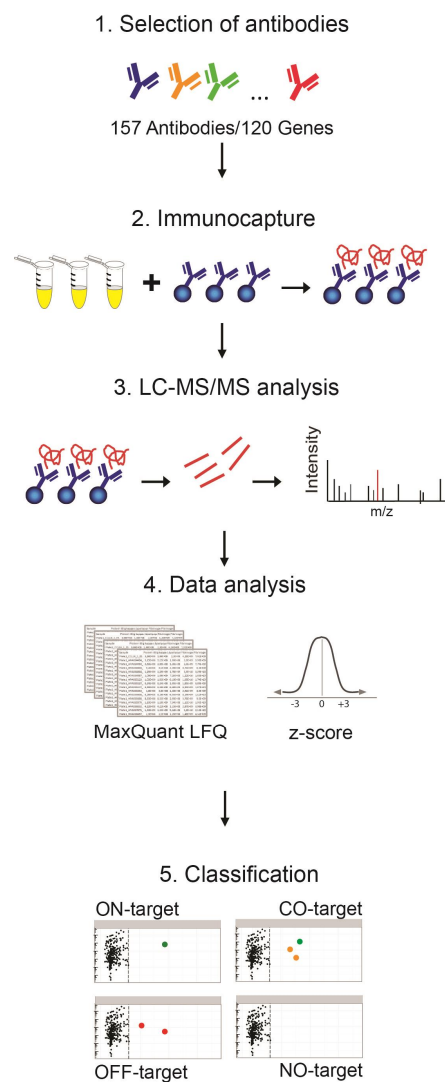


Figure 1B: Distribution of antigen annotation. The target proteins of the 157 antibodies were grouped as: Plasma by MS, were identified in plasma previously by mass spectrometry as reported by Peptide Atlas. Cellular and Extracellular were assigned according to Gene Ontology classification (see Materials and Methods). Numbers stated inside the pie chart refer to the number of antibodies (Abs) in the category and corresponding number of target proteins..

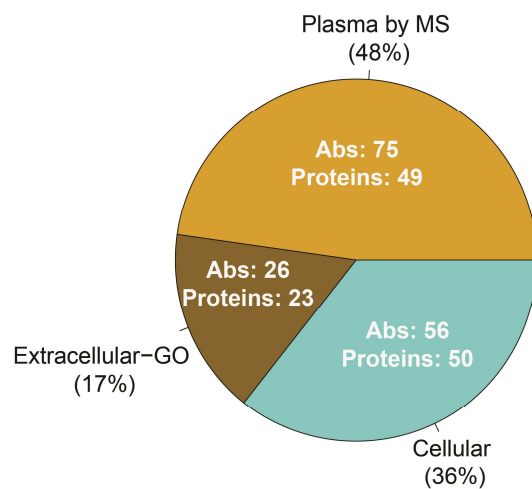


Figure 1C: Distribution of frequencies of identification. The proteins obtained from assays conducted in heat-treated (red) vs untreated plasma (black) were collected in terms of the number of times they were observed in the IP-MS data. For both sample types, the majority of the 1313 proteins were found in less than 20% of the IPs.

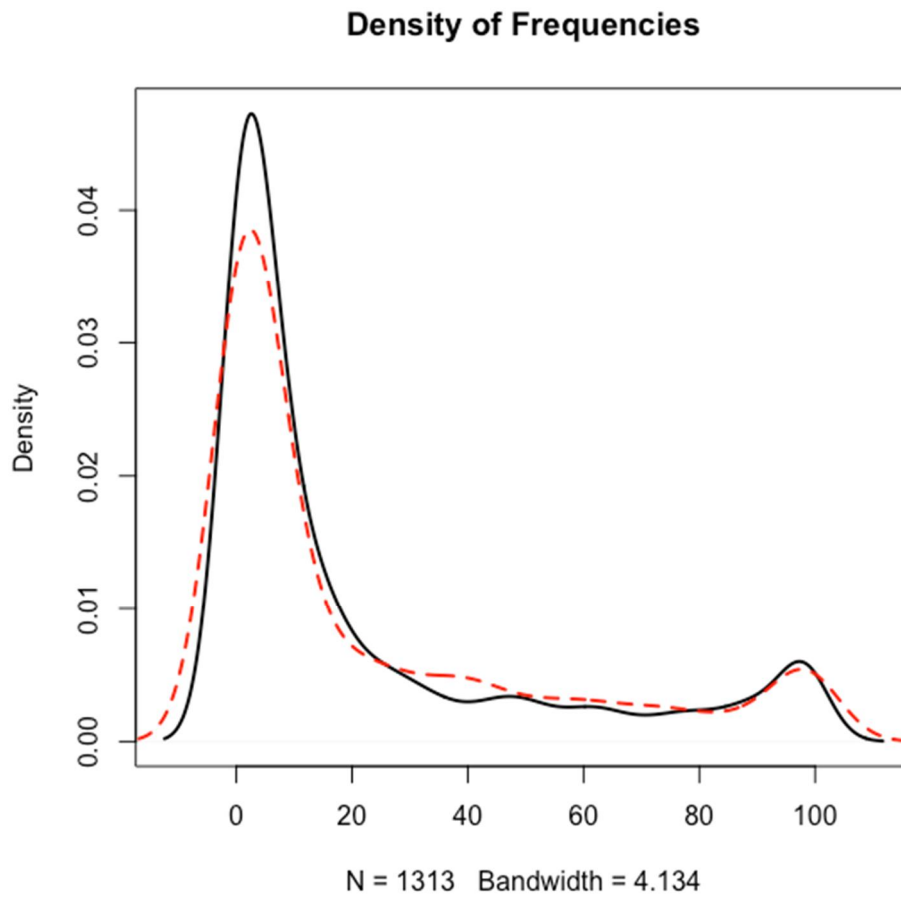


Figure 1D: Frequency vs Concentration. Estimated concentrations in PeptideAtlas were compared between frequent (>20%) and less frequent (<20) protein identifications.

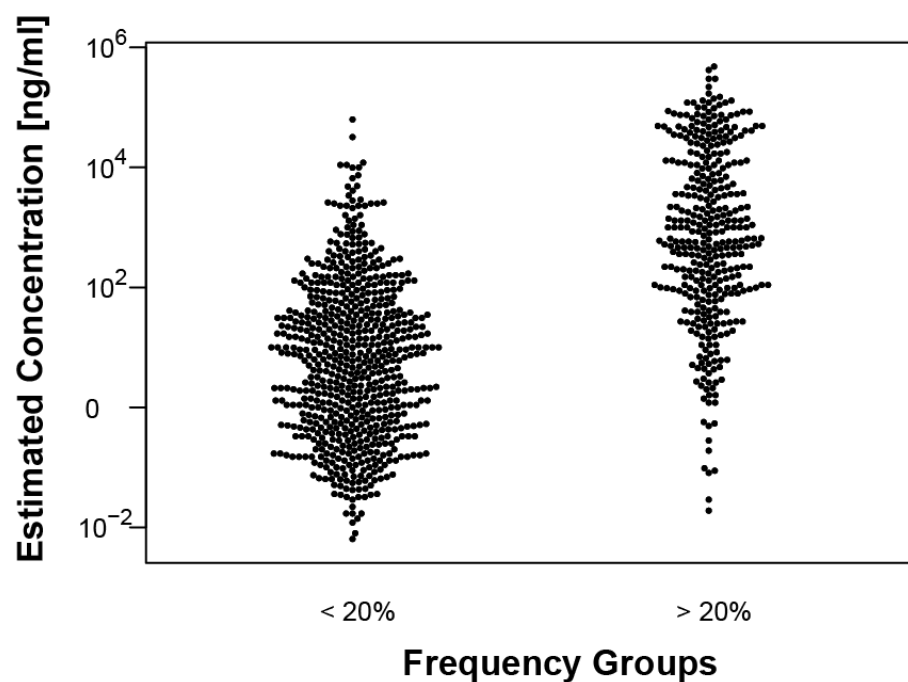


Figure 2: Frequency correlation. The relation between the frequency percentages of protein occurrence in IPs performed with heat-treated and untreated plasma is shown. The red line represents the line of identity.

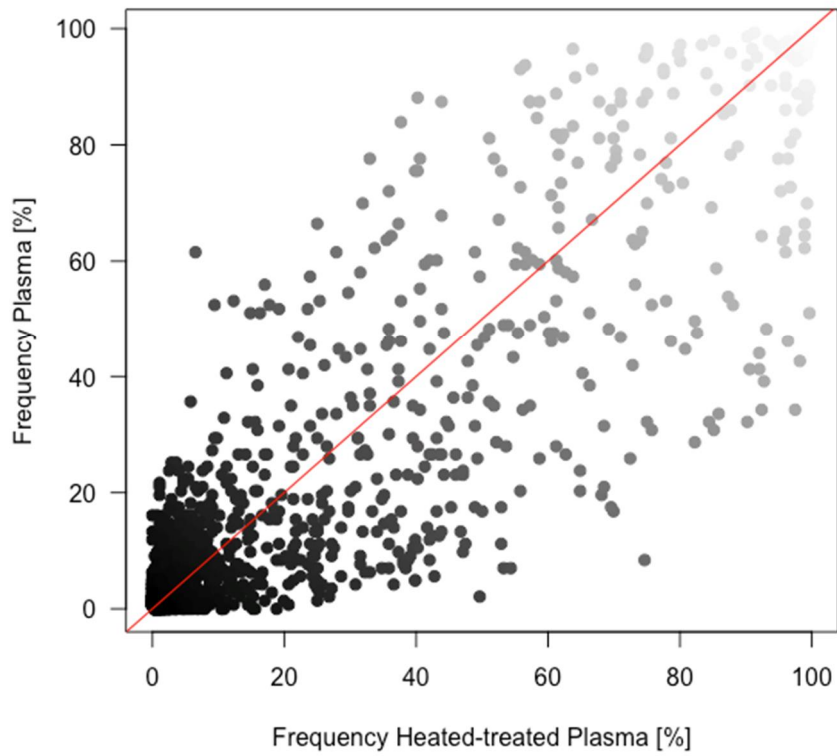


Figure 3 B: Paired antibodies and co-enrichment profiles. The z-score/LFQ intensity plots of paired antibodies raised against IGFBP2 are shown for HPA004754, HPA045140, HPA077723. (H+) refers to heat treated plasma and (H-) to untreated plasma. IGF2 was identified as P01344, and P01344-2 (*).

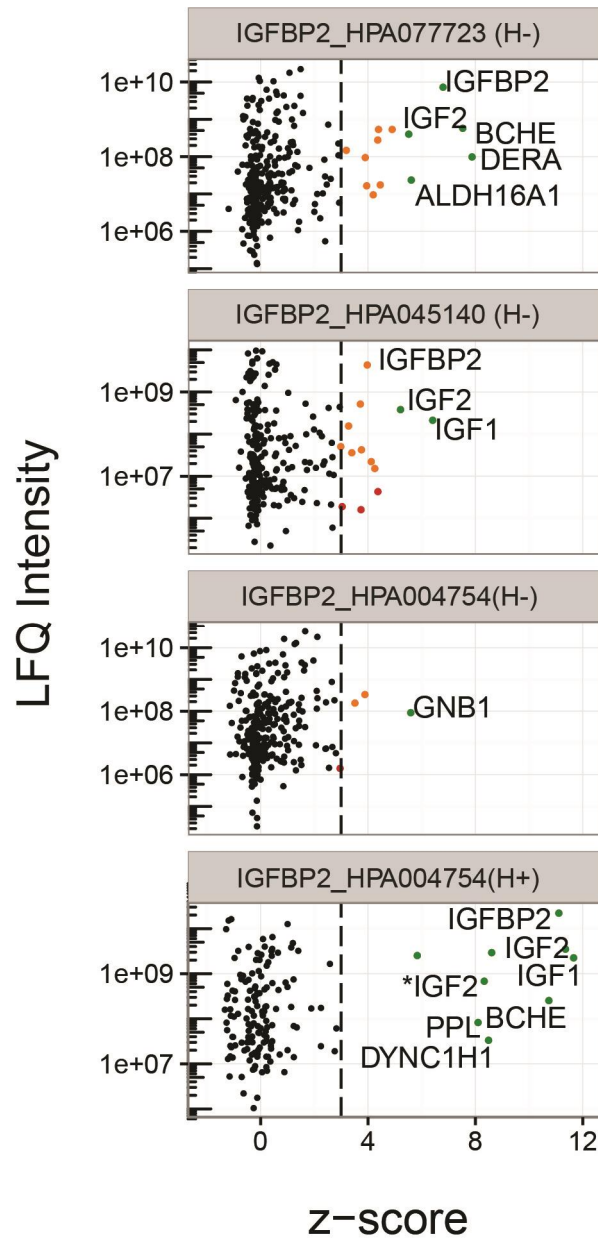


Figure 4:IGFBP2 protein interaction analysis by sandwich immunoassay. Dilution curves of plasma analyzed by sandwich assays using different combination of capture and detection antibodies. Dots represents mean value with standard error (SD) bars. In black, heated plasma (H+); in gray,non-heated plasma (H-).

