

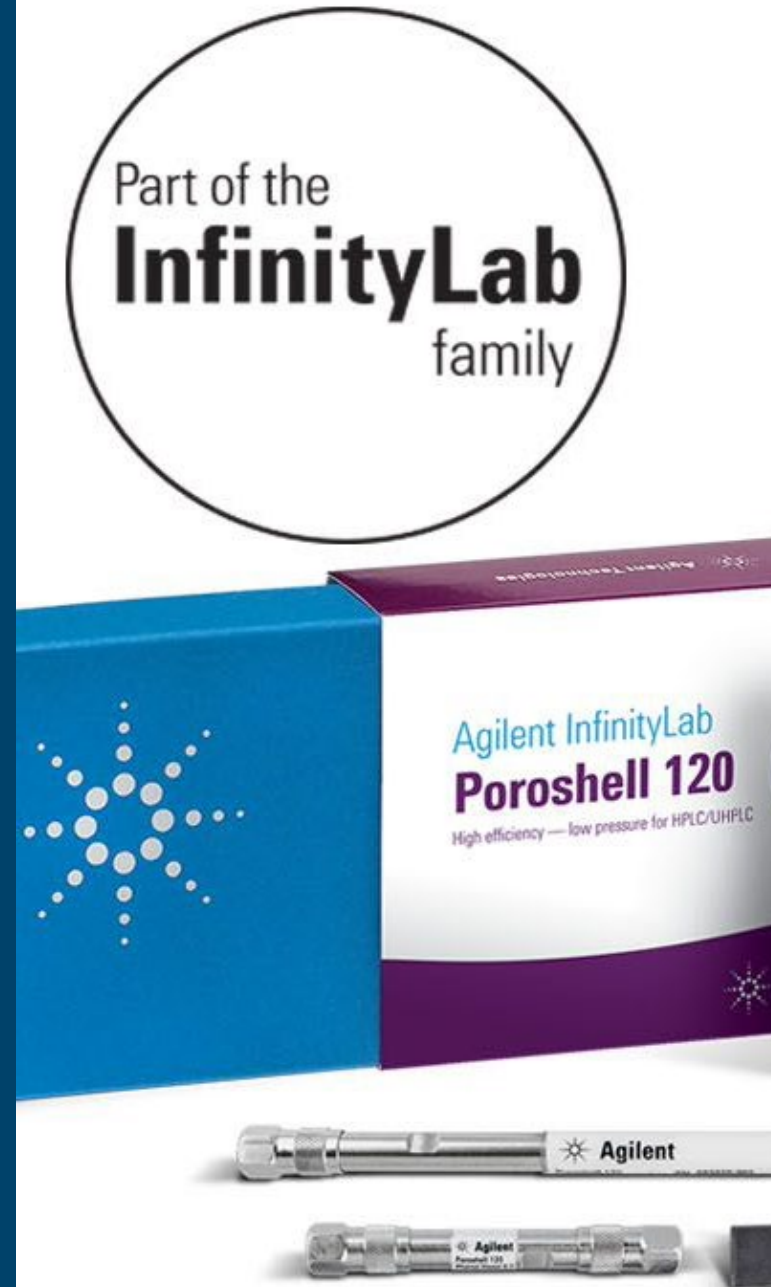
# HILIC Chromatography: When and How?

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LC Columns and Consumables Technical Support

January 25, 2022



Agilent  
InfinityLab



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What is HILIC and when should you consider it?

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HILIC method development

- Agilent HILIC column options
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Tips and tricks for successful HILIC column use and care

- Column equilibration
- Sample solvent compatibility
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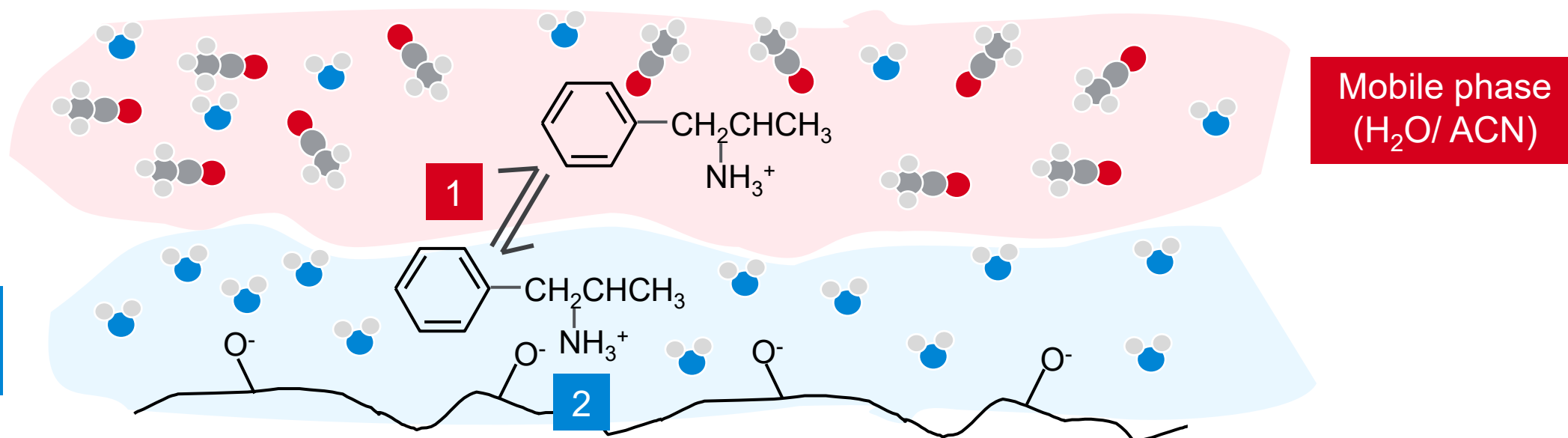
Summary

# What Is HILIC and When Should You Consider It?

## HILIC retention mechanism

A water layer is adsorbed onto the polar silica surface, creating a liquid/liquid extraction system

- 1 Polar analytes can partition into and out of the water layer, with more polar analytes having a stronger interaction.
- 2 Charged polar analytes can also undergo ion exchange with the silica surface.



Elution is typically from least to most polar, which is the opposite of RPLC

Solvent strengths in HILIC mode are: THF < acetone < acetonitrile < isopropanol < ethanol < methanol < water

# What Is HILIC and When Should You Consider It?

## HILIC compared to RPLC

# What Is HILIC and When Should You Consider It?

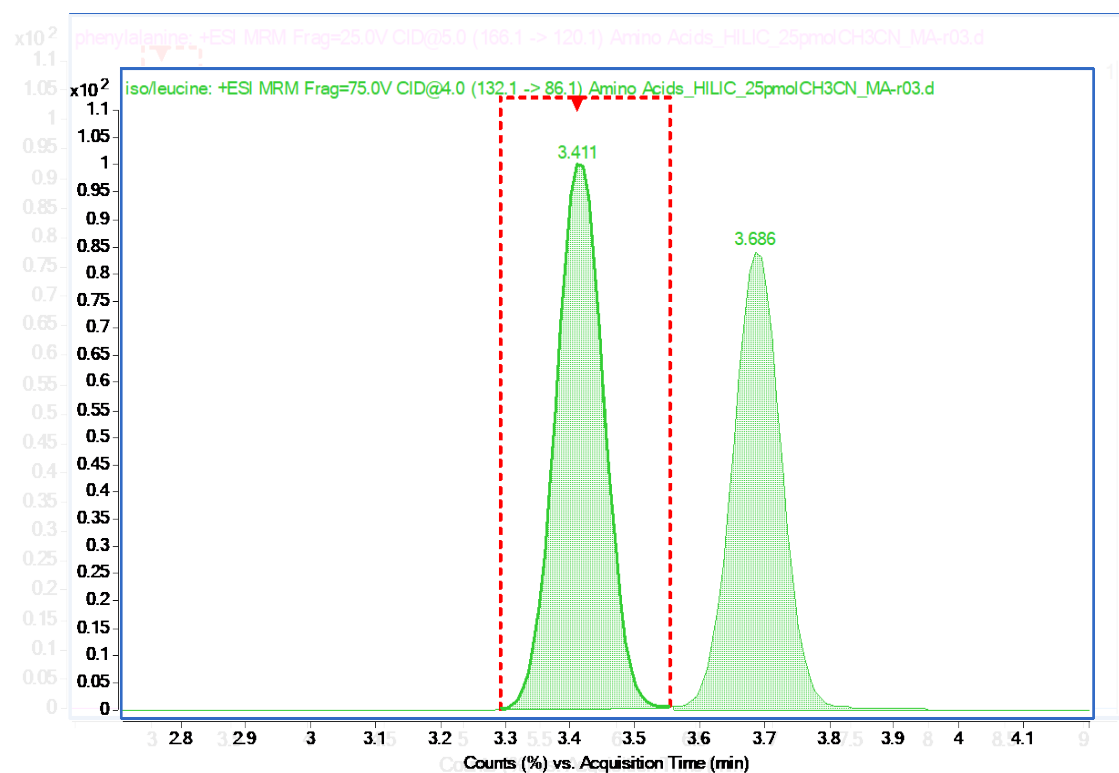
## HILIC complements RPLC

Reversed-Phase LC		Hydrophilic Interaction LC (HILIC)
Nonpolar stationary phase (for example, C18)	Polarity	Polar stationary phase (for example, silica)
Polar mobile phase H <sub>2</sub> O/CH <sub>3</sub> OH, H <sub>2</sub> O/CH <sub>3</sub> CN	Mobile phase	Polar mobile phase H <sub>2</sub> O/CH <sub>3</sub> CN
Decrease retention by decreasing polarity of mobile phase  H <sub>2</sub> O ↓ = retention ↑ CH <sub>3</sub> CN ↑ = retention ↓	Gradient	Decrease retention by increasing polarity of mobile phase  H <sub>2</sub> O ↑ = retention ↓ CH <sub>3</sub> CN ↓ = retention ↑
Polar to nonpolar	Elution order	Nonpolar to polar

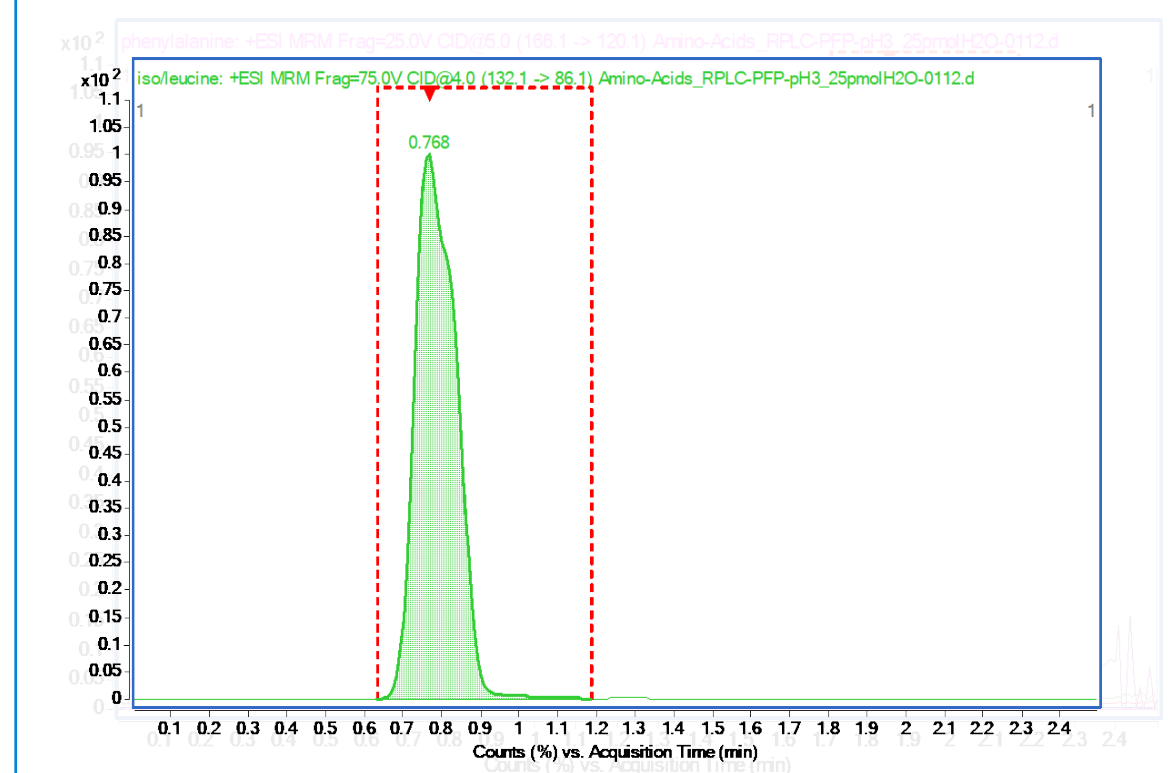
# Find the Best Column to Retain and Separate All Analytes

