### A comprehensive study of Phospholipid fatty acid rearrangements in the early onset of the metabolic syndrome: correlations to organ dysfunction.

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Running title: Diet-induced rearrangements of phospholipids

Data described in the manuscript will be made available from the corresponding author upon request

#### 1 Abstract

2 The balance within phospholipids (PL) between Saturated Fatty Acids (SFA) and mono- or poly-3 Unsaturated Fatty Acids (UFA), is known to regulate the biophysical properties of cellular membranes. 4 As a consequence, perturbating this balance alters crucial cellular processes in many cell types, such as vesicular budding and the trafficking/function of membrane-anchored proteins. The worldwide 5 6 spreading of the Western-diet, which is specifically enriched in saturated fats, has been clearly 7 correlated with the emergence of a complex syndrome, known as the Metabolic Syndrome (MetS), 8 which is defined as a cluster of risk factors for cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes and hepatic 9 steatosis. However, no clear correlations between diet-induced fatty acid redistribution within cellular 10 PL, the severity/chronology of the symptoms associated to MetS and the function of the targeted 11 organs, particularly in the early onset of the disease, have been established. In an attempt to fill this 12 gap, we analyzed in the present study PL remodeling in rats exposed during 15 weeks to a High Fat/High 13 Fructose diet (HFHF) in several organs, including known MetS targets. We show that fatty acids from 14 the diet can distribute within PL in a very selective way, with PhosphatidylCholine being the preferred 15 sink for this distribution. Moreover, in the HFHF rat model, most organs are protected from this 16 redistribution, at least during the early onset of MetS, at the exception of the liver and skeletal muscles. 17 Interestingly, such a redistribution correlates with clear-cut alterations in the function of these organs. 18

*Keywords*: Saturated fat; Phospholipids; Type 2 Diabetes; Cardiovascular diseases; Hepatic Steatosis;
 polyunsaturated fatty acids

#### 21 1. Introduction

22 The first observations concerning the involvement of obesity and dyslipidemia in the occurrence of metabolic disorders, including type 2 diabetes, fatty liver and cardiovascular diseases, go back to the 23 24 late 1960's. Since then, the prevalence of this metabolic syndrome has been clearly correlated to the 25 worldwide spreading of the Western-diet which is excessively rich in sugar and saturated fat. In obese 26 individuals, the incidence of the metabolic syndrome is associated with high plasma levels of Non 27 Esterified Fatty Acids (NEFA) and more specifically of long-chain saturated fatty acids (SFA) (1). A prime 28 example of long chain SFA is Palmitate (bearing 16 carbons and no double-bond in the acyl chain: 16:0), 29 the main component of Palm oil. When the storage capacity of the adipose tissue is exceeded, NEFA 30 tend to accumulate into cells not suited for lipid storage, among which muscle cells, hepatocytes and 31 pancreatic  $\beta$ -cells are prime examples (1). As a corollary, it is now widely accepted that fatty acid 32 imbalances are directly involved in the promotion of insulin resistance, non-alcoholic steatohepatitis 33 (NASH), impaired glucose tolerance and systemic inflammation (2).

34 Phospholipids (PL), which bear two fatty acid chains, are the main components of cellular membranes. 35 In mammalian cells, PhosphatidylCholine (PC) is the most abundant PL (3). Ethanolamine (Etn)-36 PL the abundant containing species are second most phospholipids, in which 37 PhosphatidylEthanolamine (PE), a diacyl glycerophospholipid, and ethanolamine plasmalogen (PE(P)), 38 an alkenylacylglycerophospholipid, are the main constituents (4, 5). These species, and to a lesser 39 extent, PhosphatidylInositol (PI) and PhosphatidylSerine (PS), are the most abundant lipid classes 40 whatever the organ considered, constituting 75 % of all lipid species in the heart of rats, and 79 % in 41 the liver, as examples (3). Maintaining the equilibrium between SFA, Mono- and Poly- Unsaturated 42 Fatty Acids (UFA) within membrane PL is crucial to sustain the optimal membrane biophysical 43 properties, compatible with selective organelle based processes, including vesicular budding or 44 membrane-protein trafficking and function (6). As a corrolary, impaired balances within SFA and UFA 45 have been demonstrated to result in dramatic cellular dysfunctions in cells relevant of the metabolic 46 syndrome (for review, see (7)). As examples, altered insulin secretion in pancreatic  $\beta$ -cells or 47 impairment in Glucose disposal in muscle and liver cells have been reported in response to SFA 48 overload (7). This process, which is referred to as lipotoxicity, ultimately leads to cell death by 49 apoptosis in all the cellular systems tested (7).

50 Many animal models of the metabolic syndrome, either genetic or diet-induced, have been described 51 so far (8). Recently, Lozano et al. reported an elegant rat model based on an high-fructose and high-52 fat diet (HFHF; (9)). These authors could demonstrate that the combination of high fat and high 53 carbohydrate induced type 2 diabetes with widespread tissues effects. The phenotype increased 54 gradually from two month to eight months following the shift to HFHF, with insulin-resistance and 55 hepatic disorders increasing progressively to reach a maximum at this latter time point. Since with the 56 increased consumption of sugar-rich and fatty-products, and the increase in preference for such 57 products, metabolic disorders are becoming more common at a younger age in humans, this model appears to be very appealing to evaluate the chronology of the impacts of the diet, particularly during 58 the early onset of the metabolic syndrome. 59

In this context, the present study aimed at evaluating the distribution of fatty acids coming from the diet within cellular PL within various organs in the HFHF model. We focused in this work on the early stages of the phenotype set-up. Moreover, the function of the most impacted organs, in terms of fatty acid distribution, was also evaluated.

#### 64 2. Materials and Methods

#### 65 2.1 Animals

The present study was approved by the Comité d'Ethique et d'Expérimentation Animale (COMETHEA) and the French Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche et de l'Innovation (authorization n°2016071215184098). The protocols were designed according to the Guiding Principles in the Care and Use of Animals approved by the Council of the American Physiological Society and were in adherence with the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals published by the US
 National Institutes of Health (NIH Publication no. 85-23, revised 1996) and according to the European
 Parliament Directive 2010/63 EU.