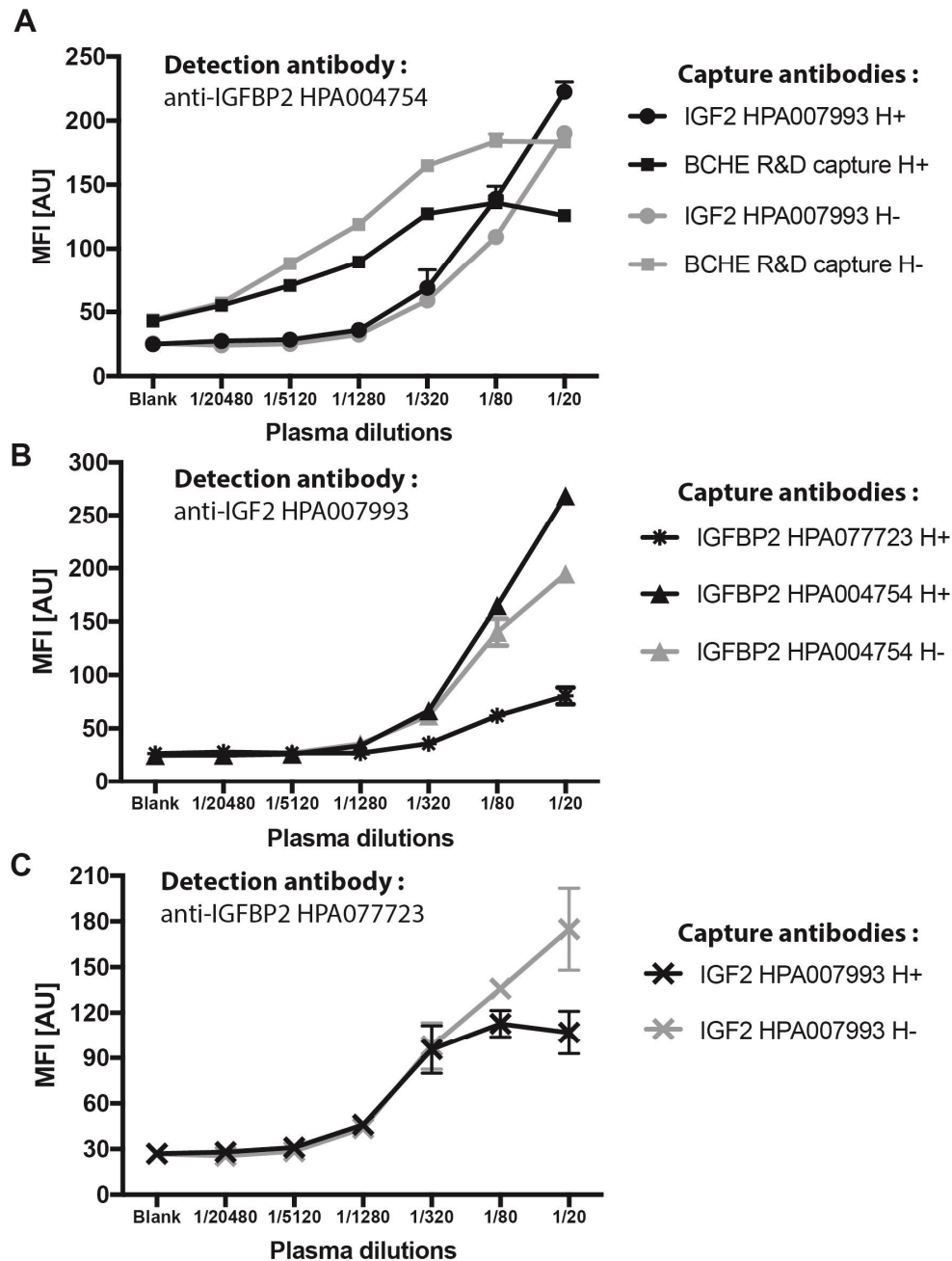


Table 1: Annotation and categorization and of antibodies.

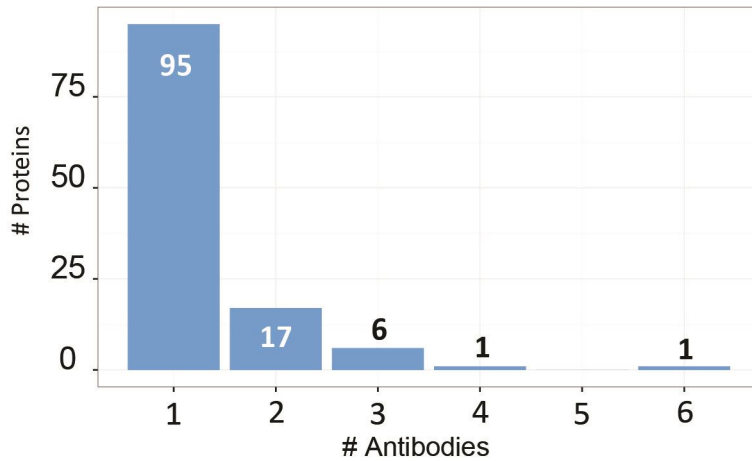
Annotated target location	On/Co-Target		Off/No-Target		Sum	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cellular	15	27	41	73	56	36
Extracellular	9	34	17	65	26	16
Plasma (MS)	46	61	29	39	75	48
Total	70	45	87	55	157	100

Table 2: Antibody pairs tested in plasma and with recombinant proteins. Annotation (✓): Trends from sample dilution assays were obtained with at least one combination of antibodies for the same protein either in heated or untreated samples. Annotation (-): No sample concentration dependent data was obtained. (Details regarding each single pair in Supplementary Excel Sheet δ Reagents_Lot_Numbers δ , catalog numbers of the functional pairs are indicated in **Figure 4** and **Supplementary Figure 10**.)

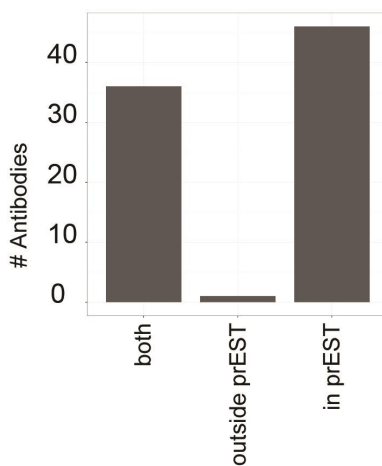
SAMPLE	DETECTION ANTIBODY	CAPTURE ANTIBODIES				
		anti-IGFBP2	anti-IGF2	anti-BCHE	anti-IGF1	anti-DEIRA
Plasma	anti-IGFBP2	✓	✓	✓	-	-
	anti-IGF2	✓	✓	-	-	-
	anti-BCHE	-	-	✓	-	-
	anti-IGF1	-	-	-	✓	-
	anti-DEIRA	-	-	-	-	-
Rec-IGFBP2	anti-IGFBP2	✓	-	-	-	-
Rec-IGF2	anti-IGF2	-	-	-	-	-
Rec-BCHE	anti-BCHE	-	-	✓	-	-
Rec-IGF1	anti-IGF1	-	-	-	-	-

SUPPLEMENTARY FIGURES & TABLES

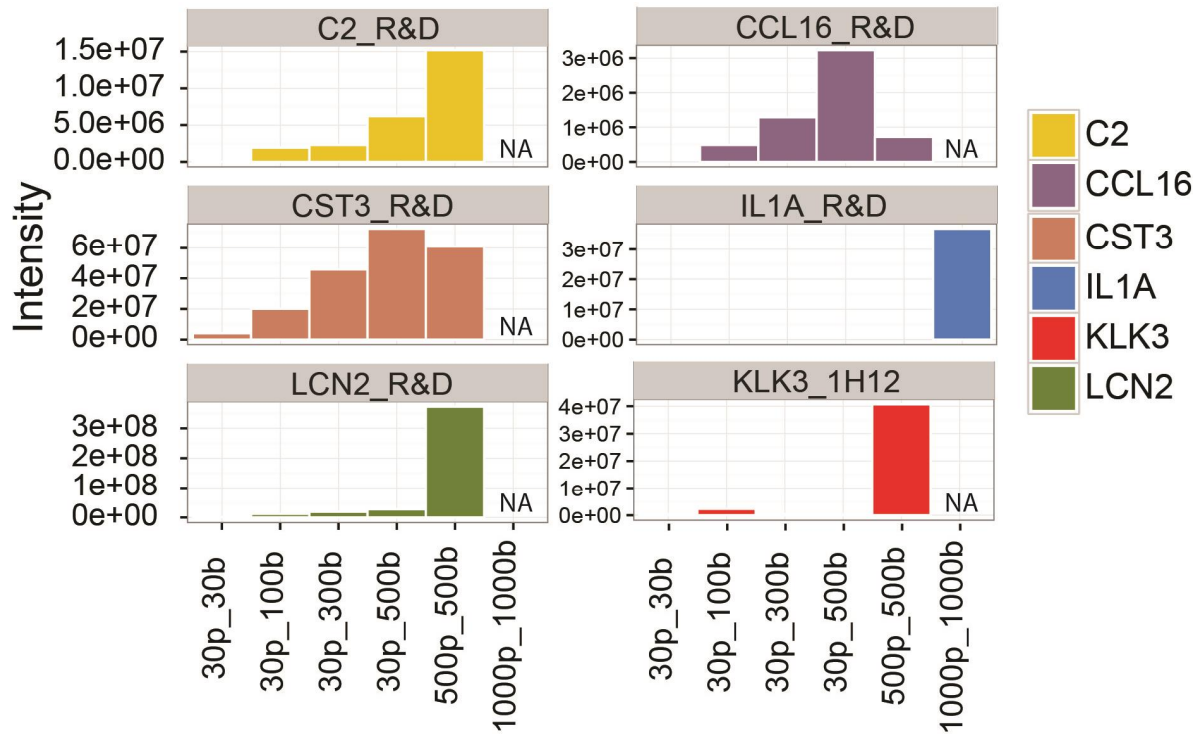
Supplementary Figure 1A: Distribution of number of antibodies targeting each protein.