HILIC retains amino acids and separates isobars, while RPLC can't

## HILIC: Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z



## RPLC: Poroshell 120 PFP

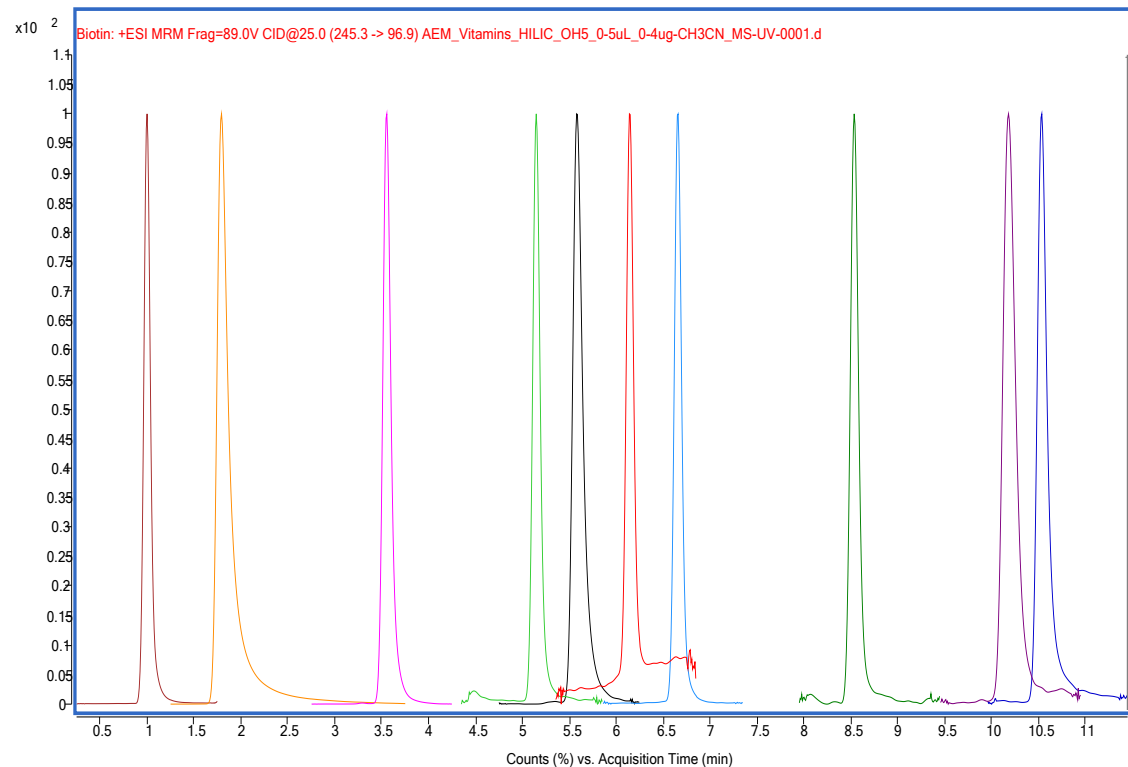


Separation of isobars leucine/isoleucine

# Find the Best Column to Retain and Separate All Analytes

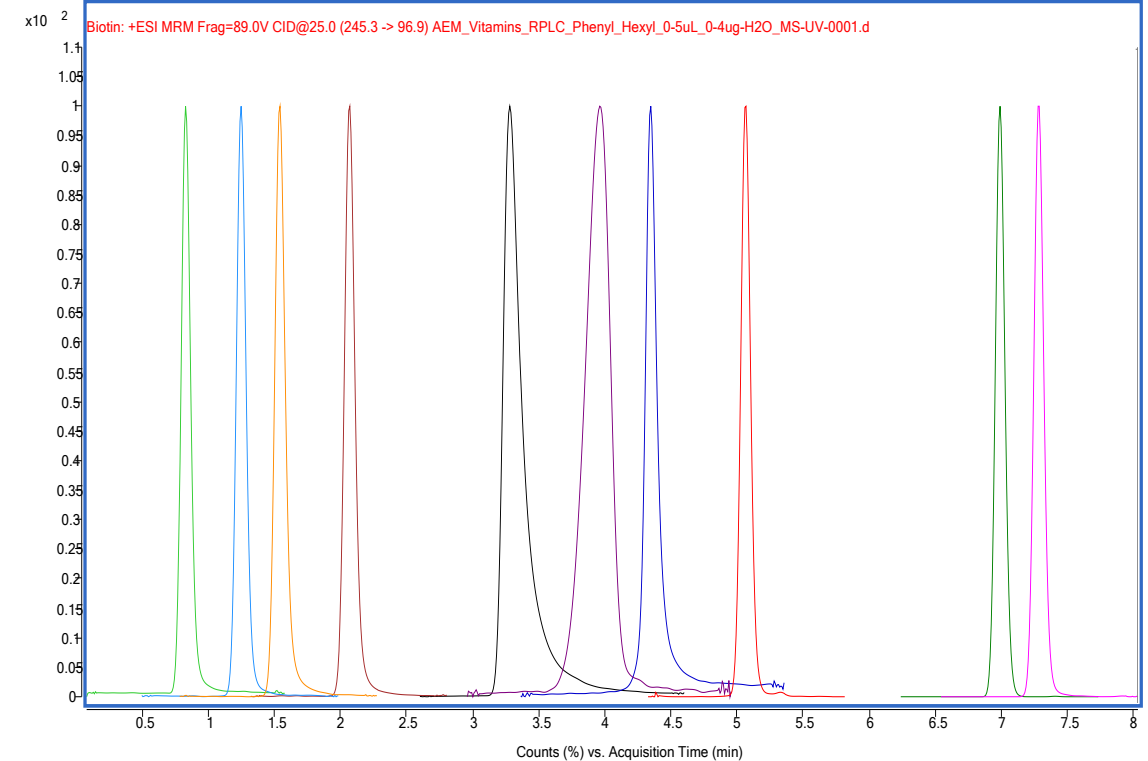
Both RPLC and HILIC are able to retain and separate water-soluble vitamins

## HILIC: Poroshell 120 HILIC-OH5



Mobile phase A: H<sub>2</sub>O; Mobile phase B: CH<sub>3</sub>CN; Mobile phase D: 200 mM ammonium acetate (no pH adjustment), pH ~6.7; Flow rate: 0.5 mL/min; Gradient: 95-65% B in 10 min, hold 5% D constant throughout analysis, 5 min post run; Injection: 0.5  $\mu$ L injection of 0.4  $\mu$ g/mL vitamin standard in CH<sub>3</sub>CN; Column: 25  $^{\circ}$ C, 2.1 x 100 mm, 2.7  $\mu$ m Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-OH5; Detection: Ultivo TQ/MS ESI+ dMRM (parameters above), DAD Sig = 260 nm, 80 Hz

## RPLC: Poroshell 120 Phenyl-Hexyl



Mobile phase A: H<sub>2</sub>O; Mobile phase B: CH<sub>3</sub>CN; Mobile phase D: 200 mM ammonium acetate + 0.2% acetic acid, pH ~5.3; Flow rate: 0.5 mL/min; Gradient: 0% B for 1 min, 0-25% B in 8 min, hold 5% D constant throughout analysis, 3 min post run; Injection: 0.5  $\mu$ L injection of 0.4  $\mu$ g/mL vitamin standard in H<sub>2</sub>O; Column: 25  $^{\circ}$ C, 2.1 x 100 mm, 2.7  $\mu$ m Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 Phenyl-Hexyl; Detection: Ultivo TQ/MS ESI+ dMRM, DAD Sig = 260 nm, 80 Hz

# What Is HILIC and When Should You Consider It?

## When to choose which separation mode for your sample

01

Find the best column to retain and separate all analytes.

02

Consider the sample: analyte solubility and sample solvent

03

Ensure reliable detection of your sample



# What Is HILIC and When Should You Consider It?

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# What Is HILIC and When Should You Consider It?

InfinityLab Poroshell 120 offers a broad portfolio to suit your needs

Best all around	Best for <b>low pH</b> mobile phases	Best for <b>high pH</b> mobile phases	Best for alternative selectivity	Best for more polar analytes	Chiral
<b>EC-C18</b> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>S</b> 1.9 μm,	<b>RP chemistries for polar analytes</b>	<b>Bonus-RP</b> 2.7 μm	<b>SB-Aq</b> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>Chiral-V</b> 2.7 μm
<b>EC-C8</b> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>S</b> 2		<b>PFP</b> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>EC-CN</b> 2.7 μm	<b>Chiral-T</b> 2.7 μm
<b>Phenyl-Hexyl</b> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm		<b>HILIC chemistries</b>		<b>HILIC</b> 1,9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm, pH range 0.0-8.0	<b>Chiral- CD</b> 2.7 μm
				<b>HILIC-Z</b> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm, pH range 2.0-12.0	<b>Chiral-CF</b> 2.7 μm
				<b>HILIC- OH5</b> 2.7 μm, pH range 1.0-7.0	

# What Is HILIC and When Should You Consider It?

When to choose which separation mode for your sample

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Find the best column to retain and separate all analytes.

02

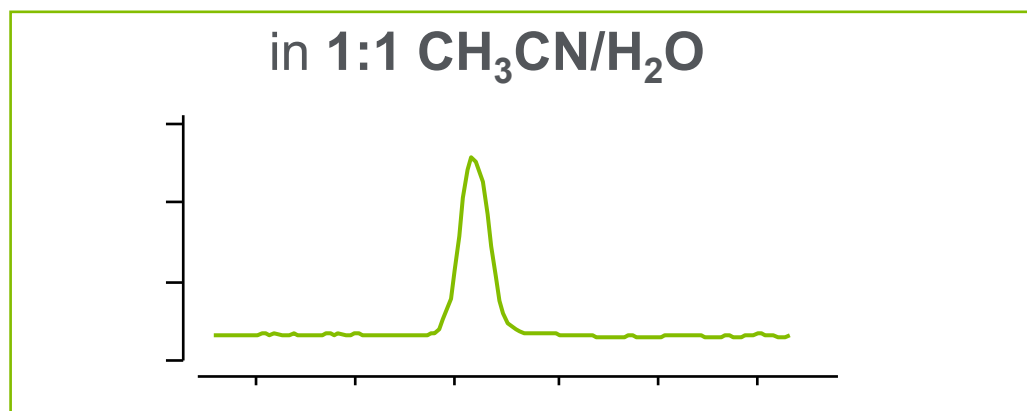
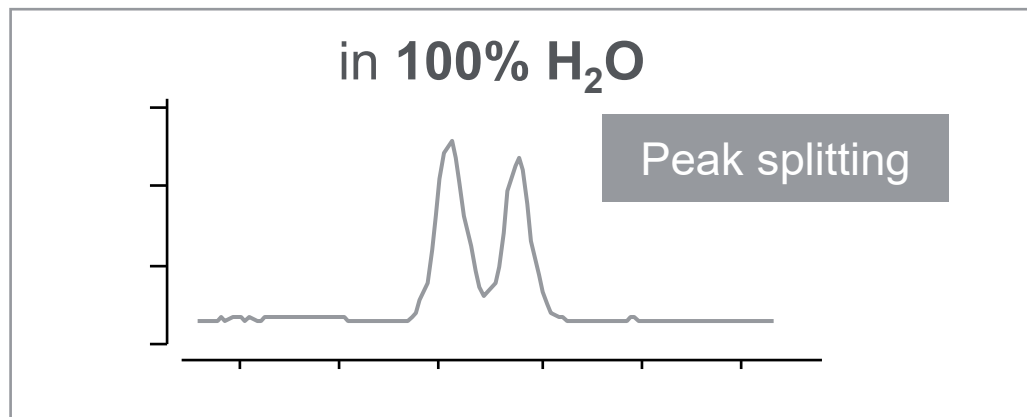
Consider the sample: analyte solubility and sample solvent

03

Ensure reliable detection of your sample

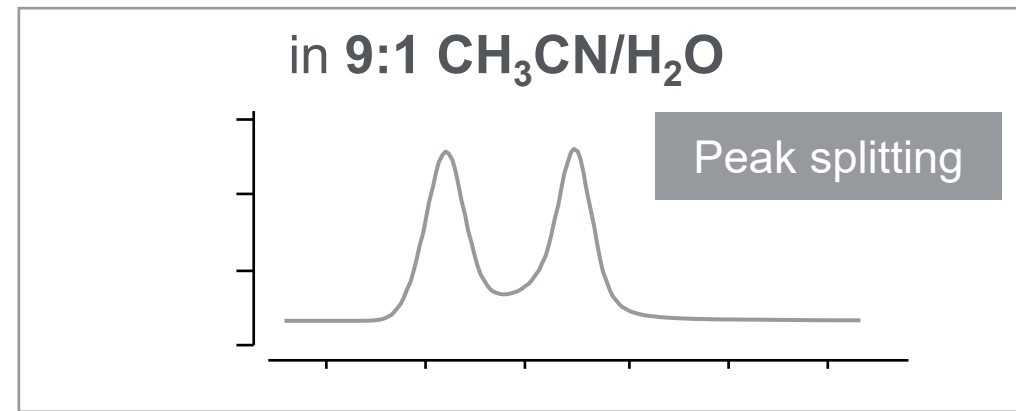
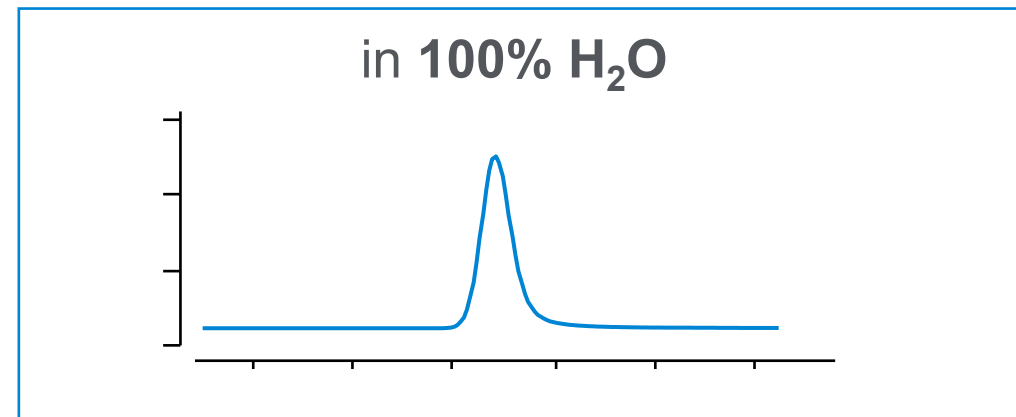
Strong injection solvents distort peak shapes for HILIC and RPLC

