

1 **Global transcriptome analysis of *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes in response to Zika**  
2 **virus infection**

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## 23 **Abstract**

24 Zika virus (ZIKV) of the *Flaviviridae* family is a recently emerged mosquito-borne virus that  
25 has been implicated in the surge of the number of microcephaly instances in South  
26 America. The recent rapid spread of the virus led to its declaration as a global health  
27 emergency by the World Health Organization. The virus is transmitted mainly by the  
28 mosquito *Aedes aegypti* that also vectors dengue virus, however little is known about the  
29 interactions of the virus with the mosquito vector. In this study, we investigated the  
30 transcriptome profiles of whole *Ae. aegypti* mosquitoes in response to ZIKV infection at 2,  
31 7, and 14 days post-infection using RNA-Seq. Results showed changes in the abundance  
32 of a large number of transcripts at each time point following infection, with 18 transcripts  
33 commonly changed among the three time points. Gene ontology analysis revealed that  
34 most of the altered genes are involved in metabolic process, cellular process and  
35 proteolysis. In addition, 486 long intergenic non-coding RNAs were identified that were  
36 altered upon ZIKV infection. Further, we found correlational changes of a number of  
37 potential mRNA target genes with that of altered host microRNAs. The outcomes provide a  
38 basic understanding of *Ae. aegypti* responses to ZIKV and helps to determine host factors  
39 involved in replication or mosquito host anti-viral response against the virus.

## 40 **Importance**

41 Vector-borne viruses pose great risks on human health. Zika virus has recently emerged  
42 as a global threat, rapidly expanding its distribution. Understanding the interactions of the  
43 virus with mosquito vectors at the molecular level is vital for devising new approaches in  
44 inhibiting virus transmission. In this study, we embarked on analyzing the transcriptional  
45 response of *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes to Zika virus infection. Results showed large  
46 changes both in coding and long non-coding RNAs. Analysis of these genes showed  
47 similarities with other flaviviruses, including dengue virus, which is transmitted by the same

48 mosquito vector. The outcomes provide a global picture of changes in the mosquito vector  
49 in response to Zika virus infection.

50 **Keywords:** *Aedes aegypti*; transcriptome; Zika virus; RNA-Seq; long non-coding RNA;  
51 microRNA; odorant binding protein; behavior

52

## 53 **Introduction**

54 Flaviviruses are a group of arthropod-borne viruses (arboviruses) that impose huge  
55 burdens on global animal and human health. The most known examples of flaviviruses  
56 that cause diseases in humans are yellow fever, West Nile, dengue and Zika viruses. Zika  
57 virus (ZIKV) has been the most recently emerged mosquito-borne virus. While it was first  
58 reported in 1952 from Uganda (1), the virus spread rapidly across the Pacific and the  
59 Americas in the last 10 years with recent outbreaks in South America (2). The clinical  
60 symptoms are variable, ranging from no or mild symptoms to severe neurological  
61 disorders such as microcephaly in infants born from infected mothers, or Guillain-Barré  
62 syndrome in adults (reviewed in (2, 3)). The virus is mainly transmitted among humans by  
63 the bites of mosquito species of the genus *Aedes*, in particular *Aedes aegypti*, when they  
64 take a blood meal from infected individuals. The virus first infects the midgut cells of the  
65 mosquito and then disseminates into other tissues, finally reaching the salivary glands  
66 where they continue to replicate and are eventually transmitted to other human hosts upon  
67 subsequent blood feeding events (4).

68 It is thought that infection by flaviviruses does not cause any detrimental pathological  
69 effects on the mosquito vectors (5), reflecting evolutionary adaptations of the viruses with  
70 mosquitoes through intricate interactions, which involve optimal utilization of host factors  
71 for replication and avoidance of overt antiviral responses. However, a number of studies  
72 have shown major transcriptomic changes in the mosquito vectors in response to flavivirus  
73 infection. These changes suggest regulation of a wide range of host genes involved in

74 classical immune pathways, RNA interference, metabolism, energy production and  
75 transport (6-13). In addition, mosquito small and long non-coding RNAs have also been  
76 shown to change upon flavivirus infection (14, 15).

77 Recently, we showed that the microRNA (miRNA) profile of *Ae. aegypti* mosquitoes is  
78 altered upon ZIKV infection at different time points following infection (16). Here, we  
79 describe the transcriptional response of *Ae. aegypti* whole mosquitoes to ZIKV infection at  
80 the same time points post-infection. Consistent with previous studies on other arboviruses,  
81 we found that the abundance of a large number of genes was altered following ZIKV  
82 infection.

## 83 **Results and Discussion**

### 84 ***Ae. aegypti* RNA-Seq data analysis**

85 RNA sequencing using Illumina sequencing technology was performed on poly(A)-  
86 enriched RNAs extracted from ZIKV-infected and non-infected *Ae. aegypti* mosquitoes at  
87 2, 7, and 14 days post-infection (dpi). Total numbers of clean paired reads varied between  
88 43,486,502 to 60,486,566 reads per library among the 18 sequenced RNA samples. More  
89 than 96% of reads mapped to the host genome with around 80% of counted fragments  
90 mapped to gene regions and 20% to intergenic areas of the genome (Table S1).

91 Principal component analysis (PCA) of the RNA-Seq data at each time point distributed all  
92 biological replicates of ZIKV-infected and non-infected samples in two distinct groups,  
93 although the differences were more subtle at 2 days post-infection, in which one of the  
94 ZIKV-infected biological replicates was relatively close to the control group (Fig. 1).

95 Analysis and comparison of mRNA expression profiles of *Ae. aegypti* mosquitoes at  
96 different time points following ZIKV infection revealed that in total 1332 genes had  
97 changes of 2-fold or more in either directions (Fig. 2 with details in Table S2). Among the  
98 three time points, the highest number of changes occurred at 7 dpi with 944 genes

99 showing alteration in their transcript levels. The numbers of genes altered at 2 and 14 dpi  
100 were very close, 298 and 303, respectively (Fig. 3). These trends were expected as we  
101 anticipated to see lower gene expression alteration at 2 dpi and 14 dpi due to low level of  
102 infection in the mosquito body at 2 dpi and advanced stages of virus replication at 14 dpi,  
103 while at 7 dpi the virus is still at its proliferative stage infecting various tissues of the  
104 mosquito. In a previous study that explored the effect of DENV-2 on *Ae. aegypti*  
105 transcriptome using RNA-Seq, the number of genes altered at 4 dpi was the highest (151  
106 combining carcass and midgut) as compared to 1 dpi that showed the lowest number of  
107 changes (40) followed by 14 dpi (82) (11).

108 Comparison of the transcriptome profiles showed 18 overlapping genes among the three  
109 time points (Fig. 3; listed in Table 1). Twelve of these common genes were depleted and  
110 only six were enriched, which were Angiotensin-converting enzyme (AAEL009310), serine-  
111 type endopeptidase (AAEL001693), phosphoglycerate dehydrogenase (AAEL005336),  
112 cysteine dioxygenase (AAEL007416) and two hypothetical proteins. To validate the  
113 analysis of the RNA-Seq data, we used RT-qPCR analysis of the 18 genes. Overall, all  
114 expression values showed consistency between the two methods and had a positive linear  
115 correlation (Pearson correlation; Day 2  $R^2 = 0.7097$   $P < 0.0001$ ; Day 7  $R^2 = 0.8793$   
116  $P < 0.0001$ ; Day 14  $R^2 = 0.9184$   $P < 0.0001$ ) (Fig. 4).

### 117 **Differentially abundant transcripts and comparisons with other flaviviruses**

118 When concentrating on genes with 10-fold differential expression and statistical  
119 significance relative to control mosquitoes, 101, 54 and 17 genes showed changes at 2, 7  
120 and 14 dpi, respectively (Table S2 in dark blue font). After removing hypothetical proteins,  
121 those with known functions are listed in Table 2. Interestingly, while the total number of  
122 genes showing differential abundance was higher at 7 dpi (Fig. 3), more genes showed  
123 10-fold or greater changes at 2 dpi as compared with 7 dpi (101 versus 54).

124 At 2 dpi, transcripts of eight genes were enriched with a metalloproteinase (AAEL011539)

125 showing 56-fold increase in abundance, a serine protease (AAEL013298) increasing 22-  
126 fold, and two trypsins (AAEL007601 and AAEL013707) with 19 and 10-fold increases,  
127 respectively. We also saw that two phosphatidyl ethanolamine-binding proteins, two  
128 cubulin proteins, and a cysteine-rich venom protein were altered at this time point.  
129 However most strikingly, we observed suppression of 14 odorant binding proteins at 2 dpi  
130 with several of these transcripts being massively reduced (around 800-fold) (Table 2).  
131 Furthermore, other odorant binding protein transcripts were enhanced (by 2 fold or  
132 greater) at 7 and 14 dpi (Fig. S1), indicating that ZIKV may have the capacity to alter the  
133 behavior of the mosquito, potentially suppressing host-seeking in early stages of the  
134 infection and encouraging host-seeking when the mosquito is infectious. Dengue virus is  
135 known to alter host-seeking behaviors and feeding efficiency (17, 18), and microarray  
136 analysis of mosquitoes with salivary gland infections found several odorant binding protein  
137 transcripts that were enhanced in this late stage of infection (14 dpi) (19). Similarly, there  
138 is evidence that malaria parasites suppress the host-seeking tendencies of the mosquito  
139 early in infection but encourage host-seeking at later stages when the mosquito can  
140 transmit the parasite (20-22). The transcription patterns we observed here with ZIKV are  
141 consistent with these observations from dengue and malaria infection of mosquitoes but  
142 further behavioral studies are required to confirm this intriguing finding.