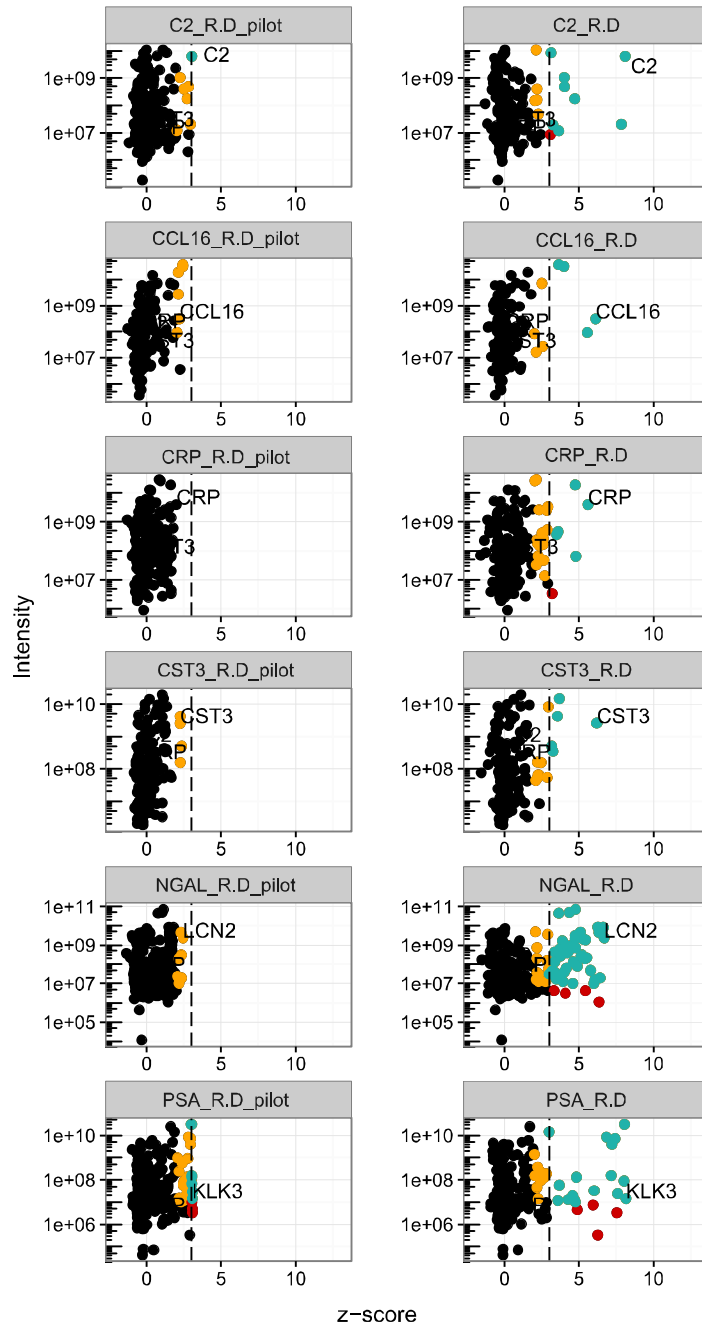
Supplementary Figure 1B: Coverage of proteins identified. Distribution of ON-target and CO-target antibodies based on the peptides identified for the intended target: peptides only covering the PrEST sequence (in PrEST), peptides not covering the PrEST (outside PrEST) or peptides identified inside and outside PrEST sequence (both).



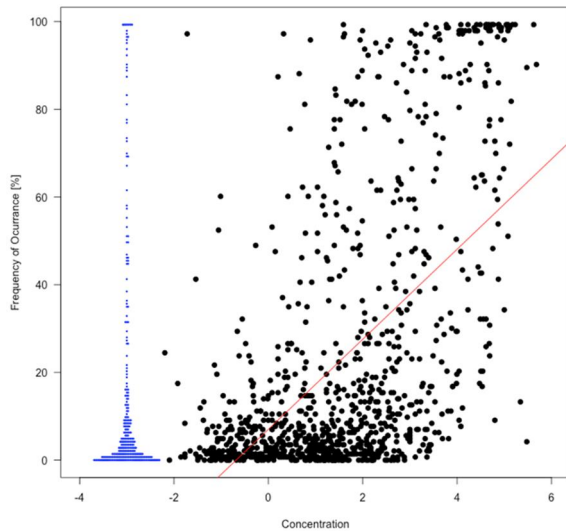
Supplementary Figure 2A: Optimization of experimental and technical conditions. Commercial antibodies targeting known plasma proteins of different abundance (C2, CCL16, CST3, IL1A, KLK3, LCN2) were used to establish optimal experimental conditions for volume of plasma and number of beads coupled to antibody. ϕ =volume of plasma in μ L; β = number of coupled beads (500000b = 1.6 μ g of antibody).



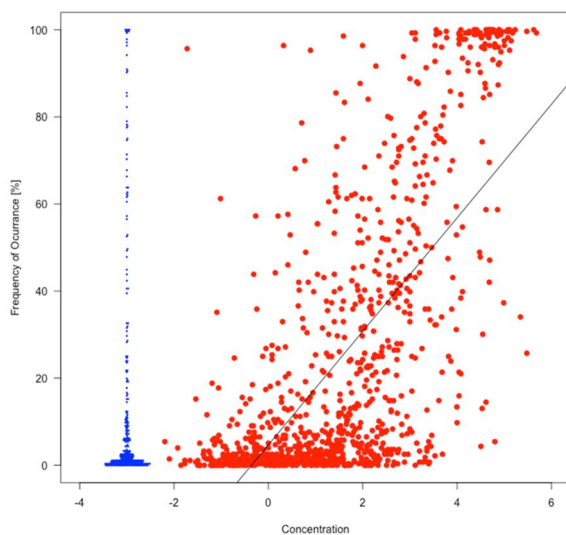
Supplementary Figure 2B: Effect of library size. Data derived from IP assays with antibodies targeting the plasma proteins of C2, CCL16, CRP, CST3, NGAL and KLK3 (PSA) was analyzed using the pilot library limited to only these 21 IPs (left column, pilot) as well as the library of more than 400 IP (right). In this experiment, 100 μ l of plasma and 500,000 beads were applied.



Supplementary Figure 3 A: Relation between estimated plasma concentration [ng/ml] and frequency [%] for untreated plasma. Blue dots represent proteins for which estimated values of concentration were not present in PeptideAtlas.

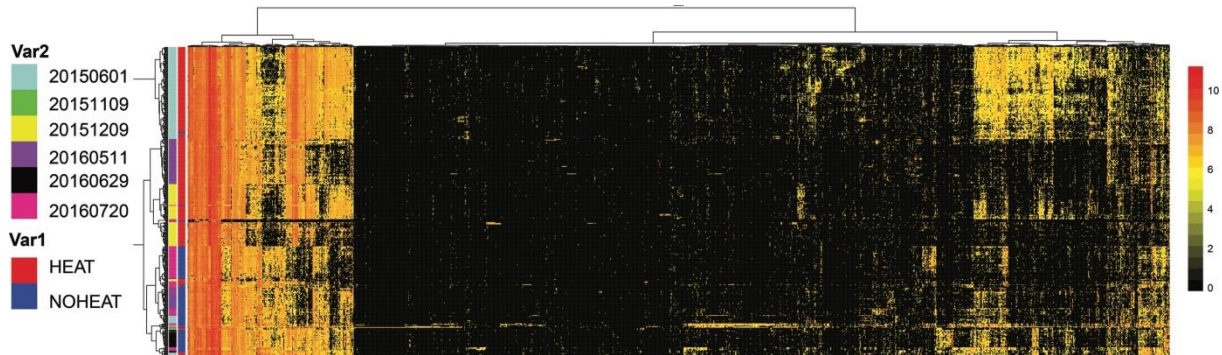


Supplementary Figure 3 B: Relation between estimated plasma concentration [ng/ml] and frequency [%] for heat-treated plasma. Blue dots represent proteins for which estimated values of concentration were not present in PeptideAtlas.

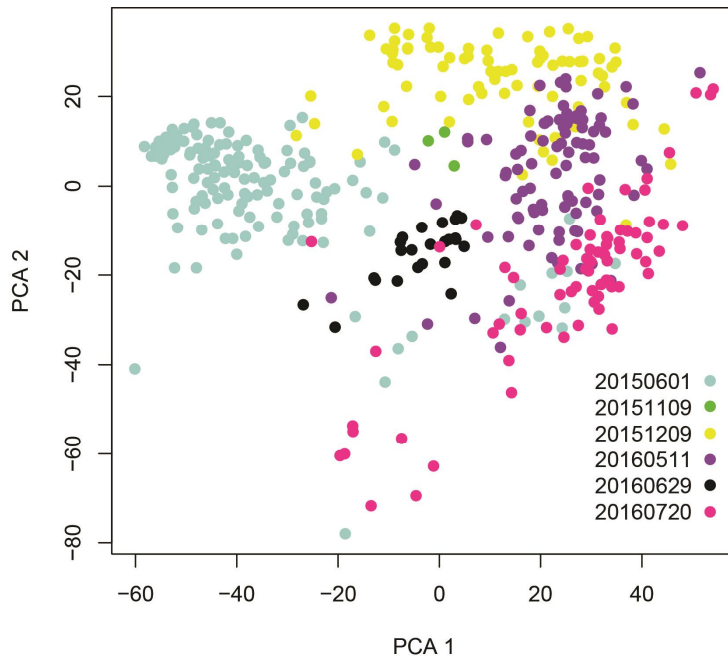


Supplementary Figure 4 Evaluation of contaminant proteins identified by pIPs and comparison of experimental batches.

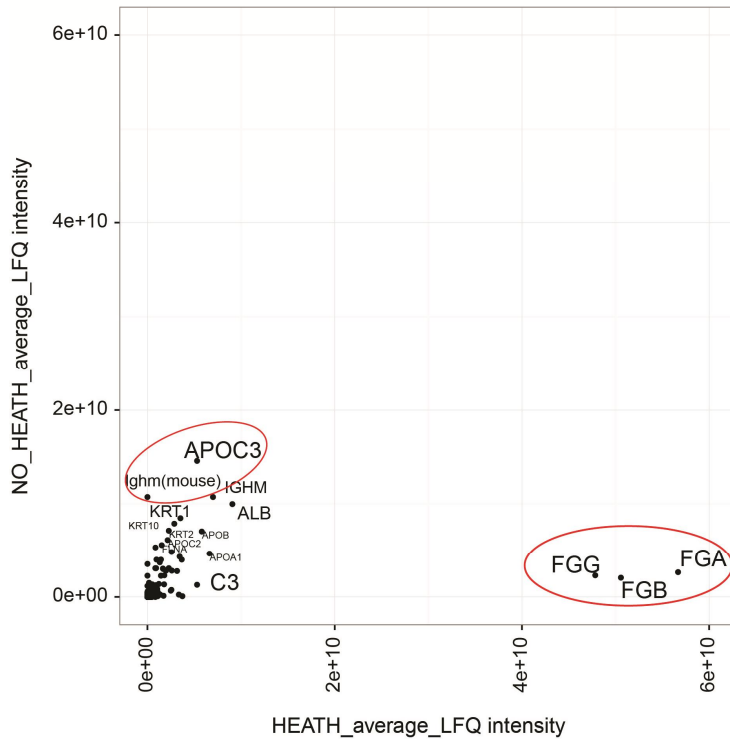
Supplementary Figure 4 A: Two ways hierarchical clustering analysis of the proteins identified in 414 immunoprecipitations. Clustering distance: "euclidean"; Clustering method: Ward. Cluster bars represent (1) different experimental batches and (2) sample heat treatment.