73 We recapitulated the model developed by Lozano et al. (9). Twenty eight male eight week old Wistar 74 rats (275-299 g), supplied by Envigo (Gannat, France), were housed in a temperature-controlled room, 75 in a 12-h-light/dark cycle environment with ad libitum access to water and food. After one week of 76 acclimatization, the rats were randomly divided into two groups of 14 rats each. The first group had 77 free access to a standard diet (CTL) from MUCEDOLA (Settimo Milanese, Italy), with the following 78 macronutrient composition: 3.0 % fat, 18.5 % protein, 46 % carbohydrate, 6 % fibre, and 7 % ash 79 (minerals). The second group "High Fat High Fructose" (HFHF) received a purified laboratory 80 hypercaloric rodent diet "WESTERN RD" (SDS, Special Diets Services, Saint Gratien, France) containing 81 21.4 % fat, 17.5 % protein, 50 % carbohydrate, 3.5 % fibre, and 4.1 % ash, and additional 25 % of 82 fructose (Sigma-Aldrich, Saint-Louis, Missouri, USA) in water. Fatty acid distribution within the fat 83 fraction of both diets is displayed in Supplementary Table 1. In "WESTERN RD", among fatty acids, the 84 mono-unsaturated fatty acid Oleate and the saturated fatty acid Palmitate were the most represented and were found in equal amounts, contributing to 60 % of total fatty acids within the fat fraction. 85 During the longitudinal observation, body weight was measured each week and plasma glucose, 86 87 plasma Triglycerides and plasma Cholesterol levels were determined every 2 weeks at the same time 88 (2 PM) under random fed conditions. A final experiment was performed 15 weeks after the initiation 89 of the different diets and plasma glucose, insulin, cholesterol, triglyceride and NEFA levels were 90 measured after a three hour fasting period to allow gastric emptying. All rats were sacrificed 16 weeks 91 after starting administration of each diet for futher lipidomic profiling and *ex-vivo* experiments.

92 2.2 Biochemical plasma analysis

Blood glucose levels were measured using an automatic glucose monitor (One Touch vita - LifeScan
Inc., Milpitas, California, USA). Plasma triglyceride and total Cholesterol concentrations were

determined using commercially available colorimetric kits (Sobioda, Montbonnot-Saint-Martin,
France). Plasma free fatty acids were quantified by a colorimetric NEFA kit (Wako Chemicals, Osaka,
Japan). For lipoprotein characterization, plasma samples were collected and subjected to fractionation
by FPLC (ÄKTA pure chromatography system - GE Healthcare Life Sciences, Chicago, Illinois, USA).
Cholesterol and Triglyceride concentrations in each fraction were measured using commercially
available colorimetric kits (Sobioda, Montbonnot-Saint-Martin, France).

#### 101 2.3 Lipid Extraction, Phospholipid Purification and Mass Spectrometry Analyses

After rats were anesthetized, the organs were quickly removed and put on ice surface. These organs were cut into small pieces (1-2 mm<sup>3</sup>) and dipped in liquid nitrogen. The frozen pieces were introduced into cryotubes before immersion in liquid nitrogen for storage at -80°C.

105 Lipids were extracted from each individual sample, according to the following procedure. Each frozen 106 sample was first submitted to three rounds of grinding using a Precellys Evolution homogenizer (Bertin 107 Technologies, Montigny-le-Bretonneux, France) and resuspended into 1 ml of water before tranfer into 108 glass tubes containing 500 µL of glass beads (diameter 0.3–0.4 mm; Sigma-Aldrich, Saint-Louis, 109 Missouri, USA). Lipids were extracted using chloroform/methanol (2:1, v/v) and shaking with an orbital shaker (IKAH VXR basic VibraxH - Sigma-Aldrich, Saint-Louis, Missouri, USA) at 1500 rpm during at least 110 1 h, as already described elsewhere (10). The final organic phase was evaporated and dissolved in 111 112 100 µL dichloromethane for purification of Phospholipids (PL) on a silica column (Bond ELUT-SI - Agilent 113 Technologies, Santa Clara, California, USA). Lipid samples were loaded on the top of the column. Nonpolar lipids were eluted by addition of 2 mL dichloromethane and glycolipids with 3 mL acetone. PLs 114 115 were then eluted by 2 mL chloroform/methanol/H<sub>2</sub>O (50:45:5, v/v/v).

PL analysis in Mass Spectrometry (MS) was performed by a direct infusion of purified lipid extracts on
a Synapt G2 HDMS (Waters Corporation, Milford, Massachusetts, USA) equipped with an Electrospray
lonization Source (ESI). The mass spectrum of each sample was acquired in the profile mode over 1 min.
The scan range for PL analysis was from 500 to 1200 m/z. PS, PI, PE and its Plasmalogens (PE(P)) species
were analyzed in negative ion mode after the addition of 0.1% (v/v) triethylamine (Supplementary

121 Fig. 1A). PC species were analyzed in positive ion mode after the addition of 0.1% (v/v) formic acid as 122 already described (10) (Supplementary Fig. 2A). Identification of the various PL species was based on 123 their exact mass using the ALEX pipeline (11), and on MS/MS fragmentation for structural confirmation 124 of the polar head (PL class) and the determincation of the fatty acid composition. MS/MS experiments 125 of PI, PS, PE and PE(P) were performed by collision-induced-dissociation (CID) in the negative ion mode. 126 Examples of obtained MS/MS spectra in the negative ion mode concerning some PLs are presented in 127 the Supplementary Fig. 1B-D, which shows characteristic fragment ions allowing the identification of 128 PL structures. MS/MS experiments in negative ion mode also allowed the identification of fatty acid 129 chains in PC species as shown in Supplementary Fig. 2C. MS/MS spectrum in positive ion mode led to 130 the identification of the polar head of PC class (characteristic and prominent fragment for all PC species 131 with m/z 184, as shown in Supplementary Fig. 2B).