## HILIC: Glufosinate



4  $\mu$ L injection of Glufosinate, 100 ppb, InfinityLab Poroshell HILIC-Z, 2.1x100 mm; Temperature: 30  $^{\circ}$ C; Flowrate: 0.6 mL/min, Mobile phase A: 10 mM ammonium acetate, pH 9, Mobile phase B: 100 mM ammonium acetate, pH 9 in 90% ACN (final concentration: 10 mM), Gradient: 90% B  $\Rightarrow$  60% B in 10 minutes, System: Agilent 6490 LC/QQQ

## RPLC: Pyridoxine (vitamin B6)

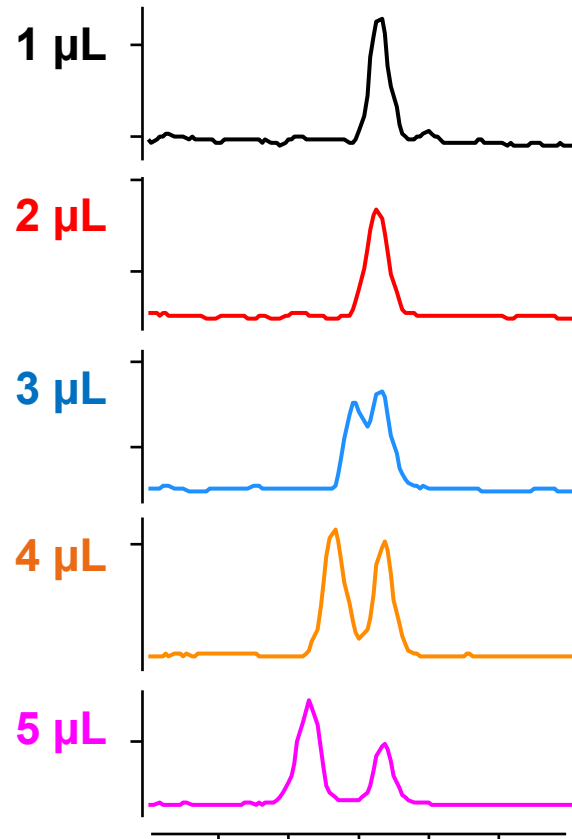


0.5  $\mu$ L injection of 13  $\mu$ g/mL pyridoxine, A: H<sub>2</sub>O; B: CH<sub>3</sub>CN; D: 200 mM ammonium acetate + 0.2% acetic acid, pH  $\sim$ 5.3; 0.5 mL/min; Gradient: 0% B for 1 min, 0-25% B in 8 min, hold 5% D constant throughout analysis; Column: 25  $^{\circ}$ C, 2.1 x 100 mm, 2.7  $\mu$ m Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 Phenyl-Hexyl; Detection: Ultivo TQ/MS ESI+ dMRM

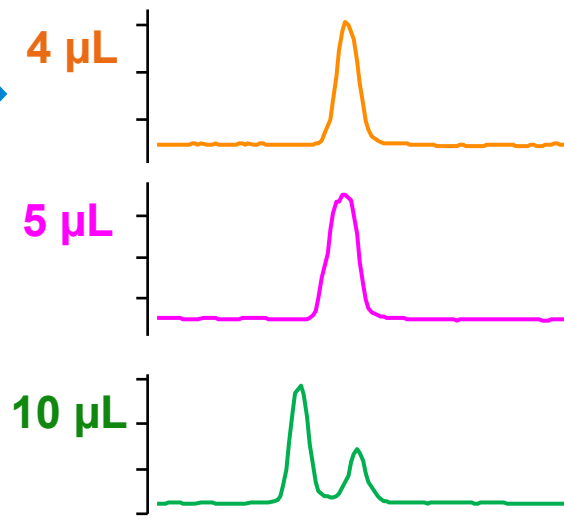
# Analyte Solubility and Sample Solvent

Strong solvent effects are greater with larger injection volumes

Sample solvent: **100% water**



Sample solvent: **50:50 CH<sub>3</sub>CN/H<sub>2</sub>O**



Sample: Glufosinate, 100 ppb  
Column: InfinityLab Poroshell HILIC-Z, 2.1 x 100 mm  
Temperature: 30 °C  
Flowrate: 0.6 mL/min  
Mobile phase A: 10 mM ammonium acetate, pH 9  
Mobile phase B: 100 mM ammonium acetate, pH 9 in 90% ACN (final concentration: 10 mM)  
Gradient: 90% B => 60% B in 10 minutes  
System: Agilent 6490 LC/QQQ

*Note: System required phosphoric acid wash*

Sample solvent: **80:20 CH<sub>3</sub>CN/H<sub>2</sub>O**

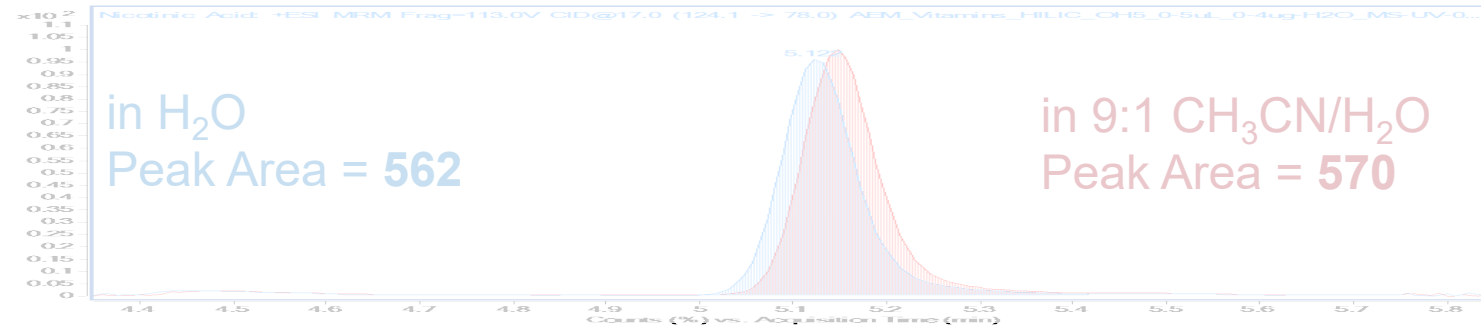


# Ensure Analytes are Completely Soluble

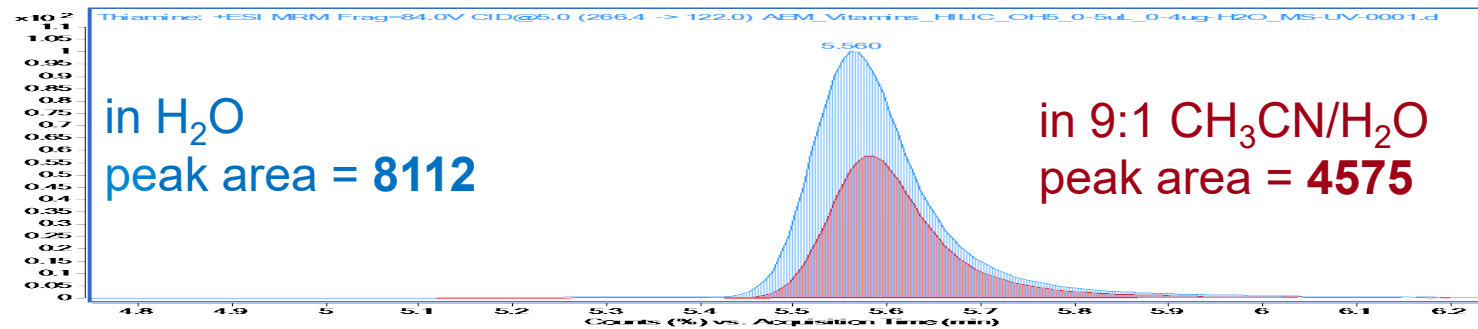
Ensure samples are completely soluble

## HILIC

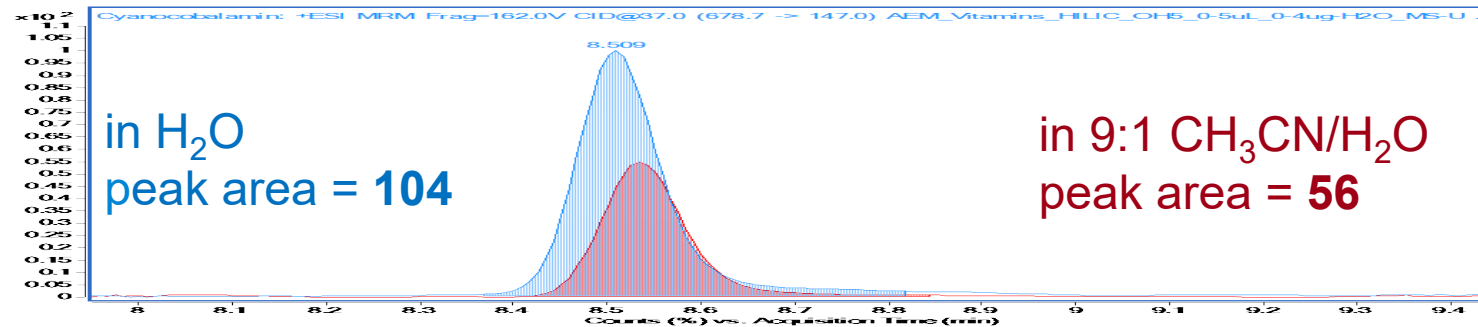
Nicotinic Acid  
0.4 µg/mL



Thiamine  
0.4 µg/mL



Cyanocobalamin  
0.4 µg/mL



~50% sample  
lost due to poor  
solubility  
in CH<sub>3</sub>CN

# What Is HILIC and When Should You Consider It?

## When to choose which separation mode for your sample

01

Find the best column to retain and separate all analytes.