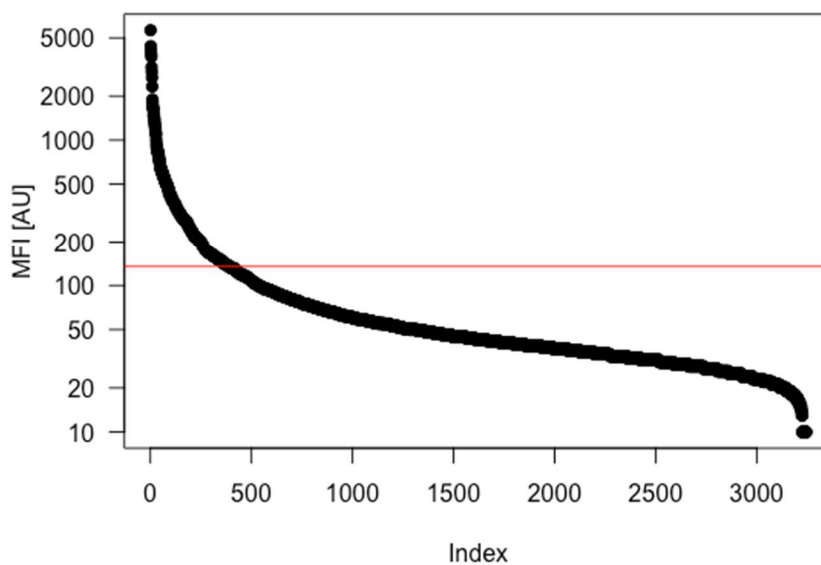
Supplementary Figure 4 B: Representation of principal component analysis (PCA) with dots colors indicating the experimental batches.



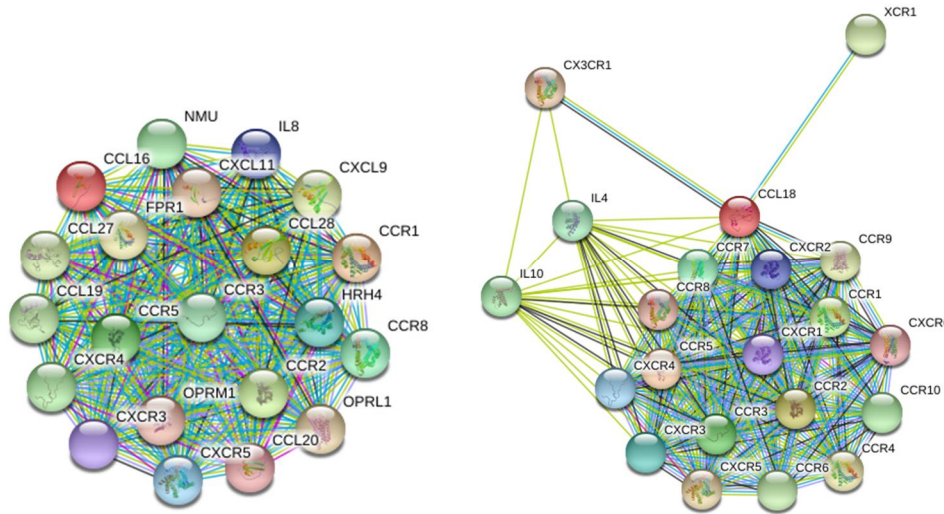
Supplementary Figure 5. Comparison of LFQ protein intensities for IMS performed in heat treated versus in not heat treated plasma. Circled in red high abundant plasma proteins which abundance in the background increases when plasma is heat treated.



Supplementary Figure 6: Ranked distribution of the detection of passenger antigens on antibody coupled beads.



Supplementary Figure 7A: Interaction networks of CCL16 and CCL18 taken from String database V10.5 (20 interactors, 1st shell only).



Supplementary Figure 7B: Sequence homology search of CCL16-CCL18 using CLUSTALO alignment revealed a 26.6% homology. In Yellow: Amino acidic sequence used as antigen in the generation of the antibody (PrEST).

CLUSTAL O(1.2.3) multiple sequence alignment

```

SP|O15467|CCL16_HUMAN MKVSEAAALSLVLVLIITSASRSQPKVPEWVNTPSTCCLKYYEKVLPRLVVGYRK-ALN 59
SP|P55774|CCL18_HUMAN MKGLAAA--LLVLVCTMALC-----SCAQVGTNKELCCLVYTSWQIPQKFIVDYSETSPQ 53
** ** *****: :: . . . . . *** * . :*:::*.* : : :

SP|O15467|CCL16_HUMAN CHLPAIIFVTKRNREVCTNPNDWVQEYIKDPNLPPLPTRLNLSTVKIITAKNGQPQLNS 119
SP|P55774|CCL18_HUMAN CPKPGVILLTKRGRQICADPNKKWVQKYISDLKLN----- 89
* * .:.*:***.*:.*:.*:***.*:.*:.*:
    
```

SP|O15467|CCL16_HUMAN Q 120
 SP|P55774|CCL18_HUMAN -

Supplementary Figure 7G: Sequence homology search of MMP1-MBL2 using CLUSTALO alignment revealed a 10.33 % homology. CLUSTAL. In Yellow: Amino acidic sequence used as antigen in the generation of the antibody(PrEST).

CLUSTAL O(1.2.4) multiple sequence alignment

```
SP|P03956|MMP1_HUMAN MHSFPPLLLLLFWGVVSHSF PATLETQEQDVDLVQKYLEKYYNLKNDRQVEKRRNSGPV 60
SP|P11226|MBL2_HUMAN MSLFPSLPLLL-LSMVAASYSETVTCEDAQKTCPA----- 34
* ** * *** .:* : * : : :

SP|P03956|MMP1_HUMAN VEKLEKQMQEFFFGLKVTGKPDAAETLKVVMKQPRCGVPDVAQFVLTEGNPRWEQTHLTYRIEN 120
SP|P11226|MBL2_HUMAN -----VIACSSPFGINGFPGKDGRD----- 53
* . * : * . : * .

SP|P03956|MMP1_HUMAN YTPDLPRADV DHAIEKAFQLWSNVTPLETF TKVSEGGADIMISFVRGDHRDNSPF DGP GGN 180
SP|P11226|MBL2_HUMAN -----G TKG EKGE PG-----QGLRGLQGP PGK 75
** . : * : . : . : : * * *

SP|P03956|MMP1_HUMAN LAHAFQPGP-----GIGGDAHFD EDERW TNNFREYNLHRVAAHELGHSLG 225
SP|P11226|MBL2_HUMAN LGPPGNPGPSGSPGPKGQKGDGPKSPDGDSSLAASERKALQTEMARIKKWLT FSLGKQVG 135
* . : *** . . * : : . * * : : . : : : : * * * : : *

SP|P03956|MMP1_HUMAN LSHSTDIGALMYP SYTFSGDVQLAQDDIDG IQAIYGRSQNPVQPIGPQTPKACDSKLTFD 285
SP|P11226|MBL2_HUMAN NKFFLTNGEIMT-----FEKV KALCVKF---QASV-----ATPRNA AEN---G 172
.. * : * : : : : : : * * ** : . : .

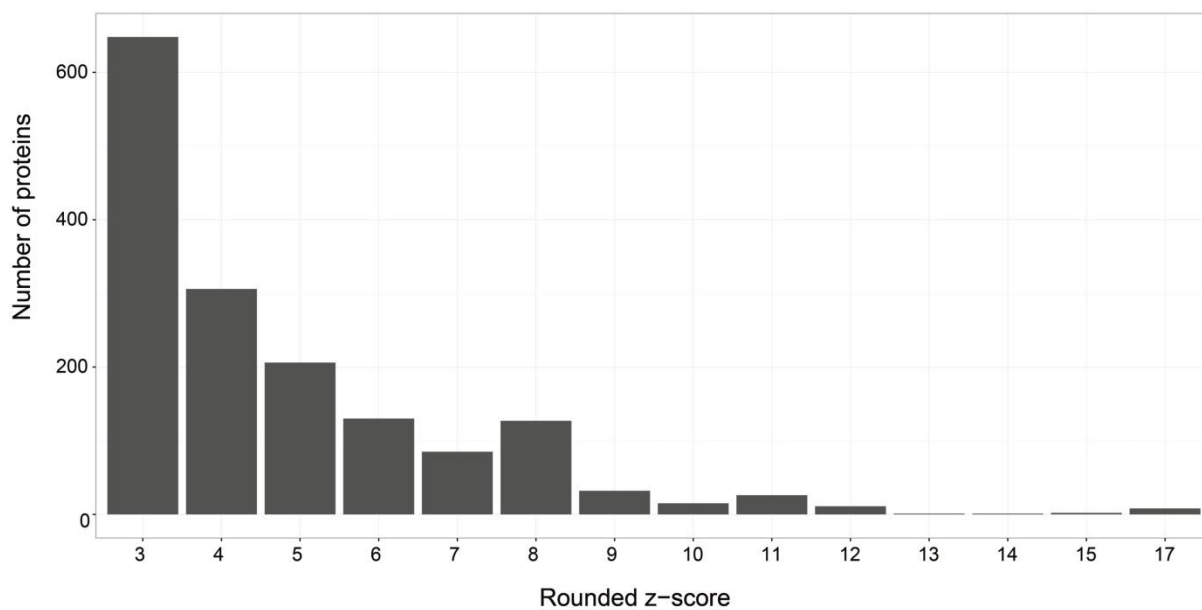
SP|P03956|MMP1_HUMAN AIT TIRGEVMFFKDRFYMRTNPFYFEVELNFISVFWPQLPNGLEAAYEFADRDEVRFFKG 345
SP|P11226|MBL2_HUMAN AIQNLIKEEAFLGITDEKTEGQFVDLTGNRLTYTNWNEGEP---NNAGSDEDCVLLL-K 227
** . : * * : . * . . : . * : : * . * * : :

SP|P03956|MMP1_HUMAN NKYWAVQGNV LHGYPKDIYSSFGFPRTVKHIDAALSEENTGKTYFFVANKYWR YDEYKR 405
SP|P11226|MBL2_HUMAN NGQWNDVPCSTS-----HLAVCEFP I----- 248
* * . : * *

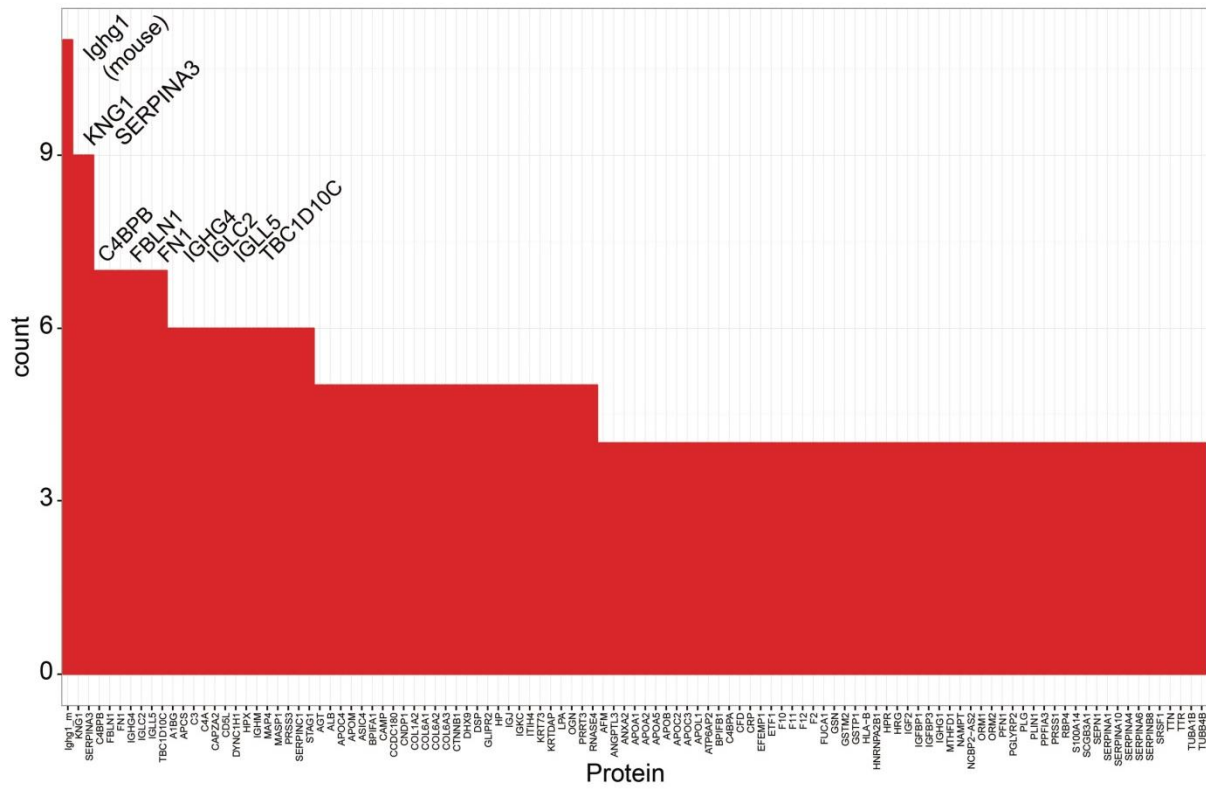
SP|P03956|MMP1_HUMAN SMDPGYPKMI AHDFPGIGHKVD AVFMKDGFFYFFHGT RQYKFDPKTKRIL TLQKANSWFN 465
SP|P11226|MBL2_HUMAN -----

SP|P03956|MMP1_HUMAN CRKN 469
SP|P11226|MBL2_HUMAN -----
```