132 Compelementary experiments were also conducted on muscle and liver samples on non-purified lipid 133 extracts in positive ion mode with a scan range from 300 to 1200 m/z to detect the neutral lipid species 134 like Cholesterol, Diglycerides (DG) and Triglycerides (TG) (Supplementary Fig. 12). The structure of these 135 compounds was confirmed based on the exact mass using the ALEX pipeline (11) and on MS/MS 136 fragmentation of main species. All spectra were recorded with the help of MassLynx software (Version 137 4.1, Waters). Data processing of MS/MS spectra in this work was carried out with Biovia Draw 19.1<sup>°</sup> 138 and MassLynx© software, with the help of Lipid Maps Lipidomics Gatway® 139 (https://www.lipidmaps.org/)

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#### 141 2.4 Exercice

To determine the diet feeding's effect on the functionnal capacity of rats, a maximal exercise test was used (*12*). In this test, 15 rats (CTL and HFHF groups, 7 and 8 per groups respectively) ran on a treadmill (Exer3/6 Treadmill - Columbus Instruments, Columbus, Ohio, USA) during five minutes at 13 m.min<sup>-1</sup> at a grade of 10 degrees, and the speed was increased by 3.6 m.min<sup>-1</sup> every two minutes until the animals were exhausted. At this time, the speed measured was their Maximum Running Speed (MRS).

147 The week before the first MRS test, a treadmill habituation session was performed.

#### 148 2.5 Muscles preparation and contraction measurement

149 EDL and Soleus muscles were carefully dissected with tendons intact on both ends and then vertically 150 tied between a fixed hook at the bottom of the water jacketed 100 mL chamber (EmkaBATH2 - Emka 151 Electronique, Noyant-la-Gravoyère, France) and the force transducer (MLTF500ST - ADInstruments, 152 Dunedin, New Zealand) by means of cotton threads. Before experiments, muscles were maintained for 153 10 min into the 25°C physiological solution chamber, under oxygenated conditions (95% O<sub>2</sub> and 5% 154 CO<sub>2</sub>). The physiological solution (Krebs solution) contained (in mmol/L.): 120 NaCl, 5 KCl, 2 CaCl<sub>2</sub>, 155 1 MgCl2, 1 NaH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>, 25 NaHCO<sub>3</sub>, and 11 glucose) and pH was 7.4. The isometric tension was recorded by means of the transducer through a module (PowerLab 2/26 - ADInstruments, Dunedin, New 156 157 Zealand) driven by the LabChart7 software (ADInstruments, Dunedin, New Zealand). Electrical external 158 field stimulation was delivered through a constant current stimulator (STM4 - Bionic Instruments, 159 Grenoble, France) and a pair of platinum electrodes (Radnoti, Terenure, Ireland) flanking both sides of 160 the isolated muscle. Optimum stimulation conditions and muscle length were established in the course 161 of preliminary experiments. In our device setup, supramaximal stimulation amplitude proved to be 162 200 mA for 1 ms, and the optimum length achieved for a resting pre-tension of 2 g.

163 The force-frequency relation was achieved by increasing step by step the frequency of iterative 164 stimulation current pulses (supramaximal amplitude and duration indicated above) as follows: 2, 5, 15, 165 25, 40, 50, 75, 100 Hz. Each sequence of multiple pulses was applied, for EDL, for 1s followed by a 166 relaxing period of 1s and, for Soleus, for 2s followed by a 1 s relaxing period. The absolute force was 167 measured as amplitude at end of the pulse and normalized to the muscle weight (in N/g of muscle). 168 The assessment of muscle fatigue was achieved by performing force-frequency relation protocol 169 before (pre-fatigue) and 30 s after (post-fatigue) a fatigue protocol consisting of 30 successive sets of 170 stimulations at 100 Hz.

#### 171 2.6 Contraction measurement on isolated aortic rings

172 The thoracic aorta of rats was removed and placed into Krebs solution containing (in mM): 120 NaCl, 173 4.7 KCl, 2.5 CaCl<sub>2</sub>, 1.2 MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 1.2 KH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>, 15 NaHCO<sub>3</sub>, 11.1 D-glucose, pH 7.4. After separation of 174 connective tissues, the thoracic segment of aorta was cut into rings of 3mm in length. Rat aorta rings 175 were mounted between a fixed clamp at the base of a water-jacketed 5 ml organ bath contained an oxygenated (95% O<sub>2</sub> and 5% CO<sub>2</sub>) Krebs solution and an IT1-25 isometric force transducer (Emka 176 177 Technologies, Paris, France; (13, 14)). All experiments were performed at 37°C. A basal tension of 2 g 178 was applied in all experiments. During 1 h, tissues were rinsed three times in Krebs solution and the 179 basal tone was always monitored and adjusted to the range 400-1000 mg (15). 1  $\mu$ M norepinephrine 180 (denoted NE) was used to evoke the sustained contractile response.

#### 181 2.7 Langendorff perfusion analyses

182 A left ventricular balloon system allows for real-time monitoring of the pressure developed by the 183 contractile left ventricle of hearts mounted in a Langendorff set-up. To achieve this goal, control or 184 HFHF rats were anaesthetized by intraperitoneal injection of sodium pentobarbital (60 mg/kg). The 185 heart was quickly removed and the ascending aorta was connected according to the Langendorff 186 technique (16) and a 0.06 ml latex balloon (VK 73-3479) was inserted in the left ventricle. 187 The balloon was connected to a pressure transducer which was linked to the data acquisition system 188 (PowerLab 425 - ADInstruments, Dunedin, New Zealand). Hemodynamic and functional parameters 189 were recorded on a personal computer using LabChart software (ADInstruments, Dunedin, New 190 Zealand). Hearts were allowed to stabilize during 30 minutes while perfused with standard Krebs 191 solution. Functional parameters were assessed before, during and after a 30 minute-long ischemic 192 insult. Preischemic period consisted in ventricular pressure monitoring in standard perfusion 193 conditions during 10 minutes (Supplemental Fig. 14). Then, ischemia was induced by complete 194 cessation of coronary flow during 30 minutes (global ischemia). At the end, reperfusion was initiated

by re-establishing coronary flow and cardiac parameters were recorded and analyzed during the subsequent 30 minutes.