02

Consider the sample: analyte solubility and sample solvent

03

Ensure reliable detection of your sample

# Ensure Reliable Detection of Your Sample

## Choose a Detector that Can Analyze Compounds of Interest

### UV, VIS absorbance

- For light-absorbing compounds

### Refractive index

- Universal detection, but poor sensitivity; can only run isocratic

### Evaporative light scattering

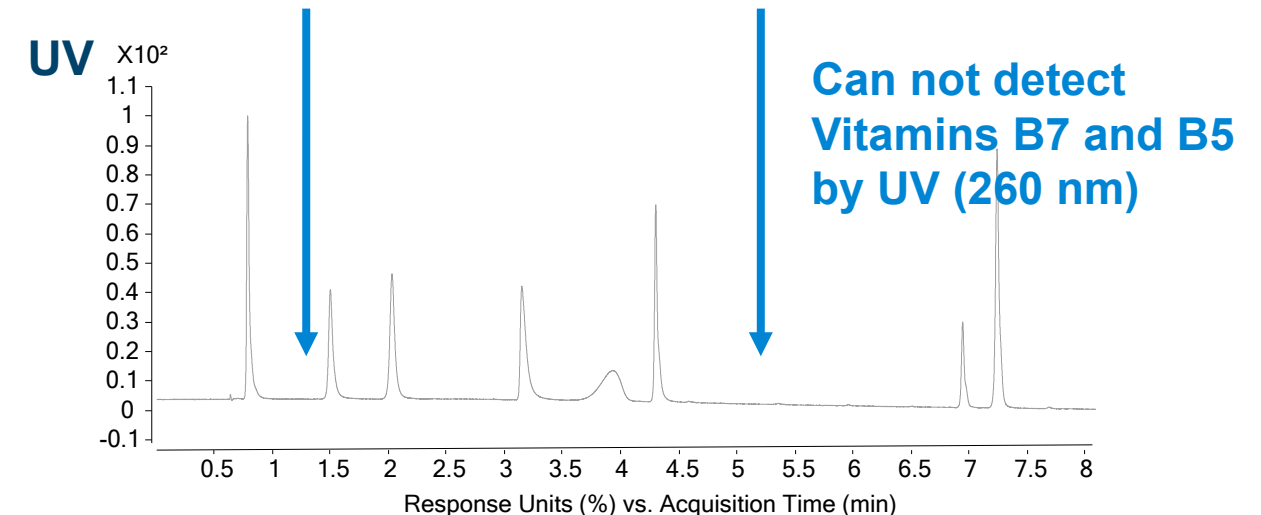
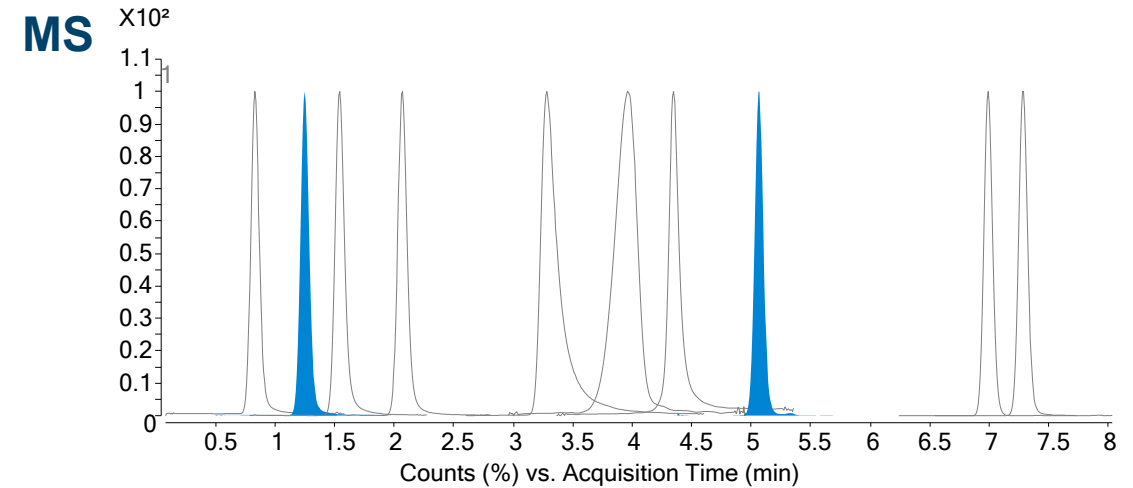
- For nonvolatile analytes

### Mass spectrometer

- Low limits of detection based on molecular weight

### Fluorescence

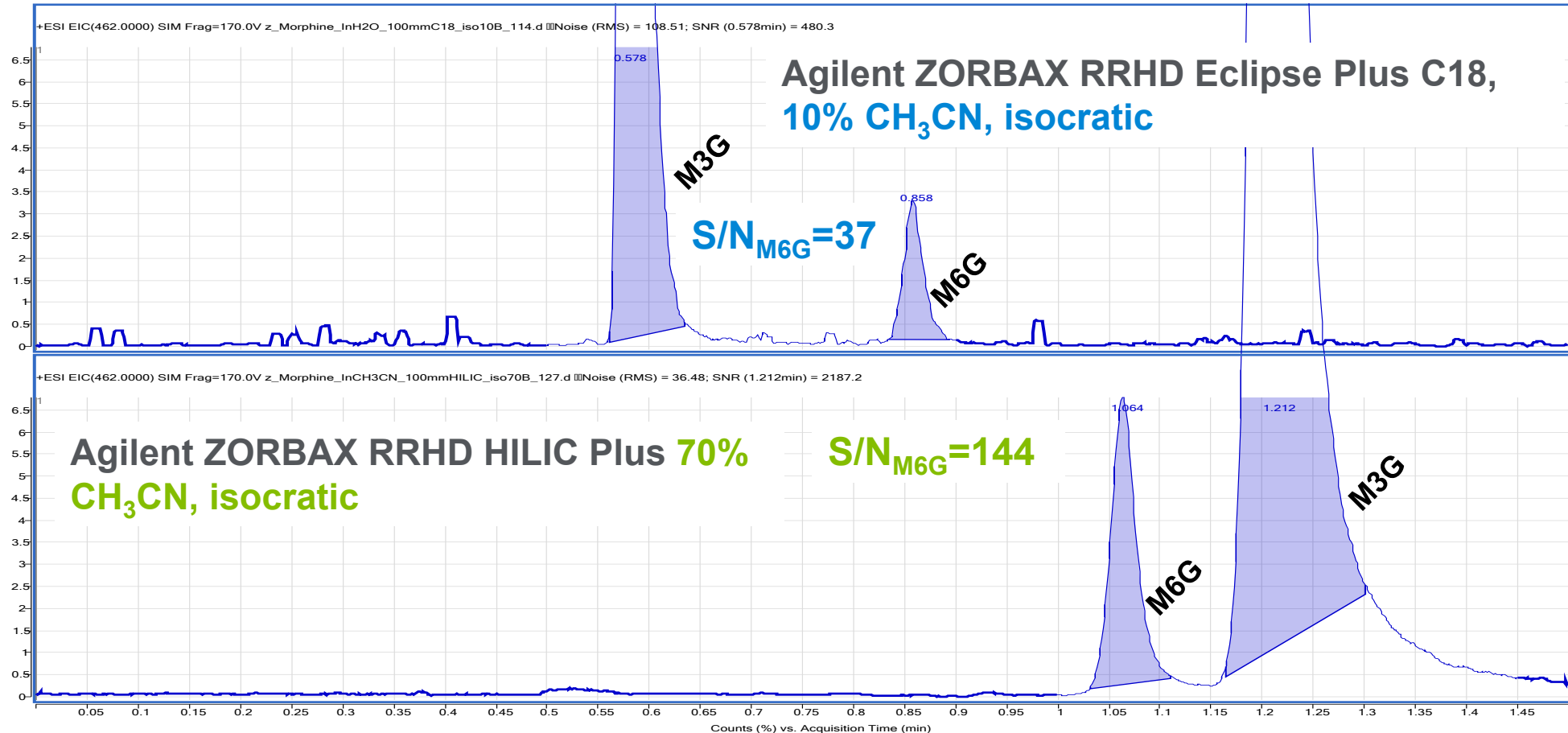
- For compounds that fluoresce or can be derivatized to do so





# Ensure Reliable Detection of Your Sample

HILIC pairs well with LC/MS and can improve sensitivity compared to RPLC for opioid metabolites



Columns used were 2.1 x 100 mm, 1.8  $\mu$ m; A: 10 mM ammonium formate pH 3.2 in water, B: acetonitrile/ 100 mM ammonium formate pH 3.2 in water (9:1), isocratic elution, 0.4 mL/min, 2  $\mu$ L injection of 1  $\mu$ g/mL each of morphine-3- $\beta$ -D-glucuronide, and morphine-6- $\beta$ -D-glucuronide; 25  $^{\circ}$ C, MS Source: ESI+, 200 V, 250  $^{\circ}$ C, 11 L/min., 30 psi, 4000 V; SIM: 462, Frag 170 V, Agilent publication: 5991-0245

# Reversed-Phase LC and UV Detection are Compatible with a Wider Range of Mobile Phases, Especially at Low pH

Mobile Phase	Useable pH/Range	Recommended for HILIC?	Recommended for MS?	Recommended for RPLC and UV?
TFA	<1.5	No	No	Yes
Phosphate	1.1-3.1	No	No	Yes
Formic Acid	<2.8	No	Yes	Yes
Acetic Acid	<3.8	No	Yes	Yes
Formate	2-8-4.8	Yes	Yes	Yes
Acetate	3.8-5.8	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carbonate	5.4-7.4	Yes	Yes	Yes
Phosphate	6.2-8.2	No	No	Yes
Bicarbonate	6.6-8.6	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ammonia	8.2-10.2	Yes	Yes	Yes
Phosphate	11.3-13.3	No	No	Yes

# What Is HILIC and When Should You Consider It?

## Summary of when to use which separation mode

01

Find the best column to retain and separate all analytes.

RPLC cannot retain all polar/ionized analytes, HILIC may work for these

Some analytes can be retained and separated equally well in both modes of LC

Injecting strong solvent in both RPLC and HILIC will negatively affect chromatographic quality

Strong solvent effects get worse with larger injection volumes

**It's a balancing act**

Polar compounds are generally more soluble in water than acetonitrile, which is good for RPLC

02

Consider the sample: analyte solubility and sample solvent

03

Ensure reliable detection of your sample

Ensure analytes are compatible with detector choice

HILIC can improve LCMS analyses due to more volatile mobile phases

UV and RPLC are compatible with a wider variety of mobile phases, which may improve analyte retention and separation

## Advantages and disadvantages of each technique

	Advantage	Disadvantage
Ion Pairing	Fast. Uses standard system and reverse phase columns.	Often contaminates system, reagents can cause ion suppression, restricted to only positive or only negative mode MS.
Ion Chromatography	Well understood mechanism, established for over 40 years.	Slower than modern HPLC, expensive systems and consumables, cannot resolve cations and anions simultaneously, difficult to make MS-compatible.
Ion Exchange	Strong retention and separation	Slower than HPLC, cannot resolve cations and anions simultaneously, difficult to make MS-compatible.
Normal Phase	Fast. Uses standard HPLC and common columns.	Safety and compatibility of organic solvents, smaller selection of stationary phases, sample solubility issues.
Derivatization	Tailored selectivity, adds chromophore or fluorophore	Lengthy sample preparation, repeatability issues.

## Why we choose HILIC

### Advantages

- Uses a standard system and solvent, just swap columns
  - Easily adopted by labs currently performing reverse phase analysis
- Retains cations, anions, and polar neutrals
  - Widely applicable across all major polar samples
- Fully MS compatible
  - Operate in positive or negative mode with high sensitivity

# HILIC Method Development

## And common application areas

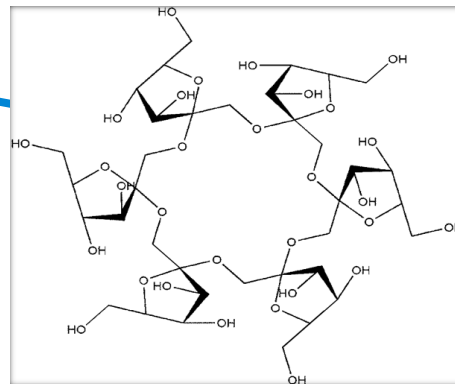
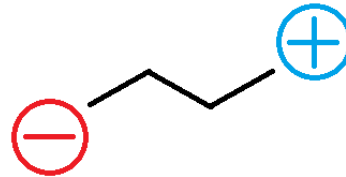
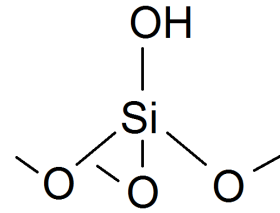
## InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC column options

### Best for polar analytes

InfinityLab Poroshell  
**HILIC**  
1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm

InfinityLab Poroshell  
**HILIC-Z**  
1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm

InfinityLab Poroshell  
**HILIC-OH5**  
2.7 μm



### HILIC

- Bare silica chemistry
- For very simple mixtures, low column bleed

### HILIC-Z

- Proprietary zwitterionic chemistry, high pH stable
- **The most modern and robust column – start method development here**
- PEEK-lined version available

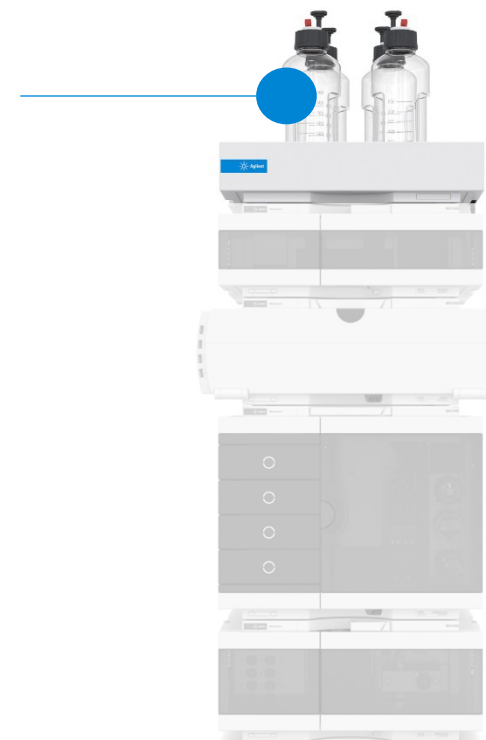
### HILIC-OH5

- Brushed fructan chemistry
- Alternative selectivity

## Mobile phase considerations

### Recommendations

Organic solvent concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Solvent strength in HILIC mode: <i>THF &lt; Acetone &lt; CH<sub>3</sub>CN &lt; IPA &lt; EtOH &lt; MeOH &lt; H<sub>2</sub>O</i></li><li>• H<sub>2</sub>O must be present — <i>need &gt;3% H<sub>2</sub>O</i> for hydration of silica</li><li>• Mobile phase will typically be &gt;50% acetonitrile</li></ul>
Ionic strength of buffer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concentration of (salt) buffer increases strength</li><li>• Different anions and cations may also affect analyte retention</li></ul>
Type of buffer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acetates and formates are good, soluble in CH<sub>3</sub>CN—also MS friendly</li><li>• Phosphate salts are bad due to low CH<sub>3</sub>CN solubility</li></ul>