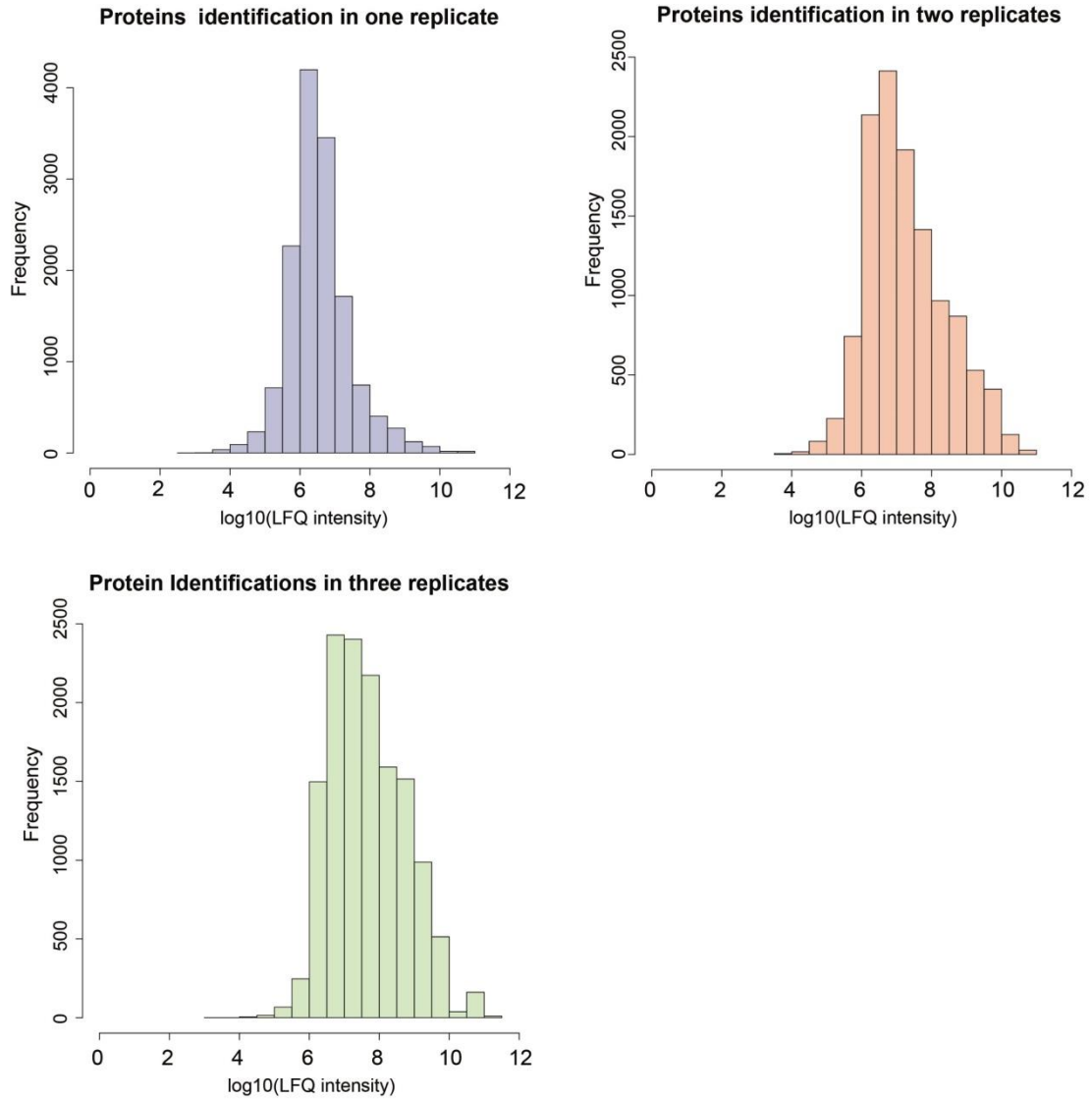
Supplementary Figure 8. Bar plot representation of the number of proteins to which a z-score $\times 3$ was assigned. Values of z-scores were rounded.



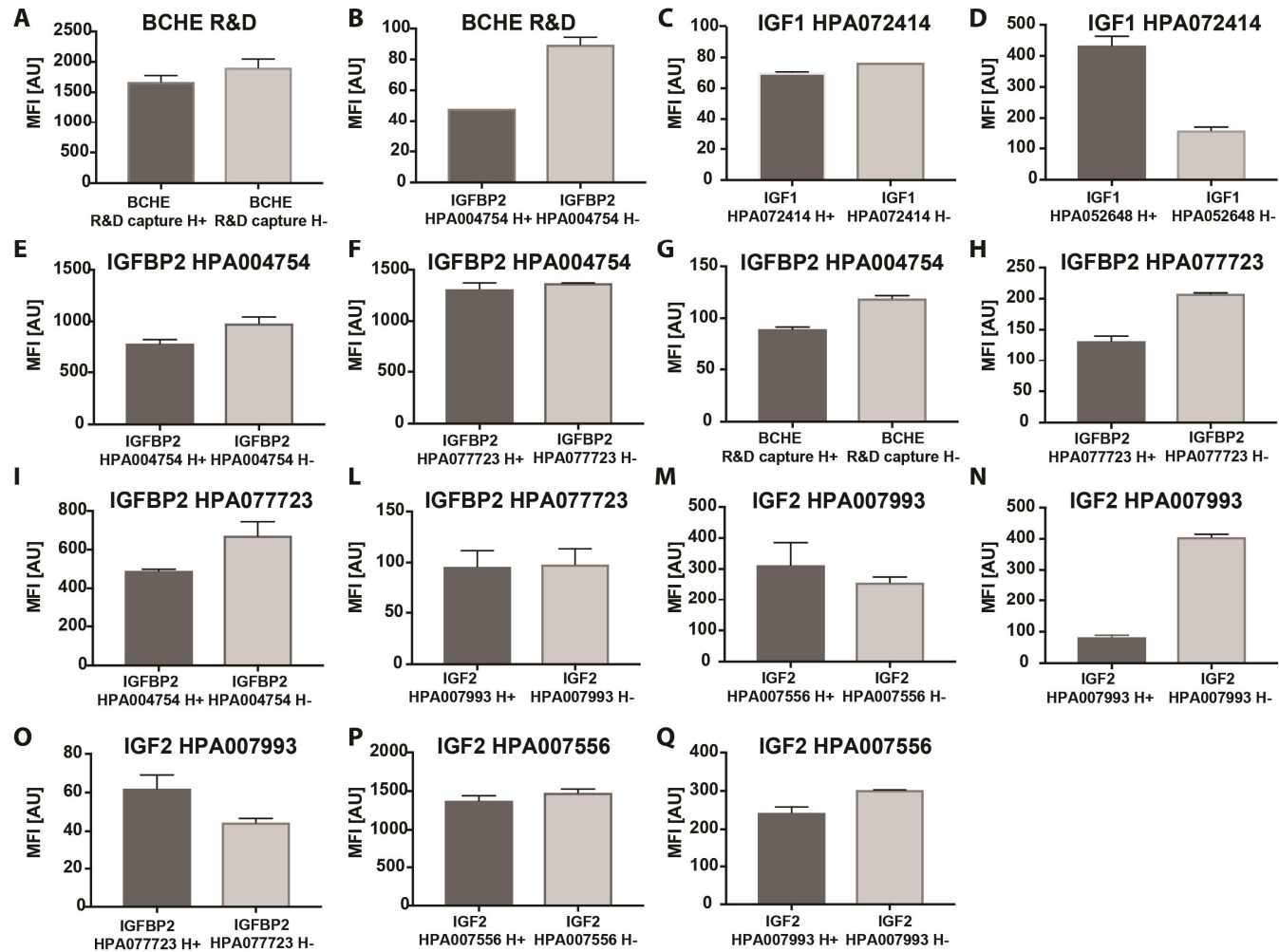
Supplementary Figure 9: Bar plot representation of proteins identified as co-targets for more than 3 antibodies.



Supplementary Figure 10. Defining a LFQ cut-off base on the Distribution of LFQ intensities associated to proteins identified (A) in a single; (B) duplicate and (C) in triplicate experiments.



Supplementary Figure 11 Combinations of antibodies were tested in plasma. The MFI values of the corresponding pair of antibodies indicated for the EC50 plasma concentration. Headers of the plots indicate the detection antibody and on the x axis is the capture antibody. The data calculated is based on the mean values (\pm SD) of duplicate dilution curves. Dark grey (H+, heated plasma), Light grey (H-, untreated plasma).



Supplementary Table 1. Comparison of validation rate by pIPs and WB for 104 antibodies assessed previously in plasma by WB. An antibody was considered passed by WB if scored 1,2 or 3, according to the Human Protein Atlas project.

Method	Plasma (MS)/Extracellular	Cellular	Sum
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Pass by pIPs + WB*	11 (19)	2 (4)	13 (13)
Pass only by WB	8 (13)	13 (29)	21(20)
Pass only by pIPs	20(34)	12 (29)	32 (31)
WB (Total)	19 (32)	15 (33)	
pIPs (Total)	32 (54)	15 (33)	
Failed by pIPs + WB*	20 (34)	18 (40)	38 (36)
Total*	59 (100)	45 (100)	104 (100)

SUPPLEMENTARY EXCEL TABLE

Description of content of each Sheet.

- Selected targets: Description of proteins for which antibodies were selected. (See Supplementary References 23-108)
- Protein Annotation (GO): Protein annotation using GO terms.
- Antibodies experim. annotations: Antibodies used in the study, annotations about experimental conditions and data of validation by pIP and WB
- Frequencies of identification: List of proteins identified in pIP experiments and their frequencies of identification in heat treated or not heat treated plasma.
- Batches Kruskal Wallis Test: p-values for differences in intensity levels detected the between batches
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- Reagents Catalogs_Lot_numbers: List of catalog and lot numbers for affinity reagents.
- Antibodies against same protein: proteins enriched by antibodies raised against the same target protein, using same or different protein fragments.

1 MATERIAL AND METHODS

2 2.1 Sample collection.

3 Human EDTA plasma from a pool of individuals (50% females) was obtained from Seralab (Sera
4 Laboratories International Ltd). Aliquots of plasma (0.5 mL) were stored in cryogenic vials at -80°C
5 and thawed at 4°C before use.