#### 197 2.8 Statistical analysis

P values were calculated either by two-tailed *t*-tests or ANOVA, completed by adequate post-tests, as
indicated the corresponding figure legends. All analyses were performed using the Graphpad Prism 5
software. ns: non-significant; \*\*\*\*P < 0.0001, \*\*\*P < 0.001, \*\*P < 0.01 and \*P < 0.05.</li>

#### 3. Results

#### 202 3.1 Metabolic follow-up

203 After 5 weeks of diet, HFHF induced a significant increase in body weight (p < 0.05) maintained until 204 the end of the study, in comparison to standard diet (CTL; Fig. 1A). Alterations in Glucose homeostasis 205 were visible from the sixth week under HFHF (Fig. 1B). The HFHF rats also developed a dyslipidemia 206 with a significant increase in blood of Triglyceride and Cholesterol levels as early as 2 and 4 weeks of 207 age, respectively (Fig. 1C and 1D). These data recapitulated the observations from Lozano et al. (9). At 208 15 weeks, additional metabolic measurements were performed on 12 rats after prior gastric emptying 209 (6 control and 6 HFHF; see below), and all animals were sacrificed to perform the phospholipid analyses 210 and the ex-vivo experiments described below.

#### 211 3.2 Fatty acid distribution within phospholipids varies depending on the organ

In a first step, we determined the fatty acid distribution within the different phospholipid species (PL), namely PhosphatidylCholine (PC), PhosphatidylEthanolamine (PE), PhosphatidylSerine (PS) and PhosphatidylInositol (PI) in various organs from rats under a standard diet (CTL). This study was completed by the analysis of Plasmalogens which correspond to specific glycerophospholipids species containing a vinyl-ether bond at the *sn*-1 position (4). Among this lipid class, ethanolamine plasmalogens (PE(P)) are found in all rat organs ((4) and see below), whereas choline plasmalogens, which can be found in significant amounts in specific human tissues, are only detected as traces in rat 219 organs ((4) and our unpublished data). The present study was performed on known targets of 220 metabolic syndrome-induced disorders, such as the liver, skeletal muscles (EDL and Soleus), the 221 vascular system (heart and aorta) and the pancreas, and was completed by the same analyses on the 222 brain, spleen and lung. In this aim, total PL were extracted from the various organs and analyzed by 223 mass spectrometry, in both the positive and negative ion modes, as described in the "Materials and 224 Methods" section. Examples of characteristic spectra obtained in the negative and positive ion modes 225 are displayed in Supplementary Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, respectively. The results obtained for PC are displayed 226 in Fig. 2 as radar graphs and Supplementary Fig. 3 as histograms, and the data corresponding to PE, PS, 227 PI and PE(P) are shown in Supplementary Fig. 4 to 7. In these figures, PL species are denominated by 228 their initials followed by the total number of carbons and the number of carbon–carbon double bonds 229 in their acyl chains (as an example, PC 38:4 corresponds to a PhosphatidylCholine bearing 38 carbon 230 atoms and four double bonds in its acyl chains).

As already described in previous studies (*17*), a first observation is that PC is the PL species which displays the widest variations in terms of fatty acid chain distribution depending on the organ considered (Fig. 2 and Supplementary Fig. 3), whereas PI essentially appears as a major species (PI 38:4) in all the organs studied (Supplementary Fig. 4).

235 Concerning PC, it clearly appears that some organs are particularly enriched in species bearing 236 polyunsaturated fatty acid chains (PUFA; more than two double-bonds/unsaturations in their fatty acid 237 chains; *e. g.* PC 38:4), whereas others preferentially contain PC with two saturated fatty acyl chains (*e.* 238 *g.* PC 32:0) (Fig. 2).

To visualize better these variations, the Double-Bond (DB) index was calculated in each case (Fig. 3A). As shown, the liver, skeletal muscles and the cardiovascular system were particularly enriched in PUFAcontaining PC species (DB>2). By contrast, the spleen, the brain and the lung contained remarkably high amounts of saturated PC species (DB=0). The brain also differentiated from other organs by its

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high levels of monounsaturated PC species (DB=1). In the latter case, PC 34:1 appeared as the major
species. Pancreas also displayed a very characteristic signature, with high levels of DB=2 PC.

Among PUFA, important variations could also be observed depending on the organ considered (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3A). If Arachidonic Acid (AA; 20:4) appeared as the most represented fatty acid in pancreas, spleen, liver, lung and the cardiovascular system, as combinations with Palmitate (PC 36:4) or Stearate (PC 38:4; Fig. 2; Table 1), Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA; 22:6) was exquisitely enriched in skeletal muscles, in combination with Palmitate (PC 38:6; Fig. 2; Table 1).

250 PE differentiated from PC in the sense that PUFA-containing species were systematically dominant, 251 whatever the organ considered (Supplementary Fig. 5 and 9 A). However, the DHA to AA balance 252 greatly varied among organs. As already observed for PC, DHA was particularly enriched in skeletal 253 muscles, where PE 40:6 was the most represented species. Interestingly, DHA was also the most 254 prominent PUFA in the brain, a situation very different of PC behavior in this organ (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3A). 255 In the heart, whereas very similar signatures were observed in PC for ventricles and atria, PE 40:6 was 256 enriched in the ventricles as compared to these latest. Even if less marked than with PC, the brain, 257 spleen and lung appeared as the most saturated PE organs and the pancreas as the most DB=2 enriched 258 organ.

The fatty acid distribution within PS paralleled the one observed with PE (Supplementary Fig. 6 and Supplementary Fig. 10 A), with PUFA being the major fatty acids in all the organs considered. Again, DHA was the most represented PUFA in skeletal muscles, brain, ventricle and atrium (PS 40:6), whereas AA was the most abundant in other organs (PS 38:4). The pancreas differentiated from others by a wider distribution of the fatty acyl chains, and relatively high levels of DB=2 species.

As already described elsewhere (*4*), PE(P) were detected in all the organs analyzed in this study, where they constituted between 30 and 56 % of ethanolamine-containing glycerophospholipids (*i. e.* PE and PE(P)), at the exception of the liver, in which their level dropped to 7 % only (data not-shown). Whatever the organ considered, PUFA-containing species were the most prominent (Supplementary Fig. 7 and 11A), with, as for PE and PS, a selective enrichment in DHA in the brain, the ventricle and skeletal muscles.