143 At 7 dpi, 34 genes showed enrichment of 10-fold or more including clip-domain serine  
144 proteases, defensins, transferrins, hexamerin, C-type lectin, and serine proteases, which  
145 are implicated in immune responses. At this time point, only seven genes were depleted.  
146 The number of genes that were differentially expressed by 10-fold or more at 14 dpi was  
147 small, with eight genes showing enrichment and eight genes showing depletion. The  
148 highest enrichment (212-fold) was steroid receptor RNA activator 1 (AAEL015052), while  
149 peritrophin, attacin and superoxide dismutase were among the depleted genes (Table 2).  
150 Previous studies have shown alteration of mRNA transcript levels in *Ae. aegypti*

151 mosquitoes infected with DENV and a couple of other flaviviruses. Using microarray  
152 analysis, Colpitts et al. found that 76 genes showed 5-fold or more changes in DENV-  
153 infected mosquitoes over 1, 2 and 7 dpi (13). Their study, which also included response of  
154 *Ae. aegypti* to West Nile virus (WNV) and Yellow fever virus (YFV), found commonly 20  
155 and 15 genes were differentially enriched and depleted, respectively, between the three  
156 flaviviruses at day 1 post-infection. Considering utilization of two different techniques in  
157 Colpitts et al (microarray) and in this study (RNA-Seq) and differences between the time  
158 points chosen, proper comparison of changes in transcript levels and fold changes cannot  
159 be done. However, when we mapped all the differentially expressed genes (2-fold or more)  
160 from Colpitts et al. against our data (Table S2), we found 364 genes from our study  
161 showed differential expression at least in one time point that overlap with the other three  
162 viral infections (Table S3).

163 In a follow-up study using the data from the above study (1, 2, 7 dpi) (13), Londono-  
164 Renteria et al. identified 20 top differentially regulated transcripts in YFV, DENV and WNV  
165 infected *Ae. aegypti* mosquitoes (23). Out of these 20 genes, five of them were also found  
166 changed in ZIKV-infected mosquitoes in our study. These were the cysteine-rich venom  
167 proteins (AAEL005098, AAEL005090, AAEL000379 and AAEL000356) by about 9, 18, 25  
168 and 150-fold depletion at 2 dpi, and an unknown protein (AAEL013122) by 390-fold  
169 depletion at 2 dpi. While pairwise comparison is not really possible between the two  
170 studies, comparing data from 2 dpi showed that AAEL005090 (in the case of DENV),  
171 AAEL005098 and AAEL000356 (in the case of YFV and WNV), and AAEL013122 (in the  
172 case of DENV) changed in the same direction as ZIKV infection. Another study also found  
173 a number of cysteine-rich venom proteins altered upon DENV infection of *Ae. aegypti*  
174 mosquitoes (11). Cysteine-rich venom proteins are secretory proteins that are mostly  
175 found in the fluids of animal venoms acting on ion channels (24). Londono-Renteria et al.  
176 found that among the cysteine-rich venom proteins only AAEL000379 was enriched in

177 DENV-infected mosquitoes and the rest did not change noticeably. Silencing the gene led  
178 to increase in replication of DENV (23). Alteration of the cysteine-rich venom proteins  
179 commonly found in the case of different flaviviruses indicates their possible importance in  
180 replication of these viruses. Further studies are required to determine the role these  
181 proteins play in ZIKV-infected mosquitoes specifically.

182 In another study with DENV-2 and *Ae. aegypti* in which deep sequencing of carcass,  
183 midgut and salivary glands with one replicate per pooled sample were used, transcript  
184 levels of infected and non-infected tissues were compared at 1, 4 and 14 dpi, which  
185 showed differential abundance of 397 genes (11). We reanalyzed the raw data from the  
186 study using the same pipeline as we used for our study. While comparative analysis of the  
187 study with ours cannot properly be made due to differences in the samples (tissues versus  
188 whole mosquitoes) and timings post-infection, in total, we found 199 genes commonly  
189 altered between DENV-2 and ZIKV infections, some with the same directional change in  
190 expression (Table S4).

191 A number of immune-related genes were mostly enriched at 7 dpi in ZIKV-infected  
192 mosquitoes. Toll was enriched only at 7 dpi by 2-fold. Twelve leucine-rich immune proteins  
193 were mostly enriched at 7 dpi by 4-16 folds. Phenoloxidae (AAEL010919), which was not  
194 changed upon DENV infection, was depleted by 2-folds at 2 dpi but enriched by 8-9 folds  
195 at 7 and 14 dpi in ZIKV-infected mosquitoes. Components of the JAK/STAT pathway, such  
196 as Dome and Hop, were not induced in ZIKV-infected mosquitoes. Interestingly, induction  
197 of the JAK/STAT pathway specifically in the fat body of *Ae. aegypti* mosquitoes by  
198 overexpressing Dome or Hop did not lead to increased resistance to ZIKV infection (25).  
199 This result and lack of induction of the pathway in our study suggests that the JAK/STAT  
200 pathway may not be involved in ZIKV-mosquito interaction. Further, major genes involved  
201 in the RNAi pathway, such as Dicer-1, Dicer-2, or any of the Argonaut genes, also did not  
202 change upon ZIKV infection in this study.



## 203 **Gene Ontology**

204 All the differentially expressed host genes were submitted to Blast2Go for gene ontology  
205 (GO) analysis. This analysis identified 126, 68 and 33 GO terms in biological process,  
206 molecular function and cellular components, respectively (Table S5). GO analysis of  
207 enriched genes at different times post-infection showed that they were mostly related to  
208 proteolysis, zinc ion/protein binding and integral component of membrane (Fig. 5). Among  
209 the depleted genes, the highest categories were more variable, with day 2 having chitin  
210 metabolic process, odorant binding, integral component of membrane, at day 7 oxidation-  
211 reduction process, DNA binding and nucleosome, and at day 14 oxidation-reduction  
212 process, protein binding and nucleus (Fig. 5). In support of our earlier observation (Fig.  
213 S1), odorant binding transcripts were depleted at day 2 but enriched at day 14 (Fig. 5). In  
214 *Ae. aegypti*, differentially expressed genes upon infection with DENV, WNV and YFV  
215 belonged to various cellular processes, such as metabolic processes, ion binding,  
216 peptidase activity and transport (13), which are also among the GO terms identified in  
217 differentially abundant transcripts in the ZIKV-infected mosquitoes (Fig. 5). The genes  
218 commonly altered upon ZIKV and DENV infections listed in Table S4 were mostly in  
219 proteolysis, oxidation-reduction process and transmembrane transport from the biological  
220 process, serine-type endopeptidase activity and protein binding from the molecular  
221 function, and integral component of membrane, nucleus and extracellular region from  
222 cellular component (Table S4).

## 223 **microRNA target genes**

224 Recently, we identified 17 *Ae. aegypti* microRNAs (miRNA) altered upon ZIKV infection at  
225 the same time points that RNA-Seq was conducted (2, 7 and 14 dpi) (16). Comparative  
226 analysis of the altered mRNAs and the 17 miRNAs with opposite trends in abundance  
227 revealed that 53 of the differentially expressed mRNAs could potentially be regulated by  
228 11 out of the 17 differentially abundant miRNAs (Table S6). However, there is growing

229 evidence that miRNAs could also positively regulate their target genes (26, 27), which are  
230 not listed in the table. Further, the analysis showed that some miRNAs have multiple  
231 potential target genes as expected (e.g. miR-309a has 19 target genes and miR-981-5p  
232 with 12 target genes). Gene ontology analysis of the target genes indicated that the  
233 majority of the genes are involved in oxidation-reduction process and integral component  
234 of membrane within the Biological Process and Cellular Component terms (Table S6).

### 235 **Long intergenic non-coding RNAs (lincRNAs) change upon ZIKV infection**

236 lincRNAs are transcripts that are larger than 200 nt but do not code for any proteins,  
237 however, they are transcribed the same way as mRNAs (28); i.e. they have a poly-A tail  
238 and therefore enriched in transcriptomic data produced following mRNA isolation and  
239 sequencing. Similar to small non-coding RNAs, the main function of lincRNAs is regulation  
240 of gene expression, involved in various processes such as genomic imprinting and cell  
241 differentiation (29), epigenetic and non-epigenetic based gene regulation (30), activation  
242 and differentiation of immune cells (31), and relevantly virus-host interactions (32-36).