6 2.2 Target selection

7 Information about target proteins their functions and involvement in diseases were collected through
8 literature searches, Gene Ontology (GO, <http://www.geneontology.org/>), Human Protein Atlas (HPA,
9 <http://www.proteinatlas.org/>), and Early Detection Research Network (EDRN,
10 <https://edrn.nci.nih.gov/>). Plasma protein abundances were obtained from the 2017 built of the Plasma
11 PeptideAtlas ([1], www.peptideatlas.org). Proteins were classified using the following terms: (i)
12 Cellular or Extracellular, when the proteins appeared in one or more of the terms extracellular region
13 (GO:0005576); extracellular space (GO:0005615); extracellular exosome (GO:0070062);
14 proteinaceous extracellular matrix (GO:0005578); (see columns “GO CC Complete” and “Summary
15 of GO CC” in the Excel sheet “Protein Annotation GO”). The list of antibodies and information was
16 reported in Supplementary Excel Tables. The analysis included 157 antibodies. There were 15
17 monoclonal antibodies (10 from R&D Systems; 1 from HyTest Ltd.; 3 from Atlas Antibodies and 1
18 from SigmaAldrich) and 144 polyclonal antibodies from the Human Protein Atlas [2]. In addition,
19 normal rabbit IgG (Bethyl Laboratories), mouse IgG and rat IgG (both Santa Cruz Biotechnology)
20 were included as controls. Catalog and lot numbers are listed in Supplementary Excel Tables. For
21 antibodies obtained by the Human Protein Atlas, antibody IDs and lot numbers are the same.

22 2.3 Antibody coupling to magnetic beads.

23 Covalent coupling of antibody to magnetic beads (MagPlex, Luminex Corp.) was performed as
24 previously described [3]. Briefly beads were activated using sulfo-NHS (Sulfo-N-
25 hydroxysulfosuccinimide, Thermo) and ethyl-carbodiimide (EDC, both Thermo). Then 1,6 µg
26 antibodies diluted in MES buffer per 500 000 beads were incubated 2 h at room temperature, beads
27 were washed and stored in blocking buffer at 4 °C.

28 2.4 Immunocapture-mass spectrometry

29 Aliquots of EDTA plasma (Seralab) were diluted 1:10 in assay buffer containing 0.5% w/v PVA
30 (Sigma-Aldrich), 0.8% w/v PVP (Sigma-Aldrich), 0.1% w/v casein (Sigma-Aldrich) and 10 % of
31 rabbit IgG (Bethyl Laboratories, Inc.). Samples undergoing heat treatment were incubated for 30 min
32 at 56 °C in water bath, before being combined with beads and incubated overnight on a rotation shaker
33 at 23°C. For the final assessment of 153 antibodies 100 µl of crude plasma and 1,6 µg of antibody
34 couple to beads were applied in each incubation. On the next day, and using a magnetic bead handler
35 (KingFisher™ Flex Magnetic Particle Processors, Thermo Scientific), beads were separated from the

36 sample, washed with 0.03% Chaps in PBS and re-suspended in digestion buffer containing 50 mM
37 ammonium bicarbonate (Sigma-Aldrich) and 0.25% sodium deoxycholate (Sigma-Aldrich). Proteins
38 were reduced with 1 mM DTT (Sigma-Aldrich) at 56 °C for 30 min, and alkylated by iodoacetamide 4
39 mM (Sigma-Aldrich), at RT in the dark for 30 min. Alkylation was quenched adding 1 mM DTT.
40 Proteins were digested using a mixture of Trypsin and LysC at 1:25 trypsin-to-protein ratio (Promega,
41 USA) overnight at 37 °C. Enzyme inactivation and sodium deoxycholate precipitation was obtained
42 adding 0.005% TFA. Peptides in the supernatant were then separated from beads, dried and re-
43 suspended in solvent A containing 3% acetonitrile (ACN) and 0.1% formic acid (FA).

44 **LC-MS/MS.**

45 MS analysis was performed using a Q-Exactive HF (Thermo) operated in a data dependent mode,
46 equipped with an Ultimate 3000 RSLC nanosystem, Dionex). Samples were injected into a C18 guard
47 desalting column (Acclaim pepmap 100, 75 $\mu\text{m} \times 2$ cm, nanoViper, P/N 164535, Thermo) and then
48 into a 50 cm x 75 μm ID Easy spray analytical column packed with 2 μm C18 (EASY-Spray C18 P/N
49 ES803, Thermo) for RPLC. Elution was performed in a linear gradient of Buffer B (90% ACN, 5%
50 DMSO, 0.1% FA) from 3 % to 43% in 50 min at 250 nL/min. The proportion of Buffer B was
51 increased stepwise to 45% in 5 min, then to 99% in 2 min, and then held for 10 minutes. DMSO was
52 added Buffer A for the chromatography (90% water, 5% ACN, 5% DMSO, 0.1% FA). Full MS scan
53 (300-1600 m/z) proceeded at resolution of 60,000. Precursors were isolated with a width of 2 m/z and
54 listed for exclusion for 60 s. The top five most abundant ions were selected for higher energy collision
55 dissociation (HCD). Single and unassigned charge states were rejected from precursor selection. In
56 MS/MS, a max ion injection time of 250 ms and AGC target of 1E5 were applied.

57 **2.7 Data analysis**

58 Shotgun MS data search was performed on MaxQuant (v1.5.3.30) [4] using the integrated algorithm
59 MaxLFQ. Spectra were search against a human protein database from Uniprot (accessed on
60 03/17/2016, Canonical and Isoforms, 20,198 hits customized adding sequences of immunoglobulins
61 chain C from rabbit, rat and mouse, LysC (PSEAE) and Trypsin (PIG). Settings allowed for two
62 missing cleavages, methionine oxidation and N-term acetylation as variable modification and cysteine
63 carbamidomethylation as fixed modification. Fast LFQ and match between runs were applied, three
64 minimum number of neighbors, and six average number of neighbors. All the 414 raw data files
65 included in the analysis of 153 antibodies plus controls were analyzed in a single session, LFQ
66 intensity values obtained were used for the following analysis. We considered as contaminants:
67 proteins belonging to the list of contaminants in MaxQuant not belonging to Homo sapiens (Human),
68 Ig gamma chain C region from *Oryctolagus cuniculus* (Rabbit) because known to be in the dilution
69 buffer and Immunoglobulin variable chains belonging to Homo sapiens (Human), and excluded from
70 the z-score calculations. We considered missing values as missing not at random (MNAR) [5], but
71 missing because of concentrations below the limit of detection (LOD). We therefore used $\text{min} = 0$ as

72 minimum value detected of intensity (Single-value imputation approach). When calculating average
73 and standard deviation for each protein identified over the population of all experiments, missing
74 values of LFQ intensities were substituted to 1 to allow for log₁₀-transformation before two ways
75 hierarchical clustering and principal component analysis. For z-scores calculation, when duplicate and
76 triplicate experiments were available, we considered only proteins identified in all replicates for
77 further analyses, and calculated average of LFQ intensities. Proteins were considered enriched when
78 associated to a z-score ≥ 3 . To visualize the enriched proteins for each antibody, z-scores and LFQ
79 intensity values were used and proteins found above the set threshold were annotated accordingly.
80 Raw data produced to assess experimental conditions were analyzed using MaxQuant but excluding
81 the function for LFQ..

82 Data analysis and representation was performed on the environment for statistical computing and
83 graphics R [6]. Alignments between protein and prEST sequences was performed using the Clustal
84 Omega program available at EMBL-EBI [7]. GO enrichment system was performed using the
85 PANTHER Classification System (<http://pantherdb.org/>). Comparison of GO terms was conducted
86 using ToppCluster ([8]; <https://toppcluster.cchmc.org/>), regarding Bonferroni corrected p-values <
87 0.01 as significant.

88 **2.8 Sandwich Immunoassay**

89 The capture antibodies towards IGFBP2, IGF1, IGF2, DERA, BCHE, and rabbit-Immunoglobulin G
90 (rIgG) and mouse-IgG, as negative controls (**Supplementary Excel Table**, sheet: “Reagents Lot
91 numbers”), were covalently coupled to color-coded magnetic beads, A Suspension Bead Array (SBA)
92 was generated and analyzed in Luminex Platform as previously described [9], using an in house
93 protocol for labeling detection antibodies with biotin [10]. The antibodies were coupled to beads and
94 labeled in order to test each different combination of capture and detection antibody pairs listed in the
95 **Supplementary Excel Table**.

96 Plasma (EDTA Seralab, LOT#BRH1147432) was thawed on ice and centrifuged for 1 min at 2000
97 rpm, and diluted from 1:20 following 4-fold dilutions in PVX casein (PVXC) buffer 10% rIgG. The
98 dilution series consisted of 6 points in duplicate and were heated at 56°C for 30 min. Then, the plasma
99 was incubated with the SBA overnight. The same procedure was carried out with non-heated plasma
100 dilution series.

101 The recombinant proteins used were IGFBP2 and IGF1 were a kind gift from Hanna Tegel and Johan
102 Rockberg (AlbaNova University Center, KTH), IGF-II (R&D systems, catalog # 292-G2-050, lot
103 DS2416011) and BCHE (DuoSet kit R&D systems, Catalog # DY6137-05, lot # 1387842). The
104 dilution series of the proteins in buffer (PVXC 10% rIgG) consisted of 7 points prepared in duplicate
105 and heated at 56°C for 30 min before incubation with the SBA overnight. Non-heated protein dilution
106 series were also tested. The standard curves comprised different concentration ranges depending on

107 the protein of interest. IGFBP2 and IGF2 were diluted in buffer from 500 ng/mL following 3-fold
108 dilutions, IGF1 from 12000 pg/mL following 3-fold dilutions and BCHE 10000 pg/mL following 2-
109 fold dilutions.

110 The detection antibodies were applied at 1 μ g/mL (HPA antibodies) or 25 ng/mL (BCHE R&D
111 systems) for 90 min, and streptavidin- R-phycoerythrin (R-PE) conjugate (Life Technologies;
112 SA10044) was used for the fluorescence read out in FlexMap3D (Luminex Corp.).

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117 **SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES**

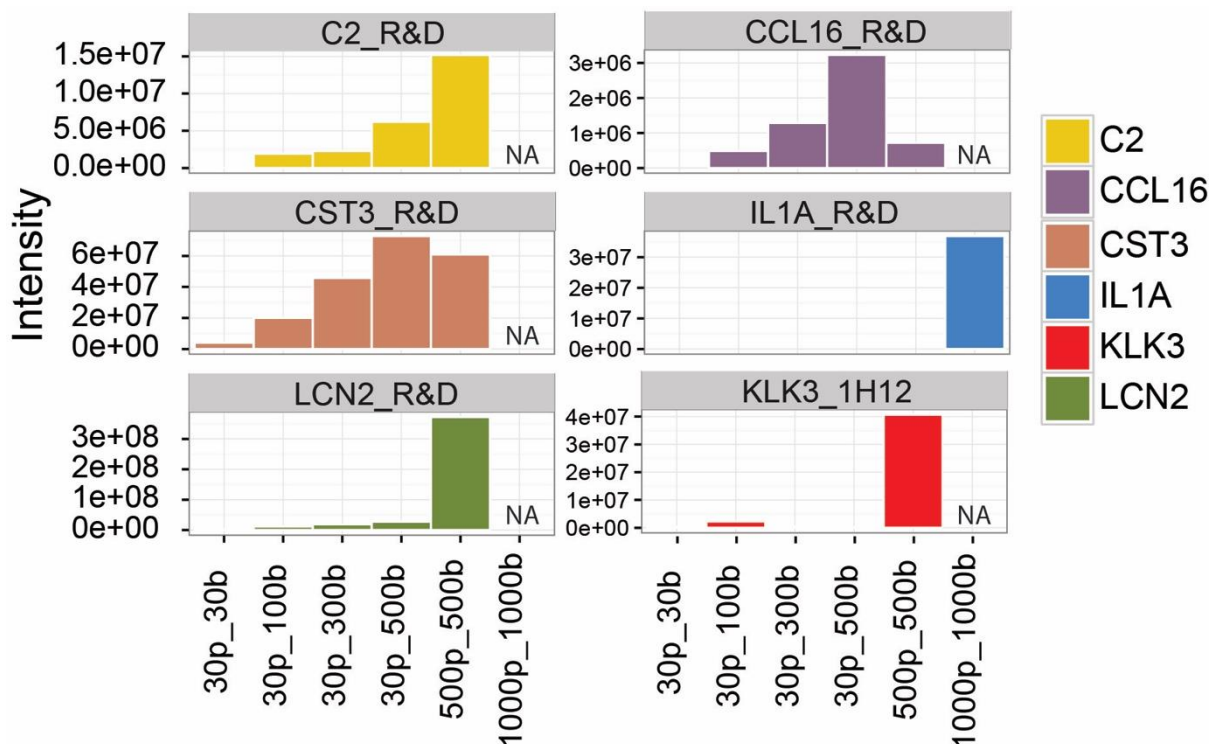
118 **Supplementary note 1: Optimization of experimental conditions and quality control**

119 Factors such as target protein concentration and properties of ionization of the peptides of interest
120 would ideally require optimized analysis for each antibody/target. Nevertheless, we began with
121 developing a procedure applicable to a broad range of antibodies and target proteins. In order to set up
122 optimal experimental conditions, we evaluated technical aspects such as volume of neat plasma
123 and amount of antibody. As expected, increasing the volume of plasma, peptides belonging to less
124 abundant proteins became detectable. For example interleukin 1 alpha (IL1A), with concentrations ~3
125 pg/mL in healthy human plasma [11], was detectable when 1 mL of plasma and 3.2 μ g of antibody
126 were applied (**Supplementary Figure 2A**). We established our protocol to enable the detection of
127 proteins in a range of concentrations from μ g/mL (C2) [12] to high pg/mL (KLK3) [13] [14-17]
128 (**Supplementary Figure 2B**).