### More information

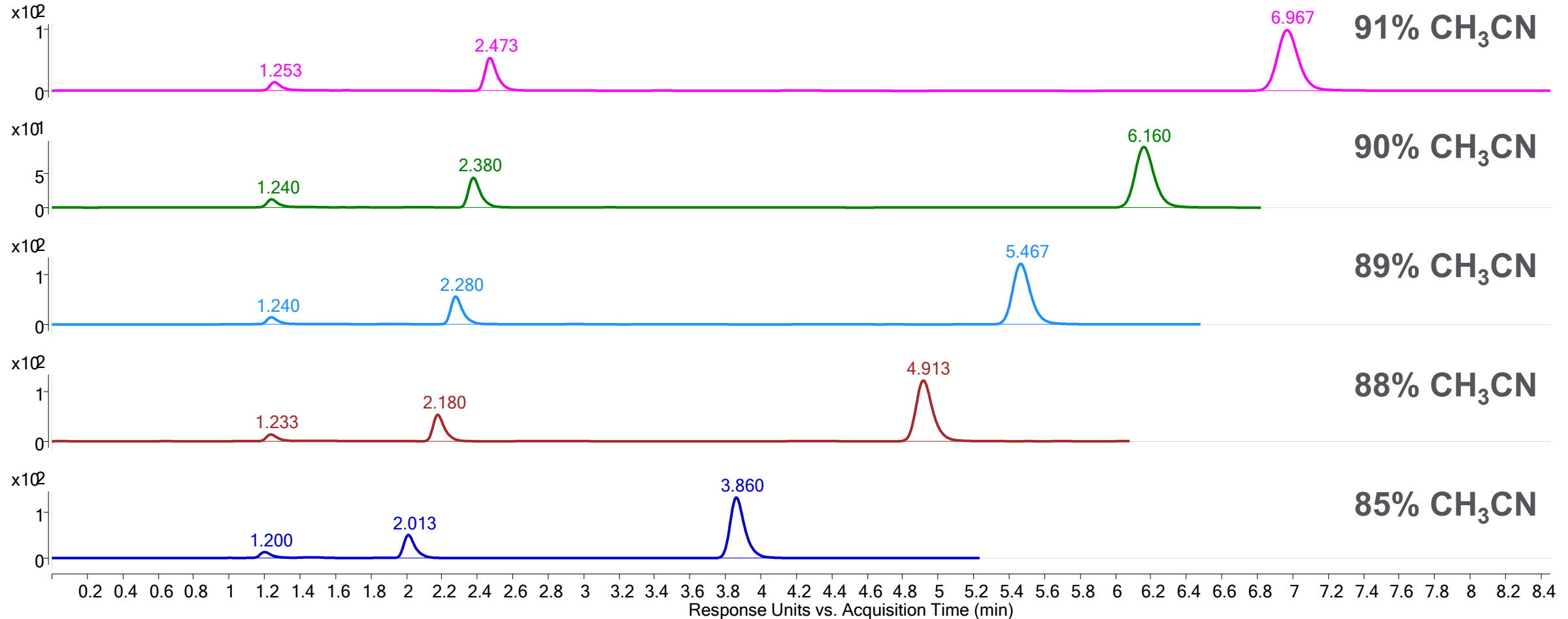


For more HILIC method development tips, see this publication:  
[5991-9271EN](#)



# HILIC Method Development

Less CH<sub>3</sub>CN makes a HILIC mobile phase stronger, causing less retention



Column used was 2.1 x 150 mm, 2.7  $\mu$ m Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z (PEEK lined); A: 100 mM pH 3 ammonium formate in Water, B: Acetonitrile, x % B, isocratic elution, 0.25 mL/min, 30  $^{\circ}$ C, 1  $\mu$ L injection of toluene, cytosine, uracil QC mixture, 254 nm

## Starting mobile phases

### Mobile phase A (strong phase, H<sub>2</sub>O):

- Typical buffer concentration: 5 to 30 mM
    - 10 to 20 mM is most common
  - Ammonium formate, pH 3
  - Ammonium acetate, pH 4-5
  - Ammonium acetate, pH ~7
    - Ammonium acetate solution is near pH 7, before adjusting with other modifiers
    - Not a true buffer, but still commonly used at mid-pH
  - Ammonium acetate or formate, pH 9-10
    - Can be formate or acetate because the ammonium ion is buffering
  - Ammonium hydroxide, pH 10-11
    - HILIC-Z only
- Phosphate buffers are not recommended \**

Basic analytes

Acidic analytes

Sugars

### Mobile phase B (weak phase, CH<sub>3</sub>CN):

- Buffer concentration should match mobile phase A for improved reproducibility
- Adding 10% water in ACN is generally recommended for improved solubility and faster re-equilibration
- Pure MeOH is too strong a solvent for most HILIC separations. Mixed with ACN in small quantities (<15%), it can be used to change selectivity slightly

\*Note: Phosphates have low solubility in high % ACN (1-30 mM). Always test solubility before running. Never run in >80% ACN to avoid precipitation.

# Effect of pH on Retention of Acidic Compounds with HILIC

## Starting mobile phases

In HILIC mode, ionizable compounds are better retained when they are ionized

- Acids at high pH
- Bases at low pH

Once the analyte is fully ionized, retention should stabilize

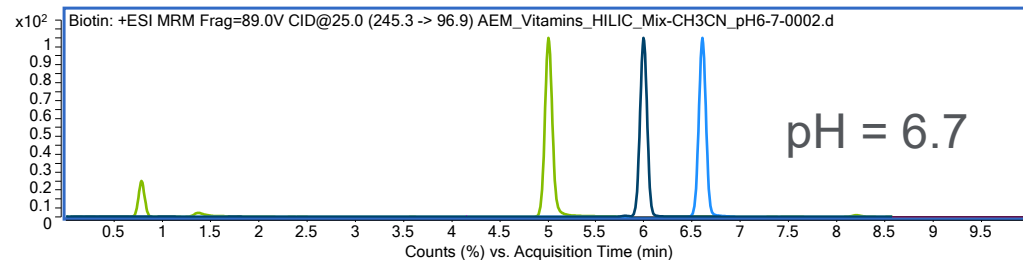
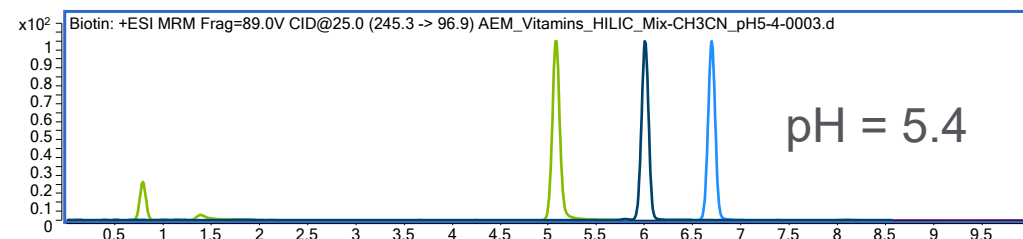
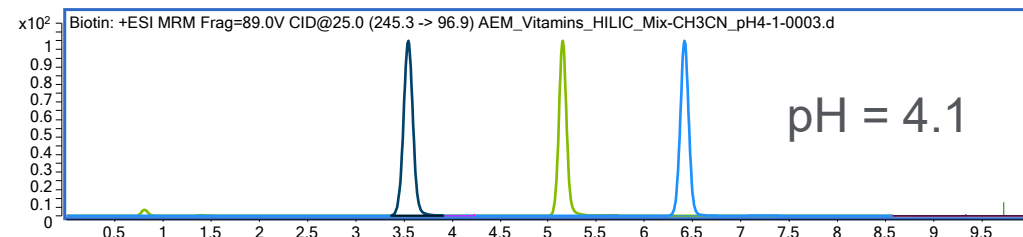
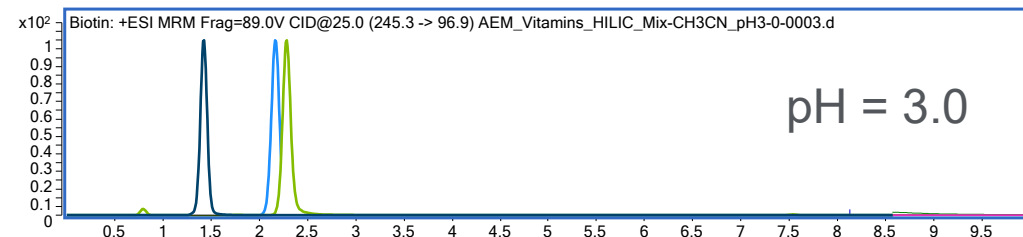
- Note: If other retention mechanisms are occurring, this may not be true

**Biotin pKa = 4.5**

**Nicotinic acid pKa = 4.8**

**Pantothenic acid pKa = 4.3**

Mobile phase A: H<sub>2</sub>O, B: CH<sub>3</sub>CN, D: varies, 200 mM ammonium formate or acetate; Flow rate: 0.5 mL/min; Gradient: 95% B for 1 min, 95-65% B in 9 min, hold 5% D constant throughout analysis, 5 min post run; Injection: 0.5 µL of 13.3 µg/mL each in CH<sub>3</sub>CN/H<sub>2</sub>O 19:1; Column: 25 °C, 2.1 x 100 mm, 2.7 µm Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z; Detection: Ultivo TQ/MS ESI+ dMRM



## Common starting conditions for HILIC method development

	Method Parameter
Column	Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z
Buffer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Acidic analytes:</b> mid to high pH (HILIC-Z only)</li><li>• <b>Basic analytes:</b> low to mid pH</li><li>• <b>Mixed analytes:</b> mid pH</li></ul>
Isocratic	<p>Column equilibration is faster as you move from high to low aqueous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>50% ACN</b> – Column wash (typically no retention)</li><li>• <b>70% ACN</b> – Very polar analytes</li><li>• <b>80% ACN</b> – Polar analytes, mixtures</li><li>• <b>90% ACN</b> – Less polar analytes separation</li></ul>
Gradient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>90% → 50% ACN</b> – Scouting gradient</li><li>• Isocratic holds or shallow gradients (1-3% per min) recommended for critical pair separation</li></ul>



# Tips and Tricks

For successful HILIC column use and care

## Considerations on solvent and sample handling

	Impact
Add 10% aqueous to your organic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffer solubility increases drastically with addition of 10-20% water</li> <li>• HILIC columns equilibrate faster with more aqueous</li> </ul>
Have the same ionic strength in both mobile phases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ionic strength gradients have more variability than constant ionic strength</li> <li>• Near 90-100% ACN, many buffers crash out, causing serious clogs</li> </ul>
Increasing buffer concentration can improve peak shape and sample loadability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High buffer concentrations can cause ion suppression when using MS detection</li> </ul>
Follow good measurement practices when mixing buffers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention can vary from bottle-to-bottle if eluent is not mixed accurately and consistently</li> </ul>
Prepare samples in as much acetonitrile as possible and keep injection volumes small	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid peak shape and retention issues from strong solvent effects</li> </ul>
Use inert solution, if needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce unwanted interactions of analytes with metal in the flow path</li> </ul>



InfinityLab solvent bottles



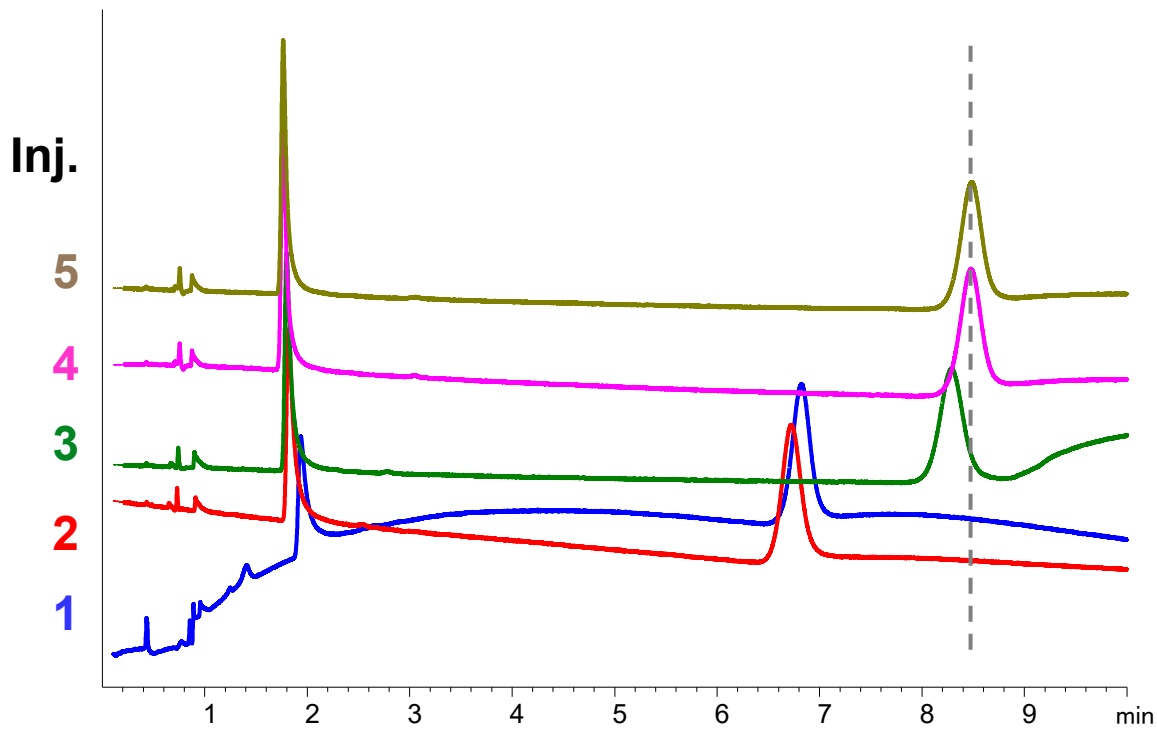
InfinityLab Stay Safe caps

# HILIC Column Equilibration is Faster with Higher Amounts of Aqueous

B vitamins on Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-OH5 (2.1 x 100 mm, 2.7  $\mu$ m)