243 We recently reported 3,482 putative lincRNAs from *Ae. aegypti* (32). In this study, we  
244 found that in total, 486 lincRNAs were differentially expressed in response to ZIKV  
245 infection in at least one time point post-infection (fold change > 2 and P-value <0.05).  
246 Similar to mRNAs (see Fig. 3), the majority of altered lincRNAs were found at 7 dpi and 56  
247 out of these lincRNAs showed significant alteration at least in two time points (Table S7  
248 and Fig. 6). The Euclidean distance was calculated for each time point based on their  
249 lincRNA fold changes. Differentially expressed lincRNAs at 7 dpi (116.83) and 14 dpi  
250 (75.30) showed more correlation or similar fold-change pattern than those of 2 dpi  
251 (180.86). Only lincRNAs 656, 1385 and 3105 were differentially expressed and showed  
252 the same fold-change change pattern among the three time points. In our previous study,  
253 we also found that the transcript levels of 421 *Ae. aegypti* lincRNAs was altered due to  
254 DENV-2 infection. Comparison of those with the ones identified in this study showed that

255 about 80 of them were also differentially expressed in ZIKV-infected samples (Table S7),  
256 which could be common lincRNAs involved in flavivirus-mosquito interactions.

## 257 **Conclusions**

258 Overall, our results showed large changes in the transcriptome of *Ae. aegypti* mosquitoes  
259 upon ZIKV infection, both in coding and long non-coding RNAs. The majority of  
260 transcriptional changes occurred at 7 dpi, with the genes mostly involved in metabolic  
261 process, cellular process and proteolysis. We found some overlaps of transcriptional  
262 alterations in the case of other flavivirus infections in *Ae. aegypti*, but unlike those, immune  
263 genes were not altered to the same extent. In regards to lincRNAs, out of 486 lincRNAs  
264 changed in ZIKV-infected mosquitoes, 80 of them overlapped with that of DENV-infected  
265 mosquitoes indicating possible conserved functions of the lincRNAs in flavivirus-mosquito  
266 interactions. A drawback of this study is that we used whole mosquitoes, which means  
267 changes at the tissue levels could have been overlooked due to dilution factor by mixing  
268 all tissues; however, the outcomes provide a global overview of transcriptional response of  
269 *Ae. aegypti* to ZIKV infection, and can be utilized in determining potential pro and anti-viral  
270 host factors.

## 271 **Materials and Methods**

### 272 **Ethics Statement**

273 ZIKV, which was originally isolated from an *Ae. aegypti* mosquito (Chiapas State, Mexico),  
274 was obtained from the World Reference Center for Emerging Viruses and Arboviruses at  
275 the University of Texas Medical Branch (Galveston, TX, USA). Experimental work with the  
276 virus was approved by the University of Texas Medical Branch Institutional Biosafety  
277 Committee (Reference number: 2016055).

### 278 **Mosquito infections with Zika virus**

279 We used excess RNA from samples generated recently to investigate miRNA profiles in  
280 ZIKV-infected *Ae. aegypti* mosquitoes (16). Briefly, 4-6 day old female *Ae. aegypti*  
281 (Galveston strain) were orally infected with ZIKV (Mex 1-7 strain) at  $2 \times 10^5$  focus forming  
282 units (FFU)/ml in a sheep blood meal (Colorado Serum Company). Infected mosquitoes  
283 were collected at 2, 7 and 14 days post-infection (dpi) from which RNA was extracted  
284 using the mirVana RNA extraction kit (Life Technologies) applying the protocol for  
285 extraction of total RNA. Viral infection in mosquitoes was confirmed by Taqman qPCR on  
286 ABI StepOnePlus machine (Applied Biosystems) (16). For all time points, three  
287 independent pools were used to create libraries for infected and uninfected samples.  
288 Uninfected mosquitoes were fed with ZIKV-free blood, collected at the same time points  
289 and processed as above. The dynamics of infection in mosquitoes was shown in Saldaña  
290 et al. (16) in Fig. S1.

#### 291 **Library preparations and sequencing**

292 All samples were quantified using a Qubit fluorescent assay (Thermo Scientific). Total  
293 RNA quality was assessed using an RNA 6000 chip on an Agilent 2100 Bioanalyzer  
294 (Agilent Technologies).

295 Total RNA (1.0  $\mu$ g) was poly A+ selected and fragmented using divalent cations and heat  
296 ( $94^{\circ}$  C, 8 min). The NEBNext Ultra II RNA library kit (New England Biolabs) was used for  
297 RNA-Seq library construction. Fragmented poly A+ RNA samples were converted to cDNA  
298 by random primed synthesis using ProtoScript II reverse transcriptase (New England  
299 Biolabs). After second strand synthesis, the double-stranded DNAs were treated with T4  
300 DNA polymerase, 5' phosphorylated and then an adenine residue was added to the 3'  
301 ends of the DNA. Adapters were then ligated to the ends of these target template DNAs.  
302 After ligation, the template DNAs were amplified (5-9 cycles) using primers specific to each  
303 of the non-complimentary sequences in the adapters. This created a library of DNA  
304 templates that have non-homologous 5' and 3' ends. A qPCR analysis was performed to

305 determine the template concentration of each library. Reference standards cloned from a  
306 HeLa S3 RNA-Seq library were used in the qPCR analysis. Cluster formation was  
307 performed using 15.5-17 billion templates per lane using the Illumina cBot v3 system.  
308 Sequencing by synthesis, paired end 50 base reads, was performed on an Illumina HiSeq  
309 1500 using a protocol recommended by the manufacturer.

### 310 **RNA-Seq data analysis**

311 The CLC Genomics Workbench version 10.1.1 was used for bioinformatics analyses in  
312 this study. RNA-Seq analysis was done by mapping next-generation sequencing reads,  
313 distributing and counting the reads across genes and transcripts. The latest assembly of  
314 *Aedes aegypti* genome (GCF\_000004015.4) was used as reference. All libraries were  
315 trimmed from sequencing primers and adapter sequences. Low quality reads (quality  
316 score below 0.05) and reads with more than 2 ambiguous nucleotides were discarded.  
317 Clean reads were subjected to RNA-Seq analysis toolbox for mapping reads to the  
318 reference genome with mismatch, insertion and deletion cost of 2, 3 and 3, respectively.  
319 Mapping was performed with stringent criteria and allowed a length fraction of 0.8 in  
320 mapping parameter, which encounter at least 80% of nucleotides in a read must be  
321 aligned to the reference genome. The minimum similarity between the aligned region of  
322 the read and the reference sequence was set at 80%.

323 Principal Component Analysis (PCA) graphs were produced for each time point after ZIKV  
324 infection between control and infected samples to identify any outlying samples for quality  
325 control. The expression levels used as input were normalized log CPM (Count Per Million)  
326 values.

327 The relative expression levels were produced as RPKM (Reads Per Kilobase of exon  
328 model per Million mapped reads) values, which take into account the relative size of the  
329 transcripts and only uses the mapped-read datasets to determine relative transcript  
330 abundance. To explore genes with differential expression profile between two samples,

331 CLC Genomic Workbench uses multi-factorial statistics based on a negative binomial  
332 Generalized Linear Model (GLM). Each gene is modeled by a separate GLM and this  
333 approach allows us to fit curves to expression values without assuming that the error on  
334 the values is normally distributed. TMM (Trimmed mean of M values) normalization  
335 method was applied on all data sets to calculate effective library sizes, which were then  
336 used as part of the per-sample normalization (37).

337 The Wald Test was also used to compare each sample against its control group to test  
338 whether a given coefficient is non-zero. We considered genes with more than 2-fold  
339 change and false discovery rate (FDR) of less than 0.05 as statistically significantly  
340 modulated genes.

341 We previously reported 3,482 putative long intergenic non-coding RNAs (lincRNA) from  
342 *Ae. aegypti* using a stringent filtering pipeline to remove transcripts that may potentially  
343 encode proteins (32). The expression profile of lincRNAs was also generated for each  
344 sample similar to the approach described above.

345 To identify the host transcriptomic response to two different flaviviruses, we compared  
346 altered gene profiles in previously published DENV-infected *Ae. aegypti* libraries (11) with  
347 our ZIKV infected samples. The relevant RNA-Seq data (SRA058076) were downloaded  
348 from NCBI sequence read archive. The libraries were treated in the same way as  
349 described above to identify differentially expressed *Ae. aegypti* gene profiles in response  
350 to DENV.

### 351 **Gene Ontology (GO) analysis**

352 All differentially expressed genes were uploaded to Blast2GO server for functional  
353 annotation and GO analysis. We used Blast and InterProScan algorithms to reveal the GO  
354 terms of differentially expressed sequences. More abundant terms were computed for  
355 each category of molecular function, biological process and cellular components.  
356 Blast2GO has integrated the FatiGO package for statistical assessment and this package

357 uses the Fisher's Exact Test.

### 358 **Identification of miRNA target genes**

359 We screened all differentially expressed mRNAs to identify potential miRNA targets among  
360 them. If selected mRNAs do not have complete annotation such as clear 5'UTR, ORF and  
361 3'UTR, the region before ORF start codon (300 bp) and after stop codon (500 bp) for each  
362 mRNA was considered as 5'UTR and 3'UTR, respectively. We used three different  
363 algorithms including RNA22 (38), miRanda (39) and RNAhybrid (40) to predict potential  
364 miRNA binding sites on genes altered by ZIKV. We previously described this approach  
365 and parameters for setting each tool, but to increase the level of confidence, we selected  
366 those binding sites which were predicted by all the three algorithms for further analysis  
367 (41).