129 **Supplementary Figure 2A: Optimization of experimental and technical conditions.**

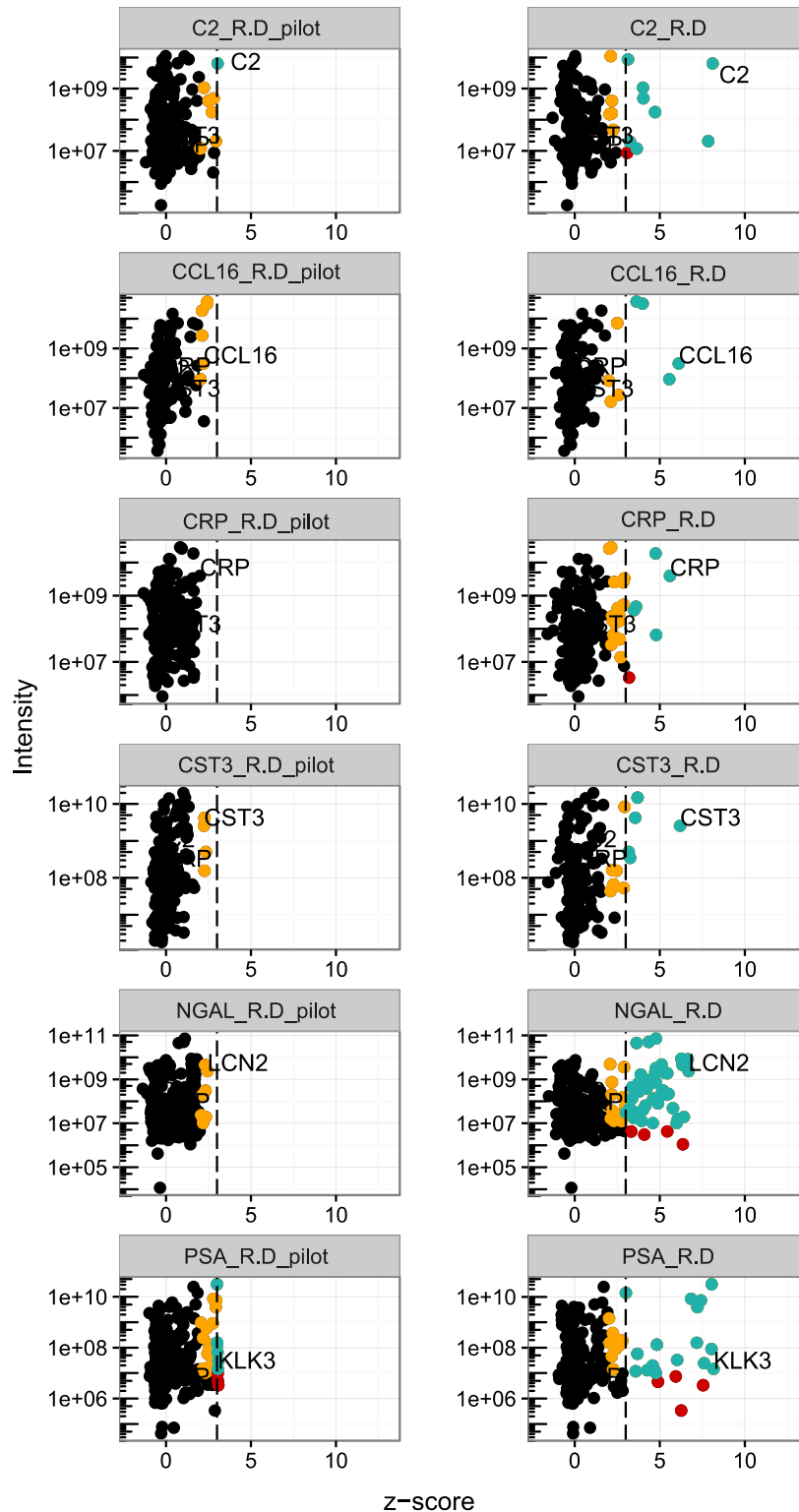
130 Antibodies targeting known plasma proteins of different abundance (C2, CCL16, CST3, IL1A, KLK3,
131 LCN2) were used to establish optimal experimental conditions for volume of plasma and number of
132 beads coupled to antibody. In the axis legends, 'p' refers to the volume of plasma in μ L; and 'b' to
133 number of coupled beads (e.g. 500b = 500,000 beads = 1.6 μ g of antibody).

134



135

136 **Supplementary Figure 2B: Effect of library size.** Data derived from IP assays with antibodies
137 targeting the plasma proteins of C2, CCL16, CRP, CST3, NGAL and KLK3 (PSA) was analyzed
138 using the pilot library limited to only these 21 IPs (left) as well as the library of more than 400 IP
139 (right). In this experiment, 100 μ l of plasma and 500,000 beads were applied.
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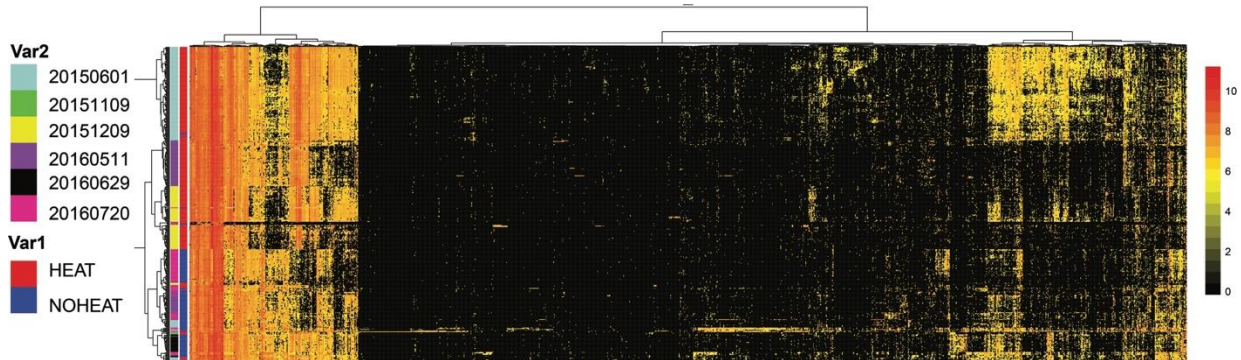
143 **Supplementary note 2: Batch effects**

144 We observed that independent IPs performed in the same batch clustered together (**Supplementary**
145 **Figure 3A**). Parameters varying between independent batches IPs include different lots of reference
146 plasma, trypsin, and analytical columns. Long-term drift in instrumental response, sample handling
147 and sample heat-treatment may also add additional variability. We found that the main difference
148 between the different assays was due to heat treatment of the samples. Indeed, despite experimental
149 batches, assays using either heat treated or untreated plasma clustered together (**Supplementary**
150 **Figure 4A-B**). For this reason, we decide to analyze IPs with heat treated and not heat-treated plasma
151 separately, in order to compare the enrichment profiles from the IPs with similar background.

152

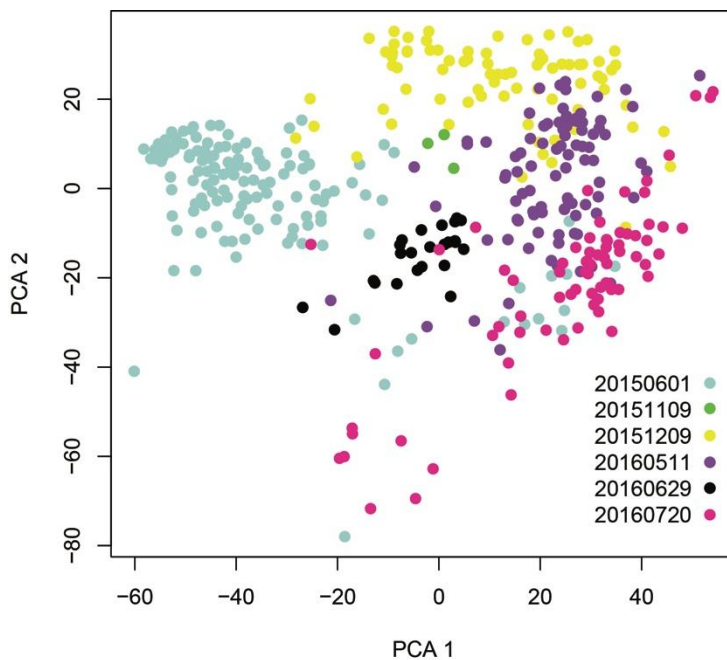
153

154 **Supplementary Figure 2A:** Two ways hierarchical clustering analysis of the proteins identified in
155 414 immunoprecipitations. Clustering distance: "euclidean"; Clustering method: Ward. Cluster lanes
156 left to the heat map represent (1) different experimental batches and (2) sample heat treatment. **(B)**
157 Representation of principal component analysis, dots colors highlight separated experimental batches.
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161 **Supplementary Figure 2B:** Representation of principal component analysis, dots colors highlight
162 separated experimental batches.