To summarize, all the organs studied here displayed very characteristic fatty acid distributions within PL and, therefore various saturation rates: they can be classified as DB=0/saturated organs (Spleen, lung), DB=1 (Brain), DB=2 (Pancreas) and DB>2 organs (liver, muscle and cardiovascular system). Among the latter, one can differentiate AA- (liver and Cardiovascular system) and DHA-enriched (skeletal muscle) organs. The brain is the organ which displays the most discrepancies between PL, PC being predominantly DB=2, whereas PE and PS are essentially DHA-enriched. These observations match and complete previous observations made by others (*17*).

- 277 3.3 Phospholipid species are differently affected by the High fat/High Fructose (HF/HF)
- 278 diet, in an organ-specific manner

The high-fat diet used in this study is exquisitely enriched in SFA and MUFA, and specially Palmitate (16:0) and Oleate (18:1) (Table S1). Surprisingly, PE, PE(P), PS and PI all appeared to be quite insensitive to this oversupply, their overall fatty acid profile remaining similar whatever the diet (Supplementary Fig. 4 to 11).

By contrast, PC was the most affected class, but in a very selective organ-specific manner, the liver and the muscles being the most affected organs (Fig. 2 and 3B). In these tissues, DB=1 species appeared to be increased (PC 32:1 and PC 34:1 in the liver; PC 34:1 in muscles), at the expense of PUFA-containing species (PC 36:4 and PC 38:4 in the liver; PC 36:4 and PC 38:6 in muscles; Fig. 2). Notably, the same tendency was observed for PE and PS, but to lower levels and below significance (Supplementary Fig. 5, 6, 9 and 10).

Tandem MS experiments provided more information about fatty acid composition of PC species (for a representative example, see Supplementary Fig. 2C). As shown in Table 1, a closer look to MS/MS analyses revealed that, in muscles, PC species have the same composition of fatty acids (the same PC subspecies) in CTL and HFHF diets. Furthermore, MS results showed that PC(16:0/18:1) clearly accumulated at the expense of AA- (PC(16:0/20:4)) and DHA- (PC(16:0/22:6)) containing species under the HFHF diet (Fig. 2). This result reflected the fatty acid composition of the HFHF diet, which is not only enriched in 16:0 and 18:1, but also contains lower amounts of Linoleic (18:2) and Linolenic (18:3) acids, being respectively the precursors for AA (20:4) and DHA (22:6), than the standard diet.

By contrast, in the liver, the situation appeared to be more complex than expected. Indeed, increased amounts of PC 32:1 and PC 34:1 could be partly accounted in this organ by the apparition of PC species that were not detected in the liver of the rats under the standard diet, namely PC(14:0/18:1) and PC(16:1/18:0) (Table 1). Notably, 14:0, 16:1 and 18:0 are also enriched in the HFHF diet (Table S1). Morover, decreased amounts of PC 36:4 et PC 38:4 were not only related to a global decrease in AAcontaining species, but were also accompanied with the formation of new species, namely PC(18:2/18:2) and PC(18:1/20:3), respectively (Table 1).

To summarize, two main organs appear to be highly reactive to the selective fatty acid-enrichment from the diet, namely the liver and skeletal muscles. Palmitate and Oleate preferentially distribute within PC under the form of PC 34:1. Moreover, a decrease in the amount of PUFA-containing species can also be observed in the same organs. This can be explained, at least for AA-containing species, by decreased amounts of the relevant precursor (namely Linoleic acid) in the HFHF diet.

#### 309 3.4 Lipotoxicity in the liver

Among the various tissues, liver clearly appeared to be one of the main targets of diet-induced fattyacid rearrangements in PL (Fig. 2 and 3). This was not a surprising observation, since the liver plays a key role in lipid metabolism, as the hub of fatty acid synthesis and lipid circulation through lipoprotein synthesis (*18*). In the HFHF model (*9*), alterations in liver function were manifested as early as 2 months following the shift to the enriched diet. The main manifestations at this early time point were the induction of steatosis, with a steatosis score of 1–2, according to Kleiner *et al.* (*19*), and increased hepatic levels of Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS). In the present study, we could also show that 4 317 months of HFHF resulted in a significant increase in liver weight (Fig. 4A), and in the amounts of 318 circulating lipids, including Triglycerides (Fig. 4B), Cholesterol (Fig. 4C) and Non-Esterified Free Fatty 319 Acids (NEFA; Fig. 4D). Analysis of the lipoprotein profile by Fast Protein Liquid Chromatography (FPLC) 320 revealed that HFHF rats displayed increased plasma concentrations of lipoproteins rich in cholesterol 321 (LDL and HDL; Fig. 4E). Moreover, we could also note an increase in Triglyceride levels within 322 Chylomicrons / VLDL (fractions 3 to 10) and within LDL / HDLs (fractions 20 to 50, Fig. 4F).

323 Since hepatic deposition of neutral lipids is a hallmark of steatosis, we also evaluated if such a 324 deposition could be visualized in the HFHF model. In this aim, MS analyses were performed on non-325 purified lipid extracts from liver samples (Supplementary Fig. 12). As shown, clear-cut accumulations 326 of Triglycerides (TG), Diglycerides (DG) and Free Cholesterol could be visualized in the liver of HFHF 327 rats (Supplementary Fig. 12). These observations were confirmed with another analytical method, i. e. 328 thin layer chromatography of hepatic neutral lipid fractions (Supplementary Fig. 13). These 329 observations confirmed the previous data from Lozano et al. (9), showing a significant increase in TG 330 in this organ as early as 2 months following induction of the HFHF diet, a situation which was 331 maintained after 8 months. Interestingly, selective TG and DG species appeared to accumulate in the liver under HFHF, the main ones being TG(52:2), TG(54:5), DG(34:1) a,d DG(36:2) (Supplementary 332 333 Fig. 12). Complementary MS/MS analyses (our unpublished data) revealed that these lipids 334 corresponded to 16:0- and 18:1- containing species, namely TG(16:0/18:1/18:1), TG(16:0/18:1/20:4), 335 DG(16:0/18:1) and DG(18:1/18:1), therefore reflecting the fatty acid composition of the HFHF diet.