### 368 **RT-qPCR analysis of mRNAs**

369 qPCR validations were done using the same RNA that was used for RNA-Seq. RNA from  
370 ZIKV positive samples was pooled (N = 5) for time points 2, 7, and 14 dpi and treated with  
371 amplification grade DNase I (Invitrogen). Total RNA was reverse transcribed using the  
372 amfiRivert cDNA Synthesis Platinum master mix (GenDEPOT, Barker, TX, USA)  
373 containing a mixture of oligo dT<sub>(18)</sub> and random hexamers. Real-time quantification was  
374 performed in StepOnePlus instrument (Applied Biosystems, Foster City, California, United  
375 States) in 10 µl reaction containing 1:10 diluted cDNA template, 1X PowerUp SYBR Green  
376 Master Mix (Applied Biosystems), 1µM each primer. The analysis was performed using  
377  $\Delta\Delta C_t$  (Livak) method (42). Three independent biological replicates were conducted and all  
378 PCRs were performed in duplicates. The ribosomal protein S7 gene (43) was used for  
379 normalization of cDNA templates. Primer sequences are listed in Table S8.

### 380 **Accession number**

381 The accession number for the raw and trimmed sequencing data reported here is GEO:  
382 GSE102939.

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394 S.G.W., and T.G.W.; Data curation: K.E.; Formal analysis: K.E., and S.A.; Writing-original  
395 draft: K.E., and S.A.; Writing-review & editing: S.A., and G.L.H.; Supervision: S.A., and  
396 G.L.H.

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- 512

513 **Figure legends**

514 **Figure 1.** The principal component analysis of the effect of ZIKV infection on *Ae. aegypti*  
515 transcriptome at three different time points post-infection. The normalized log CPM (Count  
516 Per Million) used as expression value in this analysis.

517 **Figure 2.** Volcano plot analysis. Red circles indicate differentially expressed mRNAs in  
518 response to ZIKV infection (Fold change > 2 and FDR < 0.05).

519 **Figure 3.** Venn diagram representing the number of differentially expressed coding genes  
520 at three different time points post ZIKV infection. Profound alteration in gene expression  
521 was observed at 7 dpi and more common differentially expressed genes were found  
522 between day 7 and 14 samples.

523 **Figure 4.** Validation of RNA-Seq data analysis by RT-qPCR. The 18 genes that were  
524 differentially expressed at all time points were validated by qPCR at 2, 7 and 14 days post-  
525 infection. Overall, all time points showed consistency between the two methods in their  
526 trends of depletion or enrichment.

527 **Figure 5.** GO term enrichment analysis of differentially expressed genes in response to  
528 ZIKV infection in three categories of biological process, molecular function, and cellular  
529 component for enriched and depleted genes at 2, 7 and 14 days post-infection.

530 **Figure 6.** Venn diagram representing the number of differentially expressed lincRNAs at  
531 three different time points post ZIKV infection (fold-change > 2 and P-value <0.05). The  
532 majority of altered lincRNAs were found at 7 dpi and 56 out of these lincRNAs showed  
533 significant alteration at least at two time points.

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539 **Supplemental material legends**

540 **Figure S1.** Expression levels of odorant binding protein transcripts at days 2, 7, and 14.

541 **Table S1.** RNA read summary in ZIKV-infected and non-infected libraries.

542 **Table S2.** Differentially expressed transcripts in response to ZIKV at 2, 7, and 14 dpi.

543 **Table S3.** Comparison of transcripts modulated by ZIKV to those modulated by dengue  
544 virus, West Nile virus and Yellow fever virus identified by Colpitts *et al.* (13).

545 **Table S4.** Comparison of transcripts modulated by ZIKV to those modulated by dengue  
546 virus identified by Bonizzoni *et al.* (11).

547 **Table S5.** Gene ontology analysis for transcripts differentially regulated by ZIKV.

548 **Table S6.** ZIKV regulated transcripts potentially affected by miRNAs identified by Saldaña  
549 *et al.* (16).

550 **Table S7.** Differentially expressed lincRNAs in response to ZIKV at 2, 7, and 14 dpi.

551 **Table S8.** List of primers used in the study.

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**Table 1.** List of *Ae. aegypti* differentially expressed genes common to all the three time points post ZIKV infection.

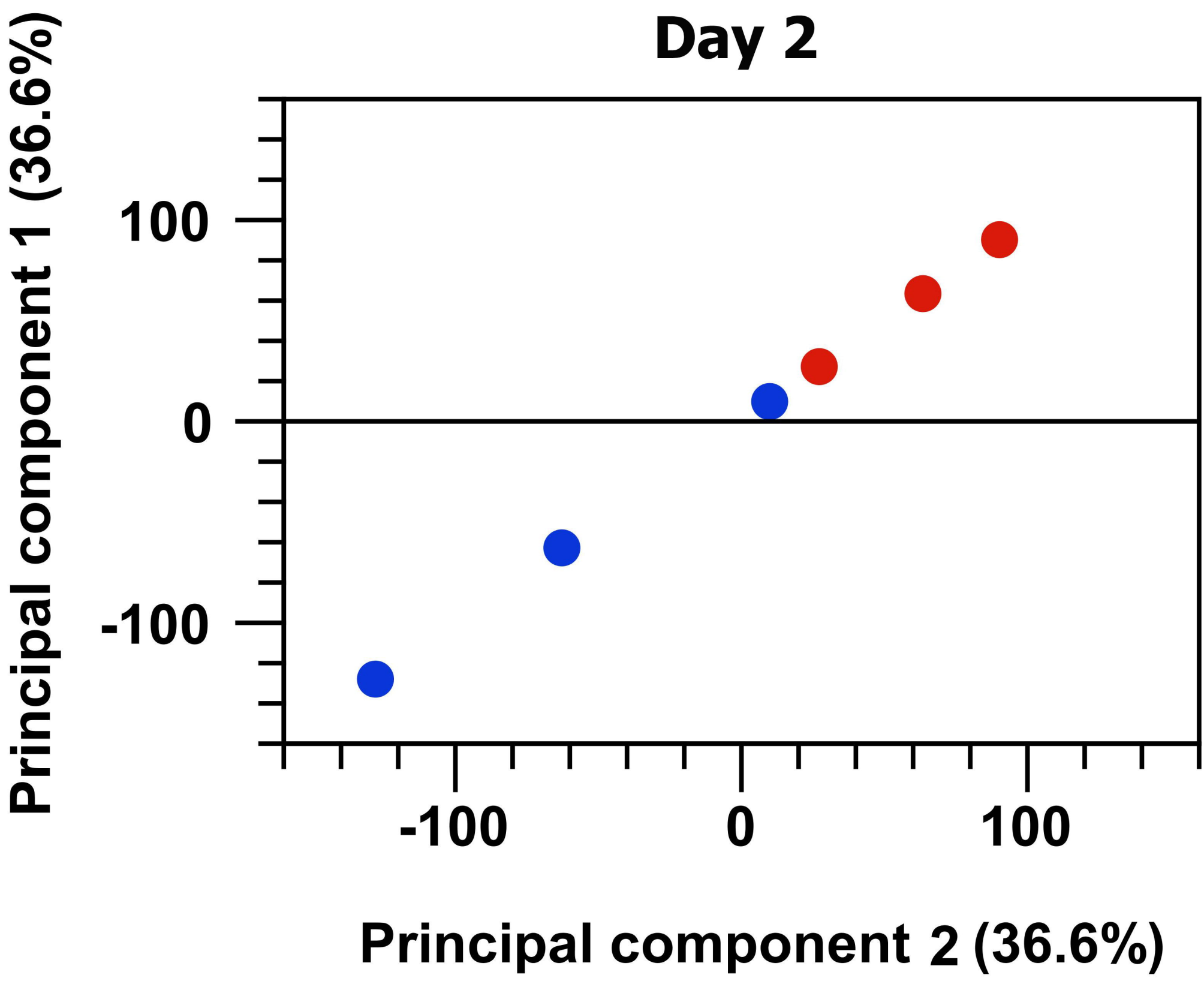
Gene ID	Gene Description	Fold change (Day 2)	FDR p-value	Fold change (Day 7)	FDR p-value	Fold change (Day 14)	FDR p-value
AAEL009310	Angiotensin-converting enzyme	5.41	3.66E-08	3.18	4.61E-04	2.65	4.81E-03
AAEL001693	Serine-type endopeptidase	4.08	8.02E-05	2.33	4.74E-03	2.46	3.81E-03
AAEL005336	D-3-phosphoglycerate dehydrogenase	2.06	0.02	2.81	3.00E-09	2.15	1.66E-03
AAEL010153	Protein bicaudal C	-2.59	9.34E-03	-2.81	0	-3.08	8.26E-13
AAEL003688	Conserved hypothetical protein	-2.21	3.40E-03	-2.13	5.98E-12	-2.23	3.00E-08
AAEL005501	B-box type zinc finger protein ncl-1	-2.87	4.86E-05	-2.13	5.55E-10	-2.6	1.72E-06
AAEL017329	B-box type zinc finger protein ncl-1	-2.52	6.34E-04	-2.14	8.32E-08	-2.44	9.77E-09
AAEL005850	Hormone receptor-like in 4 (nuclear receptor)	-2.57	8.90E-04	-2.75	3.66E-13	-3.06	1.23E-08
AAEL007416	Cysteine dioxygenase	3.12	7.28E-03	2.37	0.02	4.52	5.85E-08
AAEL010086	DNA replication licensing factor MCM4	-2.2	5.94E-03	-2.15	2.33E-10	-2.4	1.90E-07
AAEL010228	Conserved hypothetical protein	2.54	0.03	6.45	1.29E-09	3.12	3.10E-06
AAEL010644	Ribonucleoside-diphosphate reductase large chain	-2.3	0.03	-2.62	0	-2.28	5.52E-07
AAEL011811	DNA replication licensing factor MCM3	-2.03	8.63E-03	-2.37	0	-2.21	1.90E-07
AAEL012339	Cdk1	-2	4.40E-03	-2.58	1.05E-07	-2.82	5.07E-08
AAEL013338	Lethal (2) essential for life protein, l2efl	-2.78	5.28E-05	-3.3	0	-2.38	8.43E-08
AAEL013577	Conserved hypothetical protein	3.7	5.81E-04	2.81	0.02	7.57	2.13E-06
AAEL013602	Laminin gamma-3 chain	-2.31	6.85E-03	-2.03	2.80E-03	-2.29	4.66E-04
AAEL003797	Hypothetical protein	-2.82	4.43E-03	-3.12	9.61E-11	-2.18	2.47E-03

**Table 2.** List of *Ae. aegypti* differentially expressed genes with more than 10-fold change specific to each time point (in bold) post ZIKV infection.