4% aqueous, isocratic

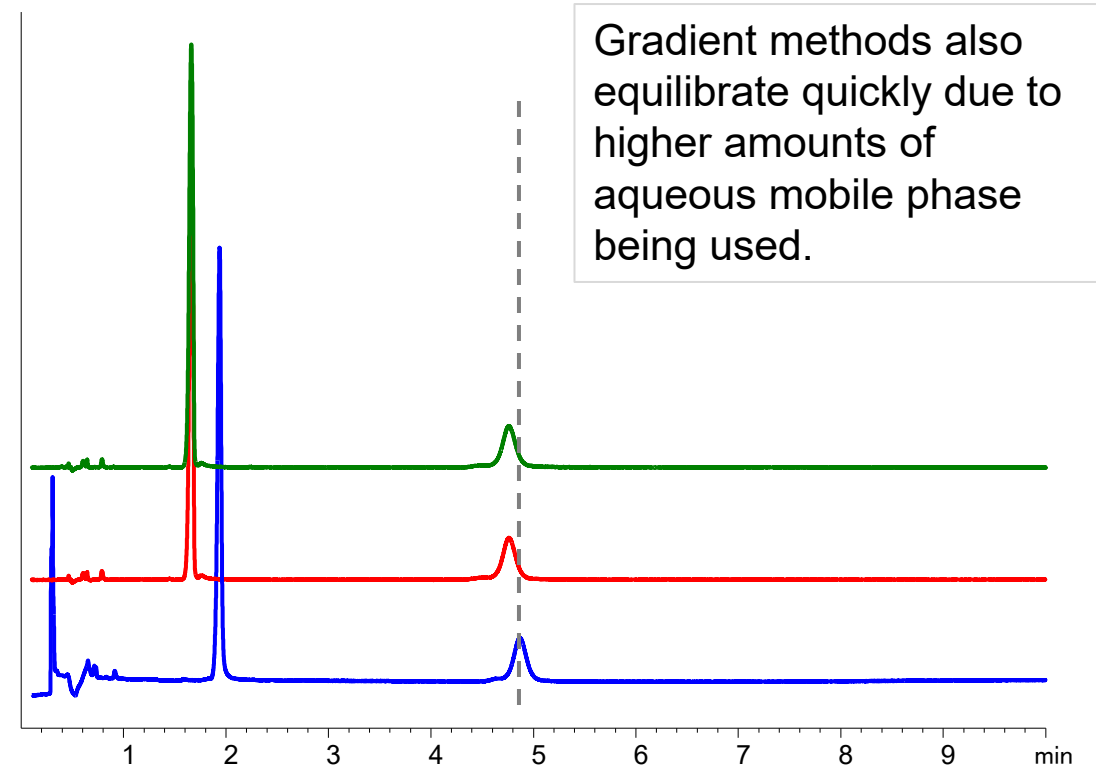
Equilibrated in 30 minutes (75 column volumes)



Column stored in 100% CH<sub>3</sub>CN before analysis; A: 100 mM ammonium formate pH 3.0, B: CH<sub>3</sub>CN, 96% B isocratic, 0.5 mL/min, 1  $\mu$ L injection of B2+B6, 25 °C, 260 nm, 80 Hz

20% aqueous, isocratic

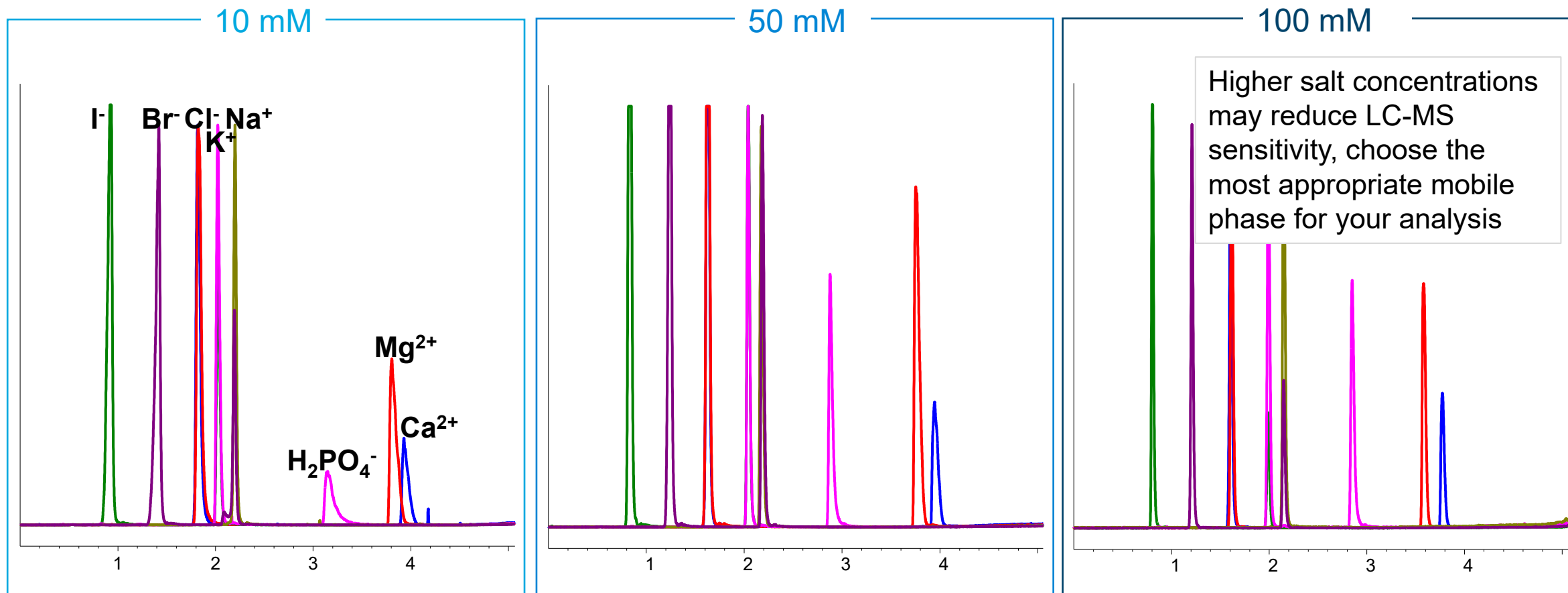
Equilibrated in <10 minutes (<25 column volumes)



Column stored in 100% CH<sub>3</sub>CN before analysis; A: 100 mM ammonium formate pH 3.0, B: CH<sub>3</sub>CN, 80% B isocratic, 0.5 mL/min, 1  $\mu$ L injection of B9+B12, 25 °C, 260 nm, 80 Hz

# Higher Salt Concentrations Can Improve Peak Shapes and Resolution

## Inorganic Ions on Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z



Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z 2.1 x 100 mm, 2.7 μm; A: 10, 50, or 100 mM pH 3 ammonium formate, B: Acetonitrile, 80-20% B in 5 min, 3 min re-equilibration, 0.4 mL/min, 30 C, 2 μL injection of individual standards (0.3 to 0.5 mg/mL), ELSD 40 °C/3.5 psi/30Hz



# HILIC Analyses Perform Best with Weak Injection Solvents

## B vitamins on HILIC with isocratic elution

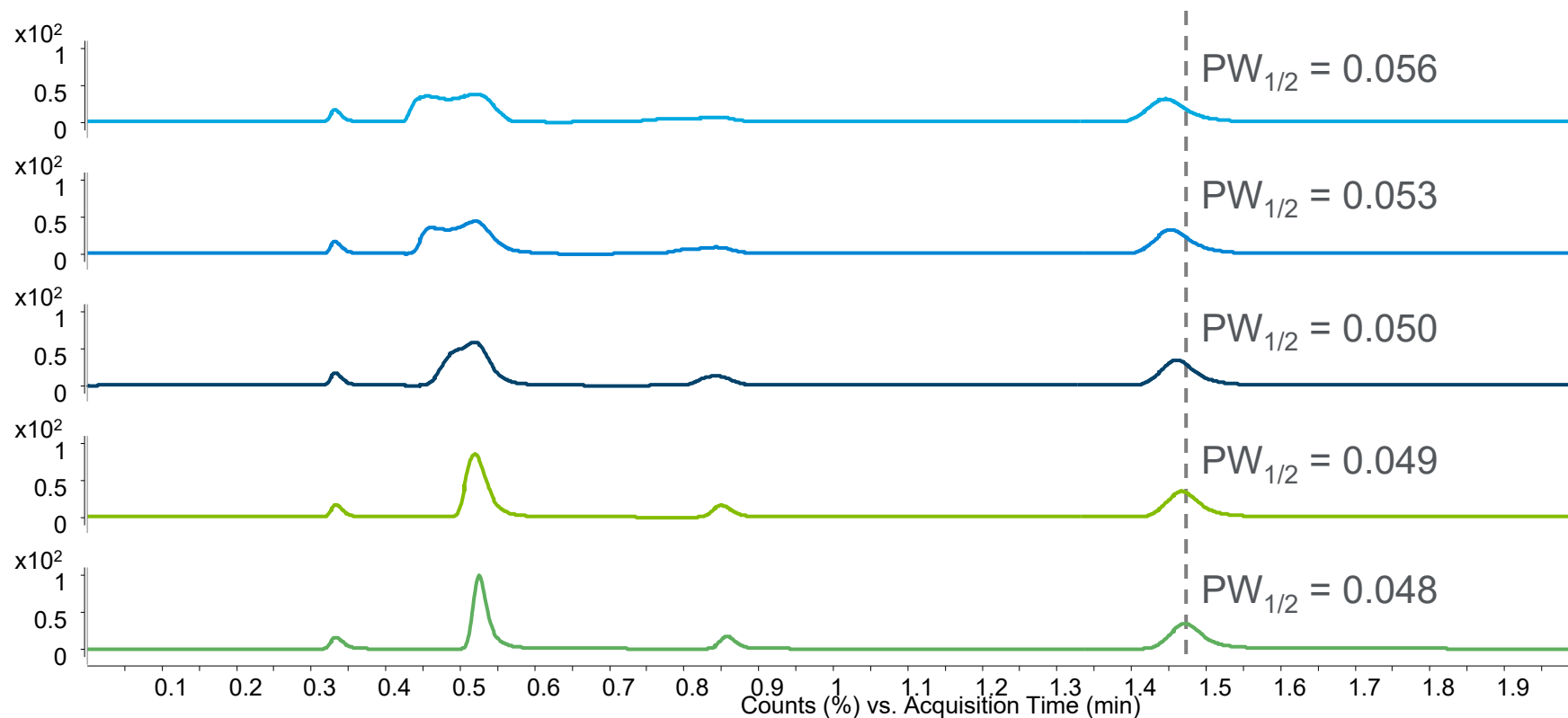
1  $\mu$ L injection in  
 $H_2O$

1  $\mu$ L injection in  
 $H_2O/CH_3CN$  (3:1)

1  $\mu$ L injection in  
 $H_2O/CH_3CN$  (1:1)

1  $\mu$ L injection in  
 $H_2O/CH_3CN$  (1:3)