#### 336 3.5 Lipotoxicity and muscle function

With the liver, muscles were the most affected tissues in terms of their sensitivity to fatty acid rearrangements within PL (Fig. 2 and 3). Interestingly however, by contrast to liver, this redistribution was not paralleled by the deposition of neutral lipids (TG, DG and Cholesterol; Supplementary Fig. 12 and 13). Fatty acid rearrangements corresponded to a decrease in the amounts of DHA containing PC species (namely PC 38:6), a lipid species that was exquisitely enriched in these tissues (Fig. 2; Table 1). Notably, the same observations could be done in either the fast-twitch (EDL) and slow-twitch (Soleus)
types of muscles (Fig. 2).

Obesity can cause a decline in contractile function of skeletal muscle. Isolated muscle preparations show that obesity often leads to a decrease in force produced per muscle cross-sectional area, and power produced per muscle mass (*20*).

We therefore investigated further the effects of HFHF diet on the functional features of both fasttwitch and slow twitch skeletal muscles. In this aim, the fast-twitch extensor digitorum longus muscles (EDL) and the slow twitch Soleus muscles (Soleus) were isolated from rats under both diets. A first observation was that absolute mass of these skeletal muscles was increased under the HFHF diet (Fig 5A and 5B).

In a next step, Soleus and EDL were stimulated with field electrodes to measure force characteristics in two different states: before fatigue (pre-fatigue) and immediately after a fatigue protocol (postfatigue) (Fig. 5 C-D).

355

356 Figure 5C displays examples of tetanus force responses, relative to muscle mass, in EDL and Soleus 357 muscles from control CTL and HFHF rats in the two pre- and post-fatigue stimulation conditions. In 358 these examples, force was classically found weaker in CTL Soleus muscle than in EDL CTL muscles in 359 pre-fatigue conditions (mean values: EDL:  $4.5 \pm 0.6$ , Soleus  $3.4 \pm 0.3$  N/g). Tetanic force was found 360 impaired by HFHF diet in EDL muscles and a reduction, but with less impact, was also observed in 361 Soleus (Fig. 5C). When we analyzed the force-frequency curves (Fig. 5D), for both EDL and Soleus 362 muscles, the HFHF diet (red curves) resulted in a decreased muscle tetanic force, compared with CTL, 363 starting at stimulation frequencies greater than 40 Hz - 50 Hz (At 100 Hz, EDL: 2.6 ± 0.8 N/g in HFHF versus 4.5 ± 0.6 N/g in the CTL group, Soleus: 1.5 ± 0.3 N/g in HFHF versus 3.4 ± 0.3 N/g in the CTL 364 365 group). These findings indicate that a HFHF diet impairs contractile force in both fast-twitch and slow 366 twitch muscles.

Moreover, a significant impairment of tetanic force after fatigue protocols was observed. At 100 Hz, in CTL EDL muscle, fatigue protocol led to a 82 % decrease (from 4.5  $\pm$  0.6 to 0.8  $\pm$  0.1 N/g) of tetanic force and such a decrease reached 85 % in HFHF EDL (from 2.6  $\pm$  0.8 to 0.4  $\pm$  0.1 N/g). The same effect, at a lesser extent, was recorded in Soleus: 32 % (from 3.4  $\pm$  0.3 to 2.3  $\pm$  0.2 N/g) in CTL and 39% (from 1.5  $\pm$  0.3 to 0.9  $\pm$  0.2 N/g) in HFHF.

To conclude, adaptations occurring in response to HFHF diet result in a general muscle force loss consistent with that observed in humans (*21*). These findings would imply that HFHF diet induces a drastic decrease of the tetanus force whatever the type of muscle and without significantly changing the behaviour towards fatigue.

376 3.5 Lipotoxicity and the cardiovascular system

By contrast to the liver and skeletal muscles, the cardiovascular system appeared to be quite protected
from diet-induced fatty acid redistribution within PL (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3).

However, since many evidences exist on the relationship between obesity and cardiovascular disease(CVD) in humans, even if the degree and the duration of obesity appears to affect the severity of CVD

381 (22), we decided to evaluate further the impacts of the HFHF diet on the cardiovascular system.

382

First, a maximal exercise test was used as an indicator of the cardio-respiratory capacity of rats. Interestingly, the Maximum Running Speeds (MRS) of the CTRL and the HFHF group were not significantly different post-diet, with values of 27.8 ± 0.83 and 29.4 ± 0.61 m/min, respectively (Fig. 6A). Therefore, HFHF clearly did not impair the global functional capacity of the animals.

387 Obese subjects with insulin resistance and hypertension have abnormal aortic elastic function, which 388 may predispose them to the development of left ventricular dysfunction (*23*). In this context, we 389 compared the basal tone on control and HFHF rat aorta, but we observed no difference between the 390 two types of aorta rings (Fig. 6B). The norepinephrine (denoted NE)-induced vasoconstriction was also 391 similar on control and HF/HF rat rings (Fig. 6B). Direct cardiac structural abnormalities and alterations in ventricular function have been shown to occur in severely obese patients and in a process that may predispose them to heart failure. More specifically, left ventricular (LV) hypertrophy in severe obesity (either eccentric or concentric) is frequently observed and the direct implication of metabolic disturbance, including Lipotoxicity, has been suggested (*22*).

The left ventricular balloon system allows for real-time monitoring of the pressure developed by the contractile left ventricle of hearts mounted in a Langendorff set-up. Rat hearts from either control (n=11) or HFHF (n=12) groups were submitted to the protocol illustrated in Supplementary Fig. 14. Parameters recorded during the pre-ischemic period (Fig. 6C) are illustrated in Fig. 6D, which shows that no significant difference was found between the two groups, whatever the parameter under consideration. In other words, the contractile behavior of rat hearts was not impacted by the feeding diet imposed to rats during the 15 weeks preceding the experiment.

404 When the hearts from both groups were submitted to global ischemia (Supplementary Fig. 15), 405 contractile performances rapidly decreased until developed pressure completely vanished. Again, no 406 significant difference was observed between control and HFHF rats, whatever the recorded parameter. 407 When perfusion was restored, as illustrated in Supplementary Fig. 15, cardiac performance was rapidly 408 recovered. It seems that there is a tendency of hearts from control rats to recover better than HFHF 409 hearts during reperfusion. However, this tendency only reaches statistical significance for LVDP at 1 410 and 5 min following reperfusion onset, all the other values remaining non-significantly different 411 between the two groups (Supplementary Fig. 15).