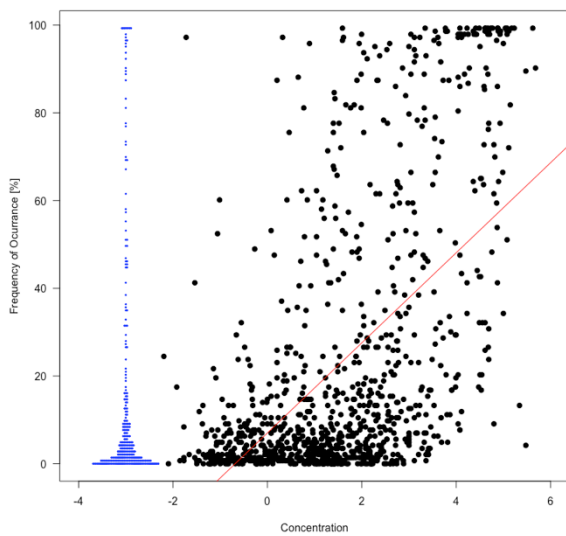


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168 **Supplementary note 3: Comparison of estimated plasma concentration and frequency**

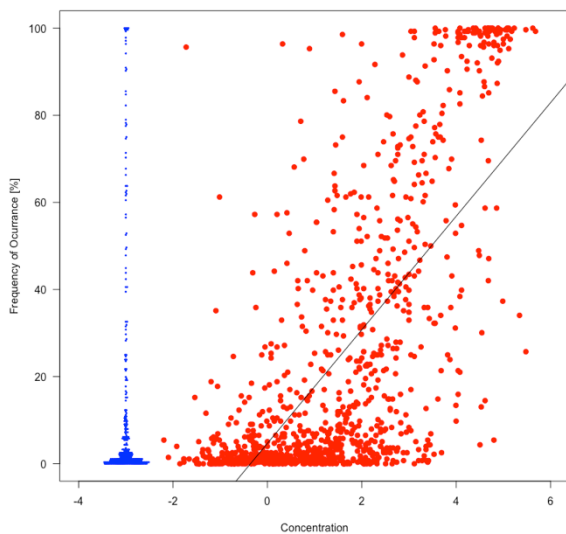
169 We investigated the relation between the frequency of occurrence of 1313 proteins in untreated plasma
170 (**Supplementary Figure 3A**) and heat-treated plasma (**Supplementary Figure 3B**) with the estimated
171 plasma concentration from PeptideAtlas. There was a significant association (p -value $< 2.2e-16$) for
172 both sample types while 293/1313 = 22% of the proteins (blue dots) were not found with a
173 concentration estimation in PeptideAtlas.

174 **Supplementary Figure 3 A:** Relation between estimated plasma concentration [ng/ml] and
175 frequency [%] for untreated plasma



176

177 **Supplementary Figure 3 B:** Relation between estimated plasma concentration [ng/ml] and
178 frequency [%] for heat-treated plasma.



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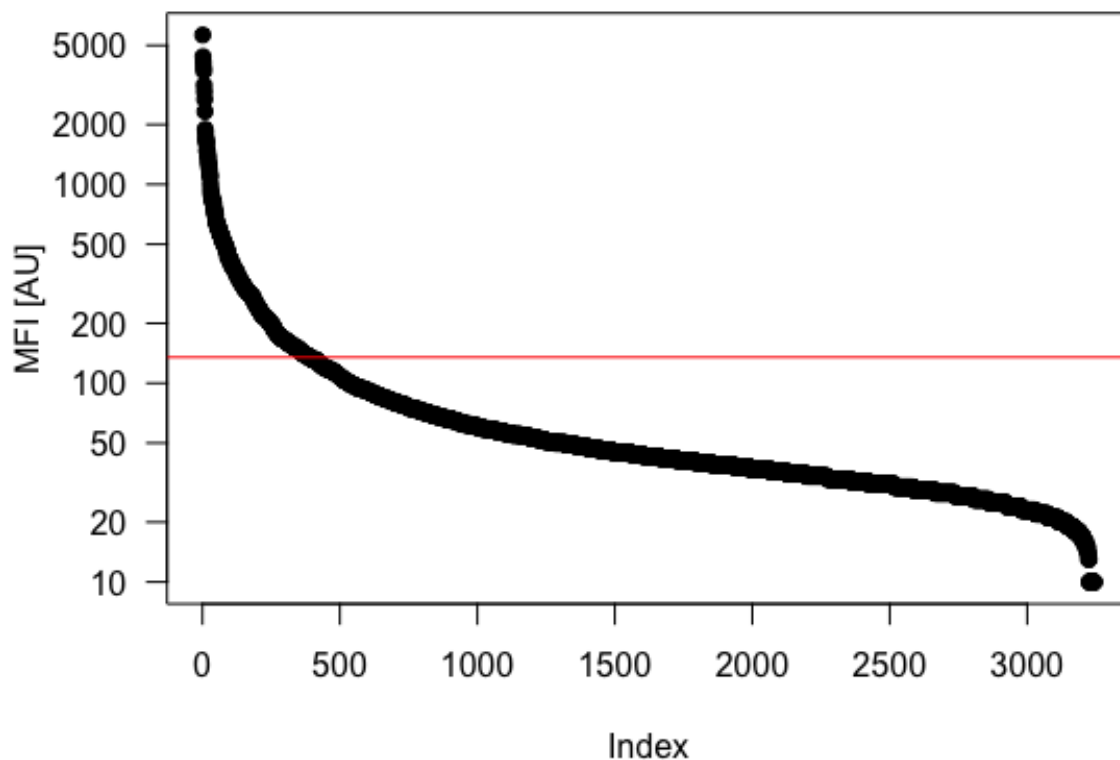
181

182 **Supplementary note 4: Investigation of passenger proteins**

183 We determined possible presence of antigens in the antibody solution. Antigens that were used during
184 the affinity purification may have been co-eluted. Each antigen, denoted PrEST, consists of a tag (His₆
185 and albumin binding protein ABP) and the region selected target protein [18]. To detect the presence
186 of the antigens, we chose an antibody specific to tag region (1:60,000; [19]) and incubated antibody-
187 coupled beads accordingly. Detection using an anti-IgY antibody carrying R-PE (1 µg/ml) we
188 determined the cut-off as 10x SD + mean MFI obtained from beads carrying normal rabbit IgG. Out of
189 4,180 antibodies tested (See Supplementary Figure 4), 41 had been investigated for IP-MS. Among
190 these, 11 revealed MFI above cut-off (135 AU). These included on binder of the ON-target category
191 (HPA042270), nine CO-target binders (HPA002869, HPA005905, HPA019493, HPA030603,
192 HPA045140, HPA045822, HPA062231, HPA067590, HPA070841) and one OFF-target binder
193 (HPA057179).

194

195 **Supplementary Figure 6:** Ranked distribution of the detection of passenger antigens on
196 antibody coupled beads.



197

198 **Supplementary note 5: Antibodies evaluation by protein arrays, WB and pIP.**

199 In plasma proteomics, current options for assessing the selectivity of antibodies can be offered by
200 paired antibodies, protein arrays [20] or Western blot (WB) [21]. Even if the three methods are each
201 valuable in evaluating antibodies quality, validation of a previous discovery or qualification prior to a
202 planned assay should be performed by a method resembling as much as possible the experimental
203 conditions of the previous or intended application.

204 For both protein arrays and WB, the setup is that a surplus of antibodies is diluted in a solution and
205 applied onto supports that present the antigens. Hence, there is generally minimal competition for
206 binding sites between potential on- and off-targets as compared to antibodies being immobilized and
207 applied to a complex solution. For an example given by anti-IL6R binder, we found application
208 dependent recognition for five different antibodies. All five were classified as target-specific using
209 protein arrays, however only three detected IL6R in plasma (**Supplementary Excel Table**). It is
210 consequently the composition of plasma, where 90% of protein content is assigned to 20 proteins, that
211 poses a challenge for WB in terms of analytical resolution. In samples in which the concentrations of
212 certain proteins dominate, the efficiency of how proteins migrate through the gel can be affected. This
213 can influence the distribution of proteins in terms of their molecular mass and abundance; hence limits
214 the amount of plasma loaded on the gel and so detectability of less abundant targets.

215 As first, we compared the classifications obtained here with existing scores of validation assigned by
216 plasma WB to the same antibody's Lot (HPA ID) within the Human Protein Atlas project [21].
217 Noteworthy, the comparison is based on different samples and the samples chosen for WB analysis
218 were depleted of albumin and IgG prior use [22]. Nevertheless, we found that the assessment of 13 out
219 of 104 antibodies (12%) provided supportive evidence by both methods. For antibodies raised against
220 plasma proteins, the success rates for plasma IP (54%) was though higher than for plasma WB (32%)
221 (**Supplementary Table 1**). When considering cellular proteins, the success rates were the same 33%.
222 For WB however, uncertainty will remain unless other standards or comparative analyses are used to
223 reference the detected bands. Until then, bands detected at the predicted molecular weight may still
224 represent the recognition of an off-target molecule.

225 Consequently, pIP provides an unequivocal identification of the target and could elucidate ambiguous
226 WB results (see C1orf64, CEP162, E2F7, and CCL16 **Supplementary Excel Table**, sheet:
227 "Antibodies_experim_annotation"). While WB may provide a more accessible technology for some
228 labs, the information added by identification in MS will be required for an in-depth analysis of
229 antibody selectivity. IP-MS can here be one option to enhance our understanding of binding to
230 proteins, in particular for plasma.

231

232 **Supplementary Table 1.** Comparison of validation rate by pIPs and WB for 104 antibodies
 233 assessed previously in plasma by WB. An antibody was considered passed by WB if scored
 234 1,2 or 3, according to the Human Protein Atlas project.
 235

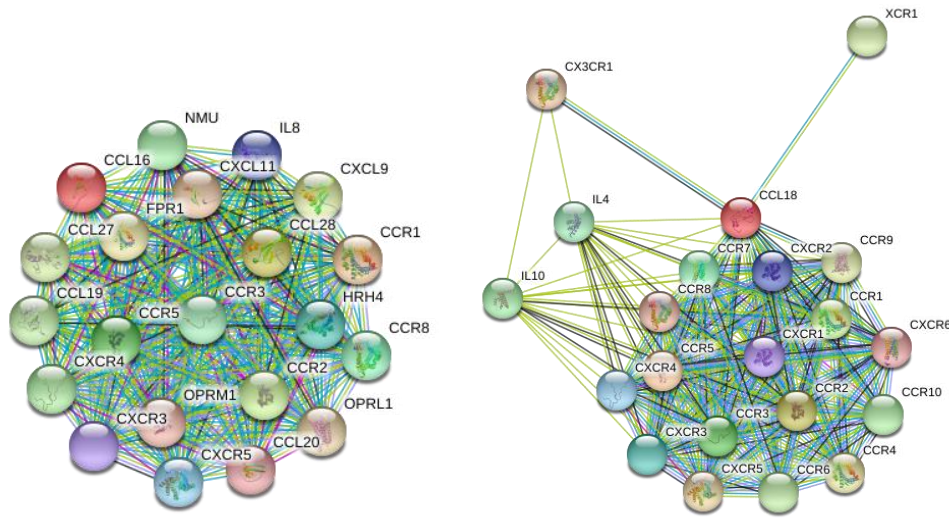
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Total*	59 (100)	45 (100)	104 (100)

236

237

238 **Supplementary note 7: Interaction and homology analysis**

239 **Supplementary Figure 7A:** Interaction networks of CCL16 and CCL18 taken from String
 240 database V10.5 (20 interactors, 1st shell only).



241
 242

243 **Supplementary Figure 7B:** Sequence homology search of CCL16-CCL18 using CLUSTALO
 244 alignment revealed a 26.6% homology. In Yellow: Amino acidic sequence used as antigen in
 245 the generation of the antibody.

```

CLUSTAL O(1.2.3) multiple sequence alignment

SP|O15467|CCL16_HUMAN MKVSEAAALLVLLIILITTSASRSQPKVPEWVNTPSTCCLKYEKVLPRLVVGYRK-ALN 59
SP|P55774|CCL18_HUMAN MKGLAAA--LLVLVCTMALC-----SCAQVGTNKELCCLVYTSWQIPQKFIVDYSETSPQ 53
**  **  ****:  ::  .  .  :  ..  .  *** *  .  :*:::*:*  :  :

SP|O15467|CCL16_HUMAN CHLPATIFVTKRNREVCTNPNDWVQVEYIKDPNLPPLPTRLNSTVKIITAKNGQPQLLNS 119
SP|P55774|CCL18_HUMAN CPKPGVILLTKRGRQICADPNKQWVQKYISDLKLN----- 89
*  *  .:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:.*:
    
```

246 SP|O15467|CCL16_HUMAN Q 120
 247 SP|P55774|CCL18_HUMAN -

247
 248

265 **SUPPLEMENTARY EXCEL TABLE**

266

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278 20%) and less frequently occurring proteins (< 20%).
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288

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290 SUPPLEMENTARY REFERENCES

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