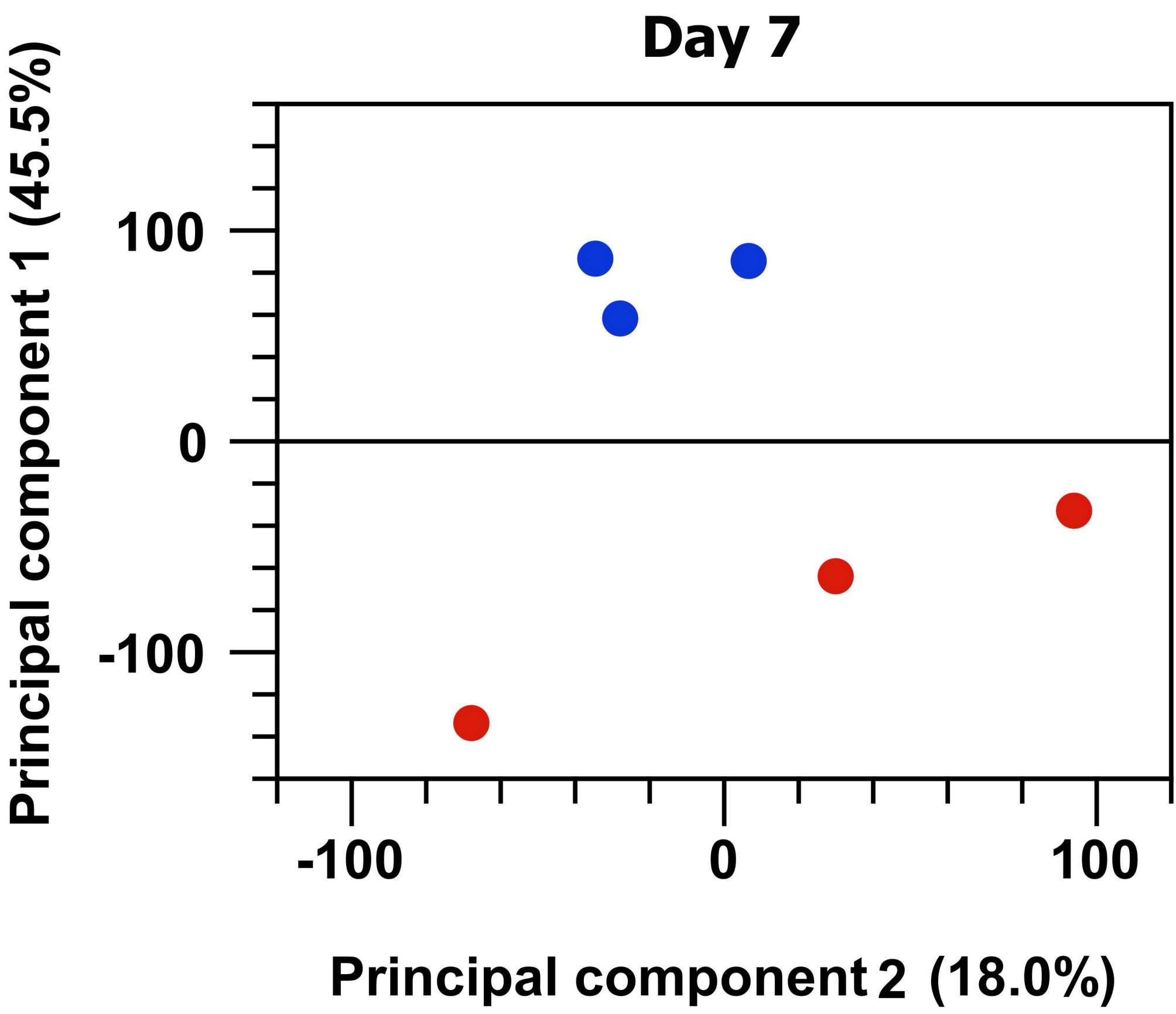
Name	Gene ID	Description	Fold change		
			Day 2	Day 7	Day 14
AAEL011539	5574950	metalloproteinase, putative	<b>56.2</b>	-1.1	3.31
AAEL013298	5577578	serine protease, putative	<b>22.08</b>	1.86	4.74
AAEL007601	5569396	trypsin 5G1-like	<b>18.98</b>	3.46	3.06
AAEL013707	5578506	trypsin 5G1-like	<b>10.07</b>	6.24	1.81
AAEL011260	5574623	protein D3	<b>-10.95</b>	3.1	-0.18
AAEL011954	5575620	elongation of very long chain fatty acids protein 7	<b>-11.96</b>	1.56	1.14
AAEL014312	5564093	cubilin homolog	<b>-12.1</b>	8.42	1.87
AAEL010965	5574152	cubilin homolog	<b>-12.49</b>	1.4	-1.61
AAEL010139	5572918	putative defense protein 1	<b>-14.85</b>	34.42	0.9
AAEL003094	5577074	glycoprotein, putative	<b>-16.59</b>	6.43	-1.29
AAEL011491	5574891	general odorant-binding protein 67	<b>-17.05</b>	-2.93	0.46
AAEL001487	5570904	general odorant-binding protein 45-like	<b>-17.49</b>	-	2.66
AAEL004947	5565723	elongation of very long chain fatty acids protein 4	<b>-18.74</b>	-2.25	5.11E-03
AAEL005090	5565985	cysteine-rich venom protein, putative	<b>-18.75</b>	3.74	-
AAEL010875	5574034	general odorant-binding protein 45-like	<b>-20.22</b>	-	-
AAEL007096	5568731	major royal jelly protein 3	<b>-21.97</b>	1.01	0.67
AAEL010848	5574004	major royal jelly protein 5	<b>-23.73</b>	1.45	-0.67
AAEL010872	5574030	general odorant-binding protein 45-like	<b>-27.81</b>	-8.89	0.38
AAEL011808	5575404	glucose dehydrogenase [FAD, quinone	<b>-29.51</b>	-1.01	3.95E-03
AAEL006398	5567938	OBP32: odorant binding protein OBP32	<b>-31.43</b>	1.71	-
AAEL006393	5567943	OBP28: odorant binding protein OBP28	<b>-35.93</b>	-6.24	-
AAEL005925	5567269	geranylgeranyl pyrophosphate synthase	<b>-38.51</b>	3.74	2.96E-03
AAEL006396	5567937	OBP31: odorant binding protein OBP31	<b>-56.46</b>	-3.6	-1.31
AAEL003511	5578352	general odorant-binding protein 45-like	<b>-59.39</b>	-1.75	0.79
AAEL015262	5566792	phosphatidylethanolamine-binding protein, putative	<b>-59.59</b>	1.4	0.56
AAEL000796	5566894	general odorant-binding protein 45-like	<b>-302.47</b>	3.74	2.66
AAEL015052	5566038	steroid receptor RNA activator 1	<b>-358.45</b>	3.11	7.73
AAEL000827	5566899	general odorant-binding protein 45-like	<b>-362.89</b>	-1.75	-
AAEL000846	5566895	general odorant-binding protein 45-like	<b>-397.26</b>	2.42	0.51
AAEL000833	5566896	general odorant-binding protein 45-like	<b>-739.97</b>	2.42	1.27
AAEL000835	5566905	general odorant-binding protein 45-like	<b>-811.93</b>	-	-0.78
AAEL000837	5566897	general odorant-binding protein 45-like	<b>-883.73</b>	-1.01	2.67
AAEL000701	5565919	39S ribosomal protein L4, mitochondrial	1.25	<b>438.21</b>	-
AAEL015019	5565969	protein artichoke	-1.43	<b>42.54</b>	1.31
DEFD	5579095	defensin-A-like	-8.11	<b>31.28</b>	-4.25
AAEL014386	5564283	serine protease easter	-2.06	<b>30.31</b>	2.23
DEFA_AEDAE	5579099	defensin-A	-7.35	<b>21.99</b>	-4.45
AAEL015430	5579444	serine protease, putative	-1.19	<b>21.79</b>	-1.05
AAEL015639	5579270	transferrin	-3.55	<b>19.09</b>	-1.67
AAEL014005	5579131	clip-domain serine protease, putative	-2.03	<b>17.69</b>	1.47
CTLMA15	5563672	C-type lectin 37Da	-1.1	<b>16.19</b>	3.91