412

To conclude, the cardiovascular system appeared to be functionally protected during the early onsetof the metabolic syndrome under the HFHF diet in our conditions.

18

#### 415 4. Discussion

It is known since a long time that the fatty acid composition of the diet can influence Phospholipid signature in various tissues (For review, see (24)). However, an important conclusion from the present study is that not all organs are equal to this redistribution. Indeed, in the HFHF rat model, most organs were protected from fatty acid rearrangements, at least during the early onset of the metabolic syndrome, with the liver and skeletal muscles being the preferred targets (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3). A second important conclusion of the present study is that fatty acids from the diet can distribute within PL in a very selective way: PC appears to be the preferred sink for this distribution.

423 In the liver, this distribution was paralleled by the deposition of neutral lipids, including Di- and Tri-424 glycerides, Cholesterol and Steryl-esters (Supplementary Fig. 12 and 13). Hepatic deposition of neutral 425 lipid is a hallmark of dyslipidemia in obesity and it has been proposed to promote hepatic insulin 426 resistance associated with nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), which is a major factor in the 427 pathogenesis of type 2 diabetes and the metabolic syndrome (25, 26). As observed for PC, the main 428 TG and DG species which accumulated in this organ corresponded to the ones containing the fatty 429 acids which are specifically enriched in the HFHF diet used in this study, i. e. 16:0 and 18:1 430 (Supplementary Table 1): PC(16:0/18:1) (Table 1), TG(16:0/18:1/18:1), TG(16:0/18:1/20:4), 431 DG(16:0/18:1) and DG(18:1/18:1) (Supplementary Fig. 12). Interestingly, in obese individuals, DG 432 can inhibit insulin signaling by activation of Protein Kinase C (PKC) isoforms (26). In these patients, and 433 as in the HFHF model, hepatic DG composed of 16:0/18:1 and 18:1/18:1 are most abundant and also strongly related with insulin resistance (26). Accordingly, HFHF resulted in the present study in a 434 435 significant increase in the concentrations of circulating Glucose (Fig. 1B) and Insulin (data not-shown), 436 confirming previous data from Lozano et al. (9) showing that after 2 months, the HOMA2-IR 437 (homeostasis model assessment) values were higher than 2.4 in HFHF rats. These data demonstrated 438 insulin resistance in this model, at a very early stage in the onset of the metabolic syndrome. To summarize, similar lipid depositions/rearrangements are observed in the liver of obese individuals and
of HFHF rats, with likely similar impacts on the initiation of the insulin-resistance phenotype.

If the impacts of HFHF on the liver were not a a surprising observation, since this organ plays a key role in lipid metabolism, the fact that skeletal muscles were the second most affected tissues in terms of PC fatty acid rearrangements was less predictable (Fig. 2). Importantly, by contrast to liver, this redistribution was not paralleled by deposition of neutral lipids in these tissues (Supplementary Fig. 12 and 13).

446 Obesity is generally associated with changes in muscle quality, as it appears to result in larger muscles 447 of lower quality (*i. e.* less contractile force per unit of cross sectional area and lower power output per 448 unit of muscle mass), which have the same absolute force and power output of smaller muscles in lean 449 individuals (20). The exact same observations were made in the present study, HFHF resulting in 450 absolute increases in EDL and Soleus masses (Fig. 5A and 5B), but reduced force per muscle mass (Fig. 451 5C and 5D). Increase in muscle mass likely compensates poor muscle quality, at least in the early onset 452 of the metabolic syndrome, as manifested by the similar performances of the HFHF rats in the maximal 453 exercise tests (Fig. 6A). If the connection between muscle force and the observed decrease in PUFA-454 containing PL remains correlative at this step, knowing the importance of such lipid species in 455 membrane plasticity/elasticity (6, 27), additional experiments aiming at studying the intimate 456 relationships between the levels of PUFA-enriched PL, the membrane properties of muscle cells and 457 their ability to stretch/contract, will undoutfully shed new lights on these mechanisms.

Finally, the fact that the cardiovascular system (CS) was protected from fatty-acid rearrangements within PL and remained largely unaffected on a functional point of view was also an unexpected result. These observations suggest that protective mechanisms under dyslipidemia do exist to channel excess fatty acids to skeletal muscles rather than to CS. It has been demonstrated that the prognosis of Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) of a patient who just became obese might be different from another who has been obese for many yeasr (22). In a pionnering study, Nakajima *et al.* (28) demonstrated that alterations of cardiac performance in obese individuals is attributed not only to the excess of body
weight but also to the duration of obesity. Long lasting experiences to evaluate the impacts of HFHF
on the CS, both on PL fatty acid signature and overall performance will undoutfully help to establish
clearer connections between these processes.

To conclude, this study is, to our knowledge, the first of its kind to give such an overview of the distribution of fatty acids originating from the diet within PL in various organs and their functional performances. Further studies aiming at establishing direct links between PL fatty acid composition, relevant membrane properties in targeted cells, and organ function, particularly in the later steps of the metabolic syndrome, will undoutfully help at understanding the impacts of lipotoxicity on the progression of the associated diseases/comorbidities in this complex pathology.

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#### **Competing Interests**

The authors declare no competing or financial interests.

### 5. Figure legends

# Figure 1: Longitudinal measurements (random fed conditions) performed during the study

During the longitudinal observation, body weight was measured each week (A) and plasma glucose (B), plasma Triglycerides (C) and plasma Cholesterol (D) levels were determined every 2 weeks at the same time of the day (2 PM) under random fed conditions, according to the protocols described in the "Materials and Methods" section, for CTL and HFHF rats (n = 8). Data are presented as means ± SD. Parameters were compared between CTL and HFHF rats using unpaired t-test.

#### Figure 2: PC species distribution in various organs as a function of the diet.

Total lipids were extracted and phospholipid species were purified and analyzed by ESI-MS from samples corresponding to the indicated organs obtained either rats fed with a normal (CTL) or HFHF diet (HFHF), as described in the "Materials and Methods" section. PC subspecies distribution in each case are displayed. The total carbon chain length (x) and number of carbon-carbon double bounds (y) of the main PC molecular species (x:y) are indicated. Values are means ± S.D. of four independent determinations from four individuals from both groups in each case.