1  $\mu$ L injection in  
 $CH_3CN$

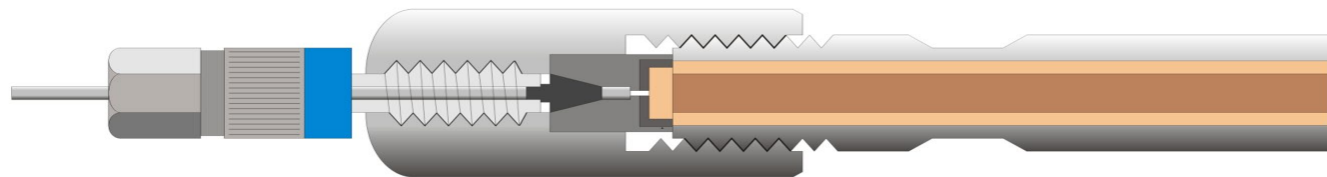


Agilent ZORBAX RRHD HILIC Plus 2.1 x 50 mm, 1.8  $\mu$ m; Mobile phase: acetonitrile/100 mM ammonium formate pH 3.2 in water (9:1), isocratic elution, 0.4 mL/min, 1  $\mu$ L injection of 5.7  $\mu$ g/mL each of 4-aminobenzoic acid, nicotinamide, riboflavin, nicotinic acid; 25  $^{\circ}C$ , MS source: ESI+, 200  $^{\circ}C$ , 10 L/min, 30 psi, 4000 V; SIM: 138, 123, 377, 124

# HILIC Sensitivity Can Be Improved with a PEEK-Lined Column

## PEEK-lined stainless steel and PEEK-coated titanium frits

- Metal-free flow path minimizes unwanted interactions
- Stainless steel provides strength for UHPLC use



## For best results, use the full InfinityLab bio-inert LC Solution:

- InfinityLab bio-inert LC System
- Bio-inert quick connect heat exchanger, p/n: G7116-60009
- All Agilent PEEK/SST Bio-inert capillaries with Quick Turn fitting (5067-5966) or UHP-FF fitting Bio-inert (5067-5695)



## InfinityLab deactivator additive pairs well with PEEK-lined HILIC-Z

	Improvement
Reduce Metal-Analyte Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Chelate-free metals, covers exposed active sites in sample flow path, reducing unwanted metal-analyte interactions and allowing lower detection limits using LC/MS</li></ul>
Amenable to LC/MS use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Optimized for use at a 5 <math>\mu\text{M}</math> (1:1000 dilution) with minimal ion suppression effects</li><li>Does not persist in the LC/MS system after use (unlike traditional ion pairing reagents)</li></ul>
Operational time and cost savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Saves time needed to passivate your system</li><li>Can avoid derivatization</li><li>Can avoid potential system contamination from ion pairing agents</li><li>Limits of detection can be lowered for challenging compounds such as phosphorylated metabolites, phosphate pesticides, and organic acids</li></ul>



InfinityLab  
deactivator additive  
50 mL: 5190-4506

### Recommended read



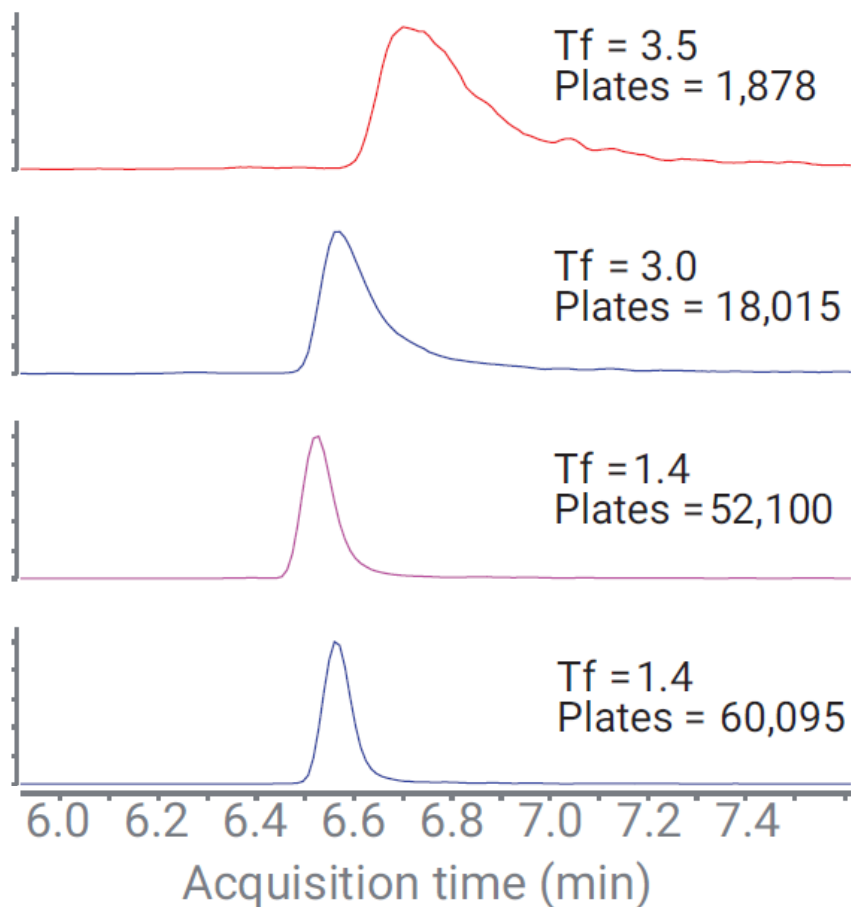
More information can be found in the InfinityLab Deactivator Additive user guide [5991-9516EN](#).

## LC passivation procedure to reduce unwanted metal interactions

- LC disconnected from MS and going directly to waste
- IPA at 5 mL/min for 5 min
- Water at 5 mL/min for 5 min
  - Flow at 0.5 mL/min for 1 hour
- 0.5% phosphoric acid in 90% acetonitrile/10% water at 5 mL/min for 5 min
  - Flow at 0.1 mL/min overnight (at a minimum)
- Water at 5 mL/min for 5 min
  - Flow at 0.5 mL/min for 1 hour
- Mobile phase at 5 mL/min for 5 min
  - Flow at 0.25 mL/min for 1 hour
- Reconnect LC to MS and proceed with analysis
  - Flow at 0.25 mL/min for 20 to 30 min

## Stepwise improvements for metal sensitive analytes

### Thiamine diphosphate



Before system passivation



After LC passivation with 0.5% phosphoric acid in 9:1 acetonitrile/water



Added InfinityLab deactivator additive to mobile phase



Installed PEEK-lined HILIC-Z column

## How to clean and store a HILIC Column

### Cleaning a HILIC column:

- Use a strong HILIC solvent to clean HILIC columns
- Flush HILIC columns with 100% water
- If that is insufficient, add in 100 to 500 mM salt
  - You can use a strong salt like NaCl or, if you prefer to avoid that, you can use buffer salts like ammonium acetate
- Increasing the temperature to 35 to 55 °C can also help with the cleaning efficiency
- Flush with about 30 column volumes per step
- Be sure that once you have finished flushing with high concentration salt, you flush with pure water before reintroducing acetonitrile into the mobile phase

### Storing a HILIC Column:

- Flush with acetonitrile/water (20/80) for 30 column volumes
- Flush with acetonitrile/water (80/20) for 30 column volumes
- Store at room temperature

When to consider a HILIC column:

- Are your analytes unretained with RPLC?
- Are your analytes at least somewhat soluble in acetonitrile?
- Are you using MS detection?
- Do your analytes interact with metals in the LC system?

Keep sample solvents in mind for HILIC analyses; prepare the sample in as much acetonitrile as possible and keep injection volumes as small as possible

- Most common support issue with HILIC methods

## Additional Information

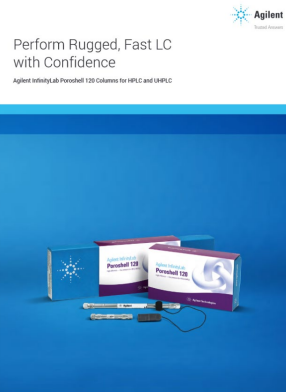
Learn more about Agilent HILIC Column portfolio





# More Information on Poroshell 120

## 1. Brochures



### [Poroshell 120 Portfolio brochure](#)

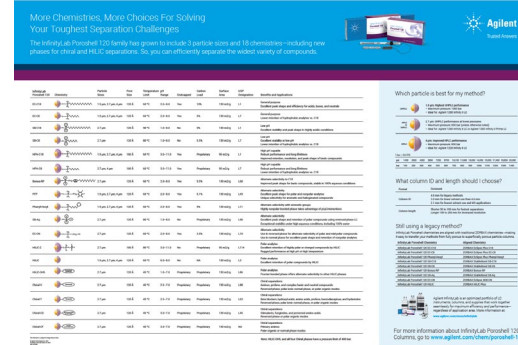
5991-8750EN



### [Poroshell 120 1.9 µm brochure](#)

5991-7352EN

## 2. Posters



### [P120 Selectivity overview](#)

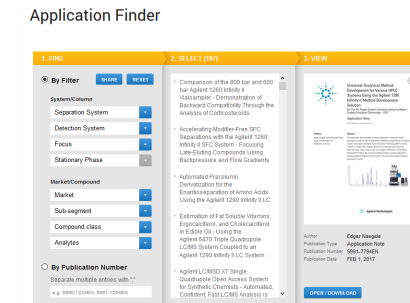
5991-9013EN



### [P120 MethDev poster](#)

5991-7188EN

## 3. Application notes



### [Agilent Application Finder](#)

>200 P120 application notes

## 4. Agilent.com

Videos  
Webshop  
Collaterals  
Specifications  
And much more...

## Application notes on Poroshell 120 HILIC columns

	Application Note Title
Agriculture and Food Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of Amino Acids in Animal Feed Matrices Using the Ultivo Triple Quadrupole LC/MS System – <a href="#">5994-0586EN</a></li> <li>• Analysis of Sugars Using an Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z Column – <a href="#">5991-8984EN</a></li> <li>• Analysis of Organic Acids on an Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z Column – <a href="#">5991-8985EN</a></li> <li>• LC/MS Analysis of Free Amino Acids on Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC 1.9 µm Columns – <a href="#">5991-7541EN</a></li> </ul>
Biopharma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated Transcriptomics and Metabolomics Study of Retinoblastoma Using Agilent Microarrays and LC/MS/GC/MS Platforms – <a href="#">5991-6215EN</a></li> <li>• Enhanced Metabolite Profiling from Bark of Alangium Salviifolium Using LC/MS and GC/Q-TOF Techniques – <a href="#">5991-4663EN</a></li> <li>• Analysis of Water-Soluble Vitamins and their Metabolites – <a href="#">5994-1553EN</a></li> <li>• Methods for the Analysis of Underivatized Amino Acids by LC/MS – <a href="#">5991-8582EN</a></li> <li>• HPLC-DAD Analysis of Nucleotides Using a Fully Inert Flowpath – Agilent 1260 Infinity II Bio-inert LC System and a PEEK-Lined Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z Column – <a href="#">5994-0680EN</a></li> <li>• <sup>13</sup>C Glucose Qualitative Flux Analysis in HEPG2 Cells Using an Agilent 6546 LC/Q-TOF and VistaFlux – <a href="#">5994-0713EN</a></li> <li>• Analysis of Choline Metabolites by Hydrophilic Interaction Chromatography (HILIC) with LC/MS/MS – <a href="#">5991-9491EN</a></li> <li>• Monitoring of Mammalian Cell Culture Media with HILIC LC/MS – <a href="#">5994-0024EN</a></li> </ul>

Filter for Poroshell 120 HILIC phases on <https://www.agilent.com/en/applicationfinder/applicationfinder>

## Application notes on Poroshell 120 HILIC columns

### Application Note Title

	Application Note Title
Small Molecule Pharma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impurity Analysis of Aminoglycoside Antibiotic Using the Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-S Column with ELSD Detection – <a href="#">5991-8824EN</a></li> <li>• Trace Level Quantification of Potential Mutagenic Impurities in Pharmaceuticals Using an Agilent Ultivo LC/TQ with Mixed Mode Detection – <a href="#">5994-1238EN</a></li> <li>• How to Catch a Potential Mutagenic Impurity Using Agilent LC/MSD XT and Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z Column for Sensitive and Reliable Detection of Dalfampridine Impurities – <a href="#">5994-0864EN</a></li> <li>• Analysis of Polar Compounds in Plant Material – <a href="#">5991-8617EN</a></li> <li>• Analysis of Water-Soluble Vitamins on an Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-OH5 Column – <a href="#">5991-8780EN</a></li> <li>• Analysis of Aminoglycosides Using the Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z Column – <a href="#">5991-8824EN</a></li> </ul>
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paraquat, Diquat, and Mepiquat Analysis in Environmental Water – <a href="#">5994-1307EN</a></li> <li>• Modified QuEChERS for HILIC LC/MS/MS Analysis of Nicotine and its Metabolites in Fish – <a href="#">5991-2408EN</a></li> <li>• Analysis of Metals, Halides, and Inorganic Ions Using Hydrophilic Interaction Chromatography – <a href="#">5991-8602EN</a></li> </ul>
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retaining and Separating Polar Molecules – A Detailed Investigation of When to Use HILIC versus a Reversed-Phase LC Column – <a href="#">5994-1137EN</a></li> <li>• Hydrophilic Interaction Chromatography (HILIC) Using Agilent Poroshell 120 HILIC – <a href="#">5991-1242EN</a></li> <li>• Hydrophilic Interaction Chromatography Method Development and Troubleshooting – <a href="#">5991-9271EN</a></li> <li>• The Agilent 1260 Infinity Analytical SFC System with Time-of-Flight Mass Spectrometric Detection - Method Development Using Method Scouting Wizard – <a href="#">5994-0251EN</a></li> <li>• Analysis of Highly Polar Compounds by SFC/Q-TOF MS with Identification using Database and Library Searches – Enhanced Fluidity Liquid Chromatography (EFLC) using High Modifier Concentration at Elevated System Pressure – <a href="#">5994-1096EN</a></li> </ul>