TRY5_AEDAE	5578510	trypsin 5G1	-1.15	<b>15.52</b>	2.13
DEFC_AEDAE	5579094	defensin-C	-8.23	<b>14.5</b>	-5.59
AAEL013640	5578322	lung carbonyl reductase	3.51	<b>13.7</b>	1.49
AAEL010429	5573346	protein G12	5.92	<b>13.51</b>	25.07
AAEL002726	5575756	37 kDa salivary gland allergen Aed a 2-like	1.09	<b>12.19</b>	1.63
AAEL015458	5579417	transferrin	-9.02	<b>11.93</b>	-1.19
AAEL013542	5578161	elongation of very long chain fatty acids	-1.65	<b>11.85</b>	2.91
AAEL002672	5575549	matrix metalloproteinase-19	-1.25	<b>11.49</b>	1.36
AAEL013990	5579047	hexamerin-1.1	-1.16	<b>10.97</b>	1.96
AAEL005787	5567041	serine protease easter	-1.05	<b>10.3</b>	1.72
AAEL015628	5579281	glycine dehydrogenase	2.92	<b>10.07</b>	1.84
AAEL004134	5564162	lupus la ribonucleoprotein	2.24	<b>-69.95</b>	-2.86
AAEL003946	5563782	28S ribosomal protein S33, mitochondrial	-2.19	<b>-101.56</b>	1.57
AAEL009497	5572080	probable phosphomannomutase	-1.25	<b>-676.56</b>	-3.51
AAEL015052	5566038	steroid receptor RNA activator 1	-358.45	3.11	<b>212.47</b>
AAEL010429	5573346	protein G12	5.92	13.51	<b>25.07</b>
AAEL009435	5571953	adhesion regulating molecule 1	-1.34	-1.21	<b>13.51</b>
AAEL002613	5575308	peritrophin-48	3.23	-3.98	<b>11.35</b>
ATT	5578028	attacin-B	4.4	-1.42	<b>-10.49</b>
AAEL007040	5568687	protein lozenge, transcript variant X3	-1.83	45.7	<b>-12.57</b>
AAEL011550	5574942	seminal metalloprotease 1	-1.93	1.71	<b>-22.18</b>
CUSOD3_a	5573744	superoxide dismutase [Cu-Zn]	1.03	1.18	<b>-39.11</b>