Statistical analysis was performed using two-way ANOVA, completed by Bonferroni post-tests to compare means variations between the two groups of animals for each PC subspecies. Significant differences between CTL and HFHF are indicated (\*\*\*\*P < 0.0001, \*\*\*P < 0.001, and \*\*P < 0.01), either in green if a specific subspecies is decreased under the HFHF diet as compared to CTL, or in red if this subspecies is increased under the HFHF regimen.

## Figure 3: PC Double-Bond (DB) index and DHA to AA ratios in various organs as a function of the diet.

Total lipids were extracted and phospholipid species were purified and analyzed by ESI-MS from samples corresponding to the indicated organs, obtained either rats fed with a normal (CTL) or HFHF diet (HFHF), as described in the "Materials and Methods" section. The relative percentage of saturated (DB=0: no double bonds) versus monounsaturated (DB=1: one double bond), diunsaturated (DB=2: two double bonds) and polyunsaturated (DB > 2: > two double bonds) phosphatidylcholine (PC) species was obtained from the PC subspecies distribution displayed in Fig. 2. The ratio of Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA)- to Arachidonic Acid (AA)-containing PC subspecies in the various organs is also displayed.

#### Figure 4: Impacts of the diet on liver function

Livers from rats fed with either a standard (CTL) or a HFHF diet (diet) for 15 weeks were dissected and weighted, and the Liver/Total weight ratio was determined (A). 15 weeks after the initiation of the different diets, plasma Triglycerides (B), Cholesterol (C) and NEFA (D) levels were measured after a three hour fasting period to allow gastric emptying. In parallel, plasma samples were collected and subjected to fractionation by Fast Protein Liquid Chromatography (FPLC) and Cholesterol (E) and Triglyceride (F) concentrations in each fraction were measured. See the "Materials and Methods" section for details. All determinations were performed on 6 rats from each group. Values are means ± S.D. Parameters were compared between CTL and HFHF rats using unpaired *t*-test.

#### Figure 5: Impacts of the diet on the function of skeletal muscles

15 weeks after the initiation of the different diets (CTL or HFHF), plasma Glucose (A) and Insulin (B) levels were measured after a three hour fasting period to allow gastric emptying, as described under the "Materials and Methods" section (n = 6). At the same time point, the EDL (C) and Soleus (D) muscles were dissected and their weigth was determined for comparison between CTL and HFHF rats (n = 11). Values are means  $\pm$  S.E.M. Parameters were compared between CTL and HFHF rats using unpaired *t*-test (A-D).

Effects of HFHF diet on tetanus amplitude and fatigue of EDL and Soleus muscle (F and G). Examples of tetanus responses to electrical field stimulation at 100 Hz for EDL (left panel) and Soleus (right panel) before and after a fatigue protocol in control (blue traces) and HFHF (red traces) rats (F). Force-frequency relationships for the same types of muscle than in F (G). Values are means ± S.E.M. Statistical tests were performed using one-way analysis of variance and a Dunnett's multiple comparison as post test.

#### Figure 6: Impacts of the diet on the Cardiovascular System

The Maximal Running Speed (MRS) was determined 15 weeks after the initiation of the different diets (CTL (n = 7) or HFHF (n = 8)) (A). At the same time point, the basal tone and the induced-contraction was measured on rat aorta rings (B). Aorta rings obtained from four control and five HF/HF rats were mounted between a fixed clamp and incubated in Krebs solution to determine the basal tone (Left panel). 1  $\mu$ M Norepinephrine (denoted NE) was added to the same aorta rings to evoke the sustained contractile response (Right panel).

The pressure developed by the contractile left ventricle of the animals was also determined using a Langendorff set-up (C and D). Rat hearts from either control (n=11) or HFHF (n=12) groups were submitted to the protocol illustrated in Supplementary Fig. 10. Parameters recorded during the whole protocol are illustrated in C). The results obtained during pre-ischemic period are presented in D) as mean  $\pm$  SEM. Pre-ischemic parameters were compared between CTL and HFHF rats using unpaired *t*-test.

## Table 1: Distribution of the various PC subspecies in the liver and soleus as a function of the diet

PC studies were obtained after fragmentation studes (MS/MS) of the indicated PC species, as described in the "Materials and Methods" section and exemplified in Supplementary Fig. 2C. Subspecies that appeared to be increased or decreased under the HFHF diet as compared to the Normal diet (CTL) are indicated in Red and Green, respectively, based on the relative proportions of the various corresponding PC species obtained from direct infusion of lipid extracts, as displayed in Fig. 2. The relative quantities of the various subspecies corresponding to a given PC species are indicated by different font sizes. bioRxiv preprint doi: https://doi.org/10.1101/2019.12.13.875096; this version posted December 13, 2019. The copyright holder for this preprint (which was not certified by peer review) is the author/funder. All rights reserved. No reuse allowed without permission.

	Liver	
PC species	CTL	HFHF
PC(32:1)	PC(16:0/16:1)	PC(16:0/16:1), PC(14:0/18:1)
PC(34:2)	PC(16:0/18:2)	PC(16:0/18:2), PC(16:1/18:1)
PC(34:1)	PC(16:0/18:1)	PC(16:0/18:1), PC(16:1/18:0)
PC(36:4)	PC(16:0/20:4)	PC(16:0/20:4), PC(18:2/18:2)
PC(36:3)	PC(16:0/20:3), PC(18:1/18:2)	PC(16:0/20:3), PC(18:1/18:2)
PC(36:2)	PC(18:0/18:2), PC(18:1/18:1)	PC(18:0/18:2), PC(18:1/18:1)
PC(38:4)	PC(18:0/20:4)	PC(18:0/20:4), PC(18:1/20:3)
	Soleus	
	СТЬ	HFHF
PC(34:2)	PC(16:0/18:2)	PC(16:0/18:2)
PC(34:1)	PC(16:0/18:1)	PC(16:0/18:1)
PC(36:4)	PC(16:0/20:4), PC(18:2/18:2)	PC(16:0/20:4), PC(18:2/18:2)
PC(38:6)	PC(16:0/22:6), PC(18:2/20:4)	PC(16:0/22:6), PC(18:2/20:4)

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