### Day 2

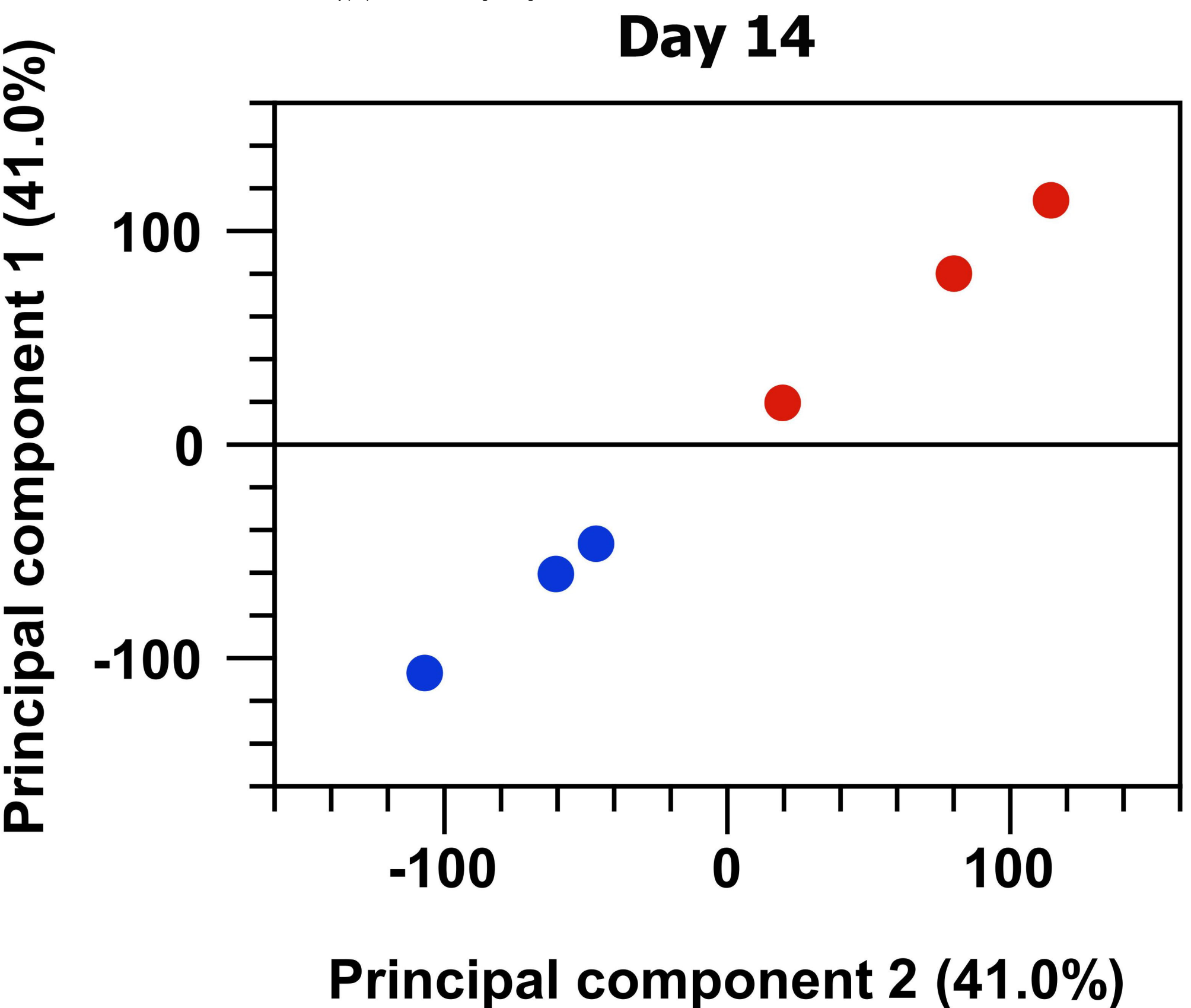


### Day 7



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### Day 14

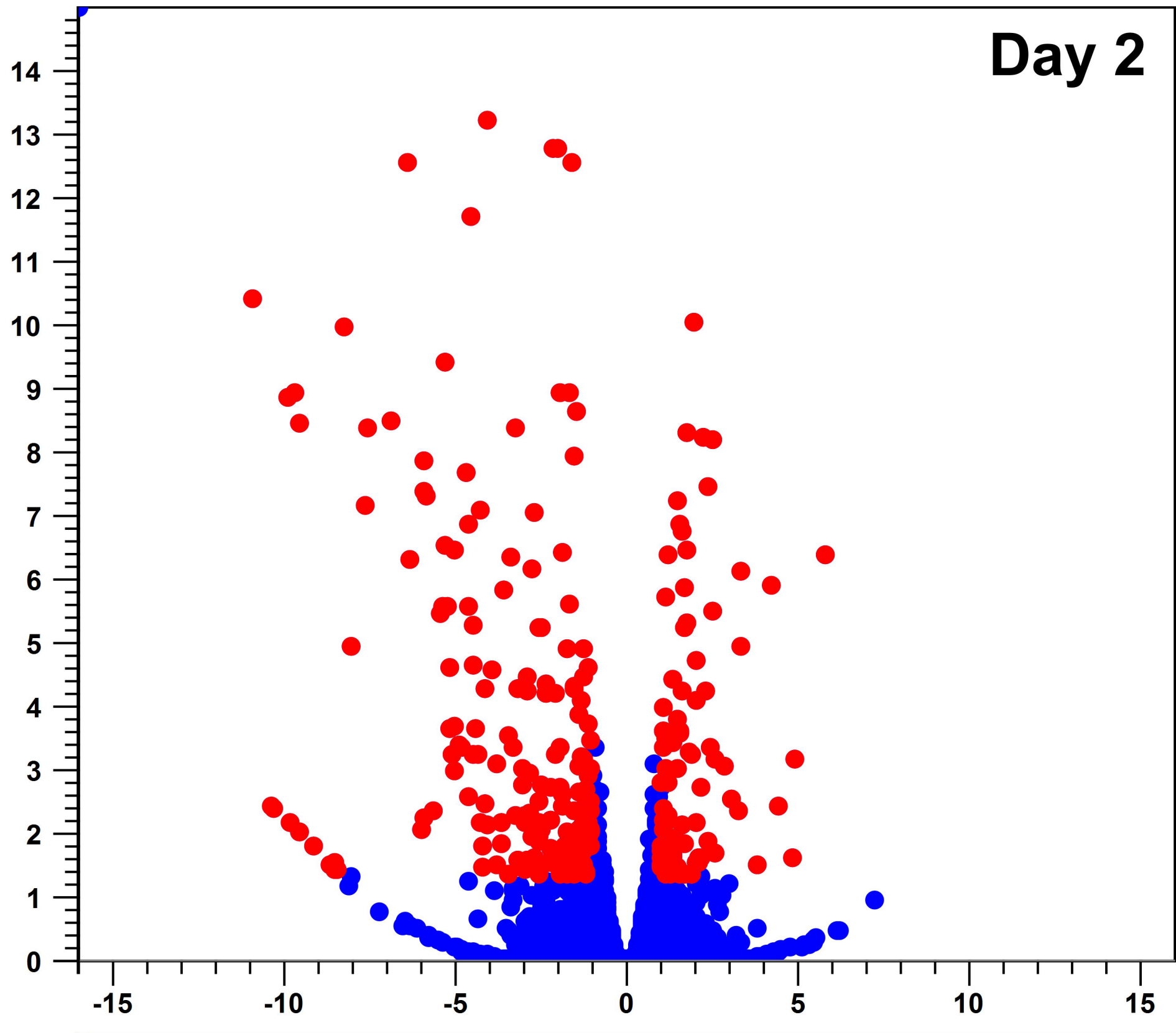


● Control

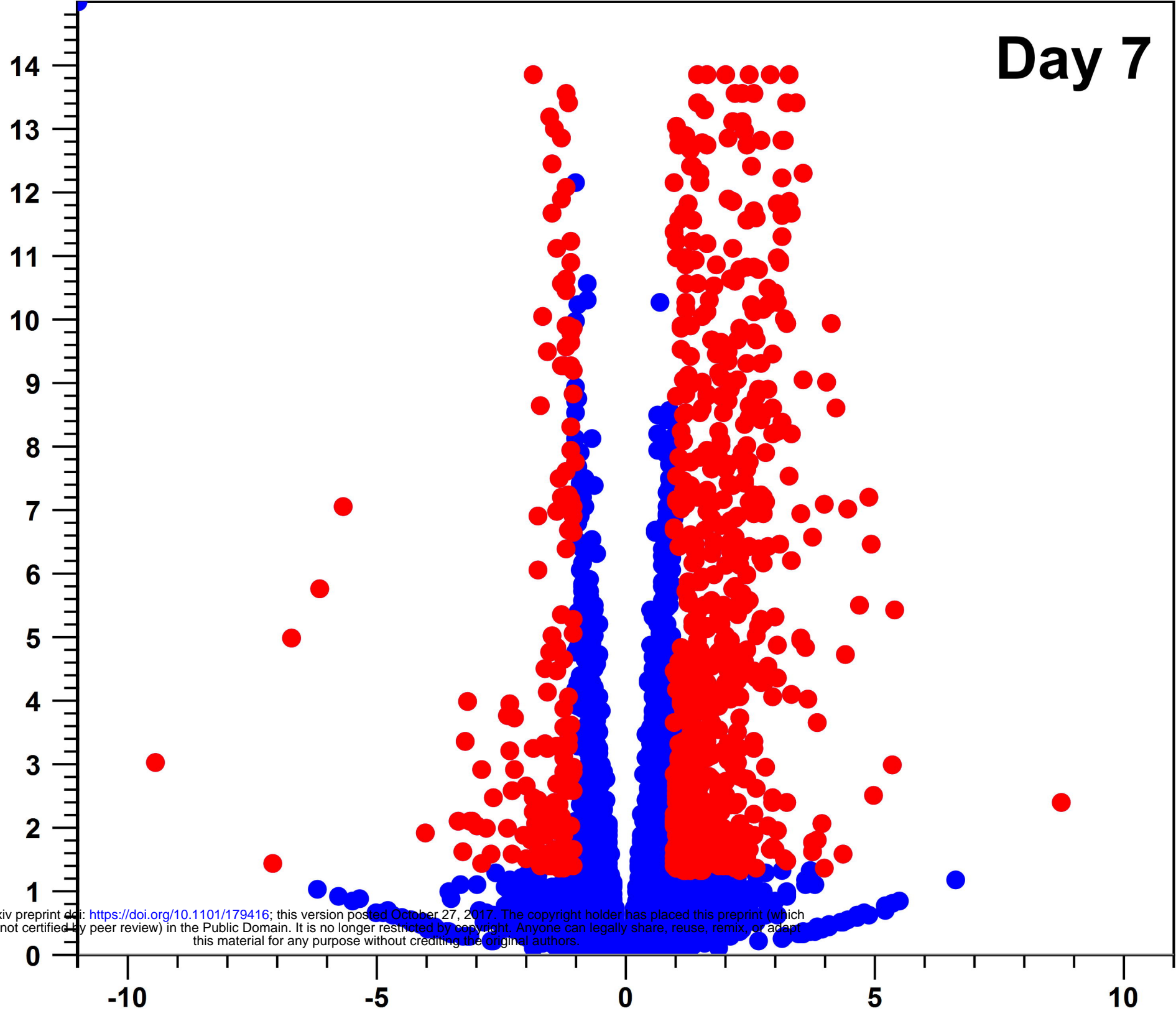
● ZIKV Infected



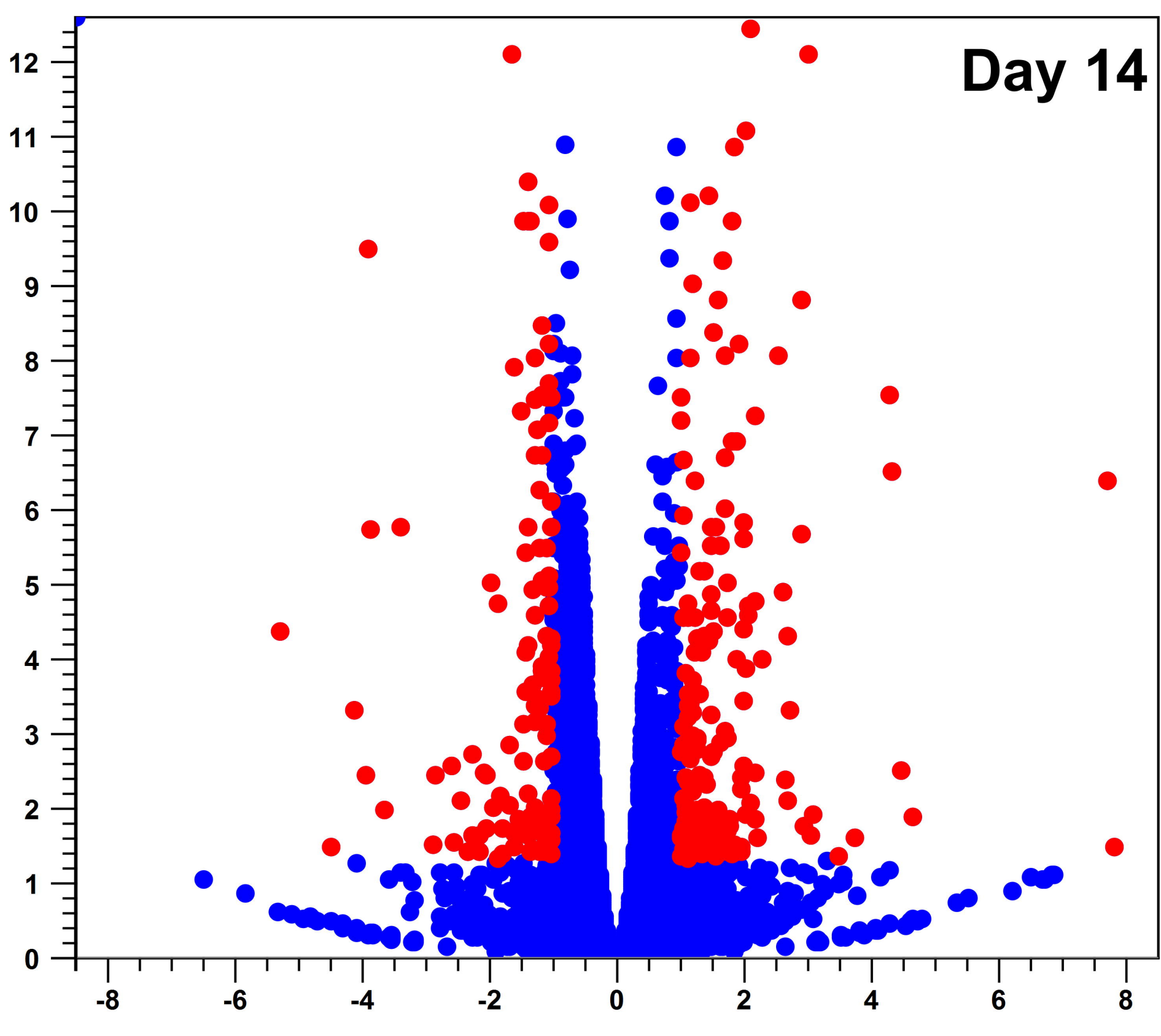
Day 2



Day 7



Day 14

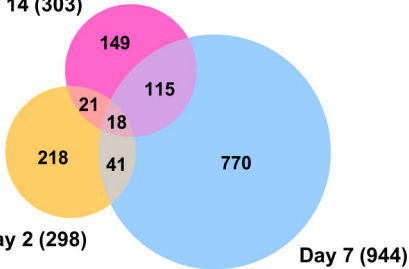


Log2 Fold Change

**-Log10 (P-Values)**

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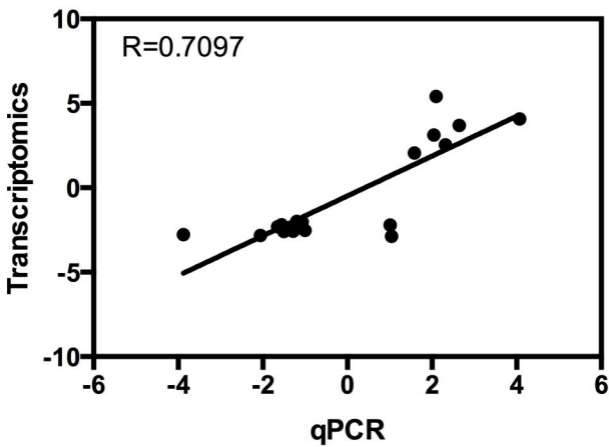
**Day 14 (303)**



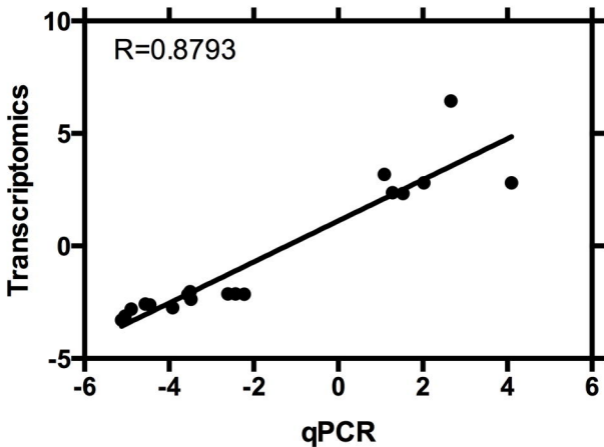
**Day 2 (298)**

**Day 7 (944)**

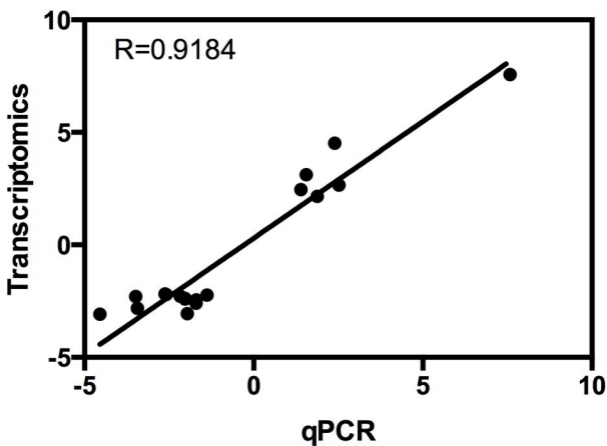
### Day 2



### Day 7

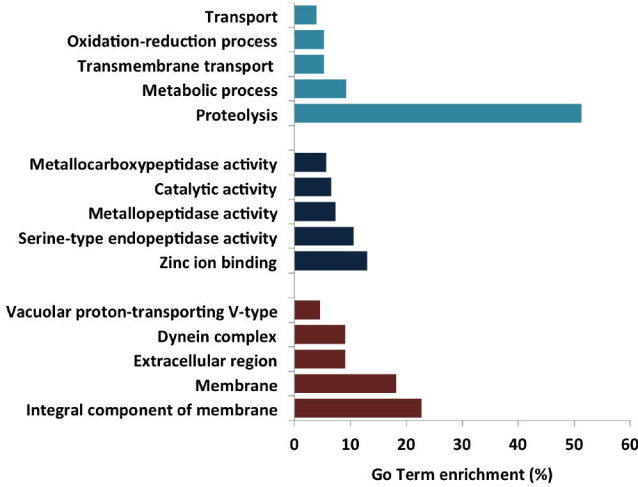


### Day 14

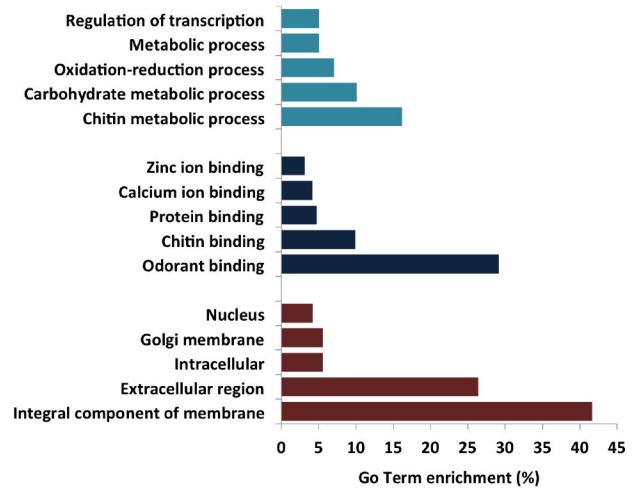


## Enriched genes

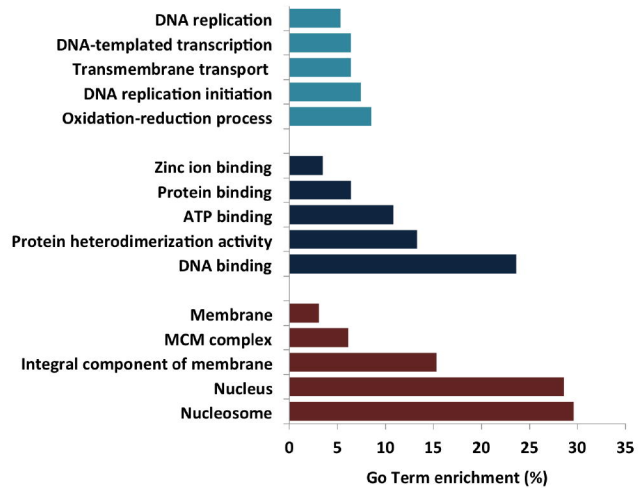
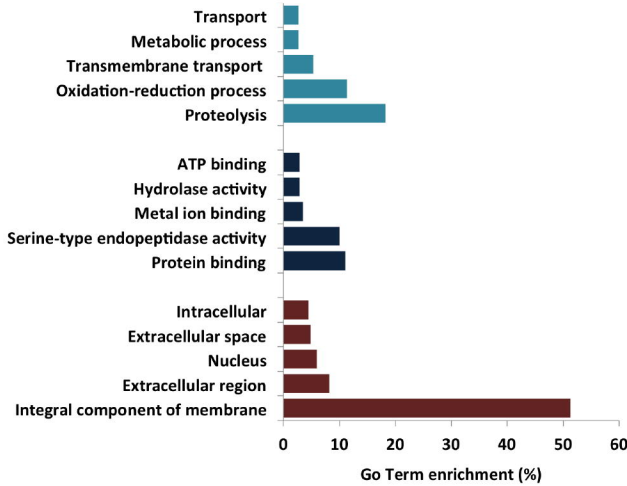
Day 2



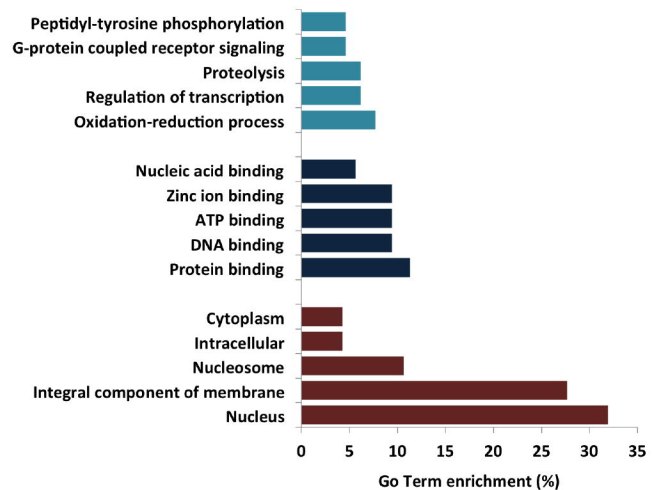
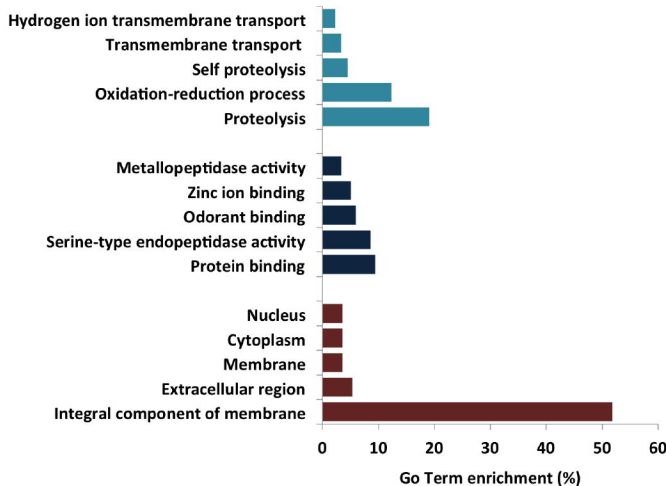
## Depleted genes



Day 7



Day 14



■ Biological process   ■ Molecular function   ■ Cellular component