Filter for Poroshell 120 HILIC phases on <https://www.agilent.com/en/applicationfinder/applicationfinder>

# Resources for Support

- LC troubleshooting poster ([5994-0709EN](#))
- Tech support [www.agilent.com/chem/techsupport](http://www.agilent.com/chem/techsupport)
- Resource page [www.agilent.com/chem/agilentresources](http://www.agilent.com/chem/agilentresources)
  - Quick reference guides
  - Catalogs, column user guides
  - Online selection tools, how-to videos
  - [Application workflows](#) (such as cannabis, PFAS, and more)
- InfinityLab LC Supplies catalog ([5991-8031EN](#))
- LC handbook ([5990-7595EN](#))
- Best practices for using an Agilent LC system ([01200-90090](#))
- Your local FSE and specialists
- Agilent University [www.agilent.com/crosslab/university](http://www.agilent.com/crosslab/university)
- YouTube – [Agilent Channel](#) (maintenance videos)
- Agilent service contracts



# Contact Agilent Chemistries and Supplies Technical Support



1-800-227-9770 option 3, option 3:

Option 1 for GC and GC/MS columns and supplies

Option 2 for LC and LC/MS columns and supplies

Option 3 for sample preparation, filtration, and QuEChERS

Option 4 for spectroscopy supplies

Option 5 for chemical standards

Option 6 for former Prozyme products

Available in the U.S. and Canada, 8–5 all time zones

[gc-column-support@agilent.com](mailto:gc-column-support@agilent.com)

[lc-column-support@agilent.com](mailto:lc-column-support@agilent.com)

[spp-support@agilent.com](mailto:spp-support@agilent.com)

[spectro-supplies-support@agilent.com](mailto:spectro-supplies-support@agilent.com)

[chem-standards-support@agilent.com](mailto:chem-standards-support@agilent.com)

[advancebio.glycan@agilent.com](mailto:advancebio.glycan@agilent.com)

Web chat: Product pages of [agilent.com](http://agilent.com)

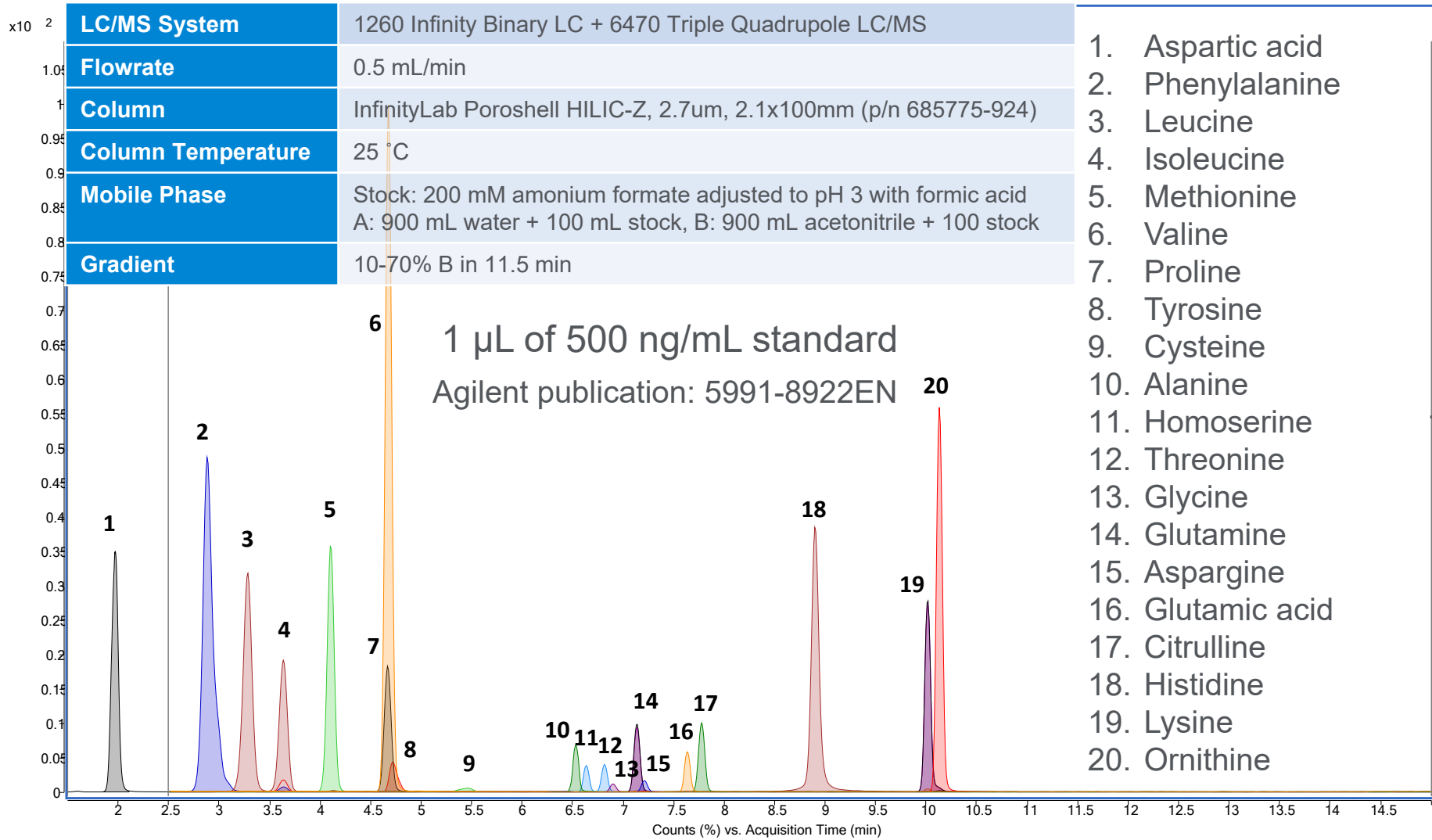
# Thank you

# Appendix

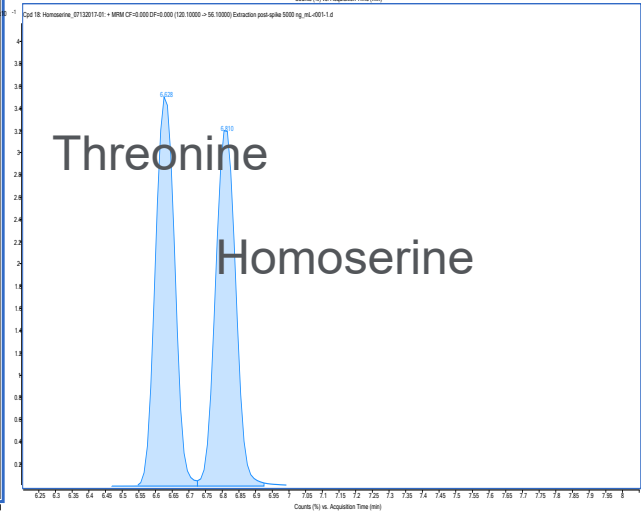
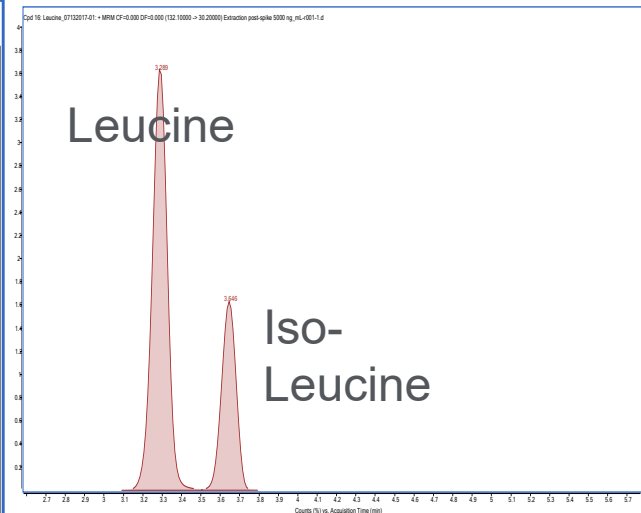
## Agilent applications



# Analysis of Amino Acids (and Isobars) in Plant Tissue with LC-MS/MS



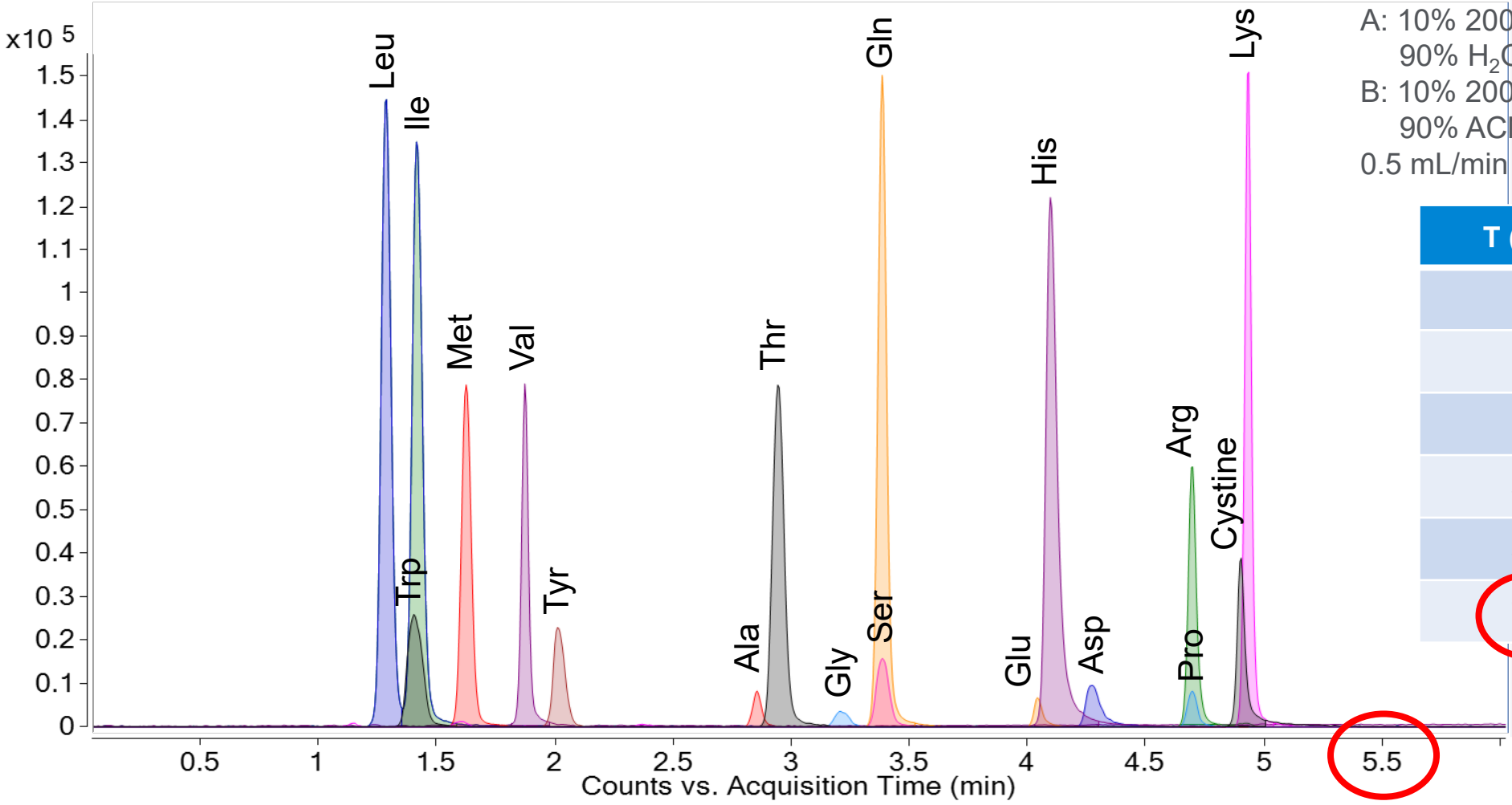
1. Aspartic acid
2. Phenylalanine
3. Leucine
4. Isoleucine
5. Methionine
6. Valine
7. Proline
8. Tyrosine
9. Cysteine
10. Alanine
11. Homoserine
12. Threonine
13. Glycine
14. Glutamine
15. Asparagine
16. Glutamic acid
17. Citrulline
18. Histidine
19. Lysine
20. Ornithine





# High Throughput LC/MS Analysis of Amino Acids with an Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z Column

InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z  
 2.1 x 50 mm  
 A: 10% 200 mM ammonium formate pH 3.5, 90% H<sub>2</sub>O  
 B: 10% 200 mM ammonium formate pH 3.5, 90% ACN  
 0.5 mL/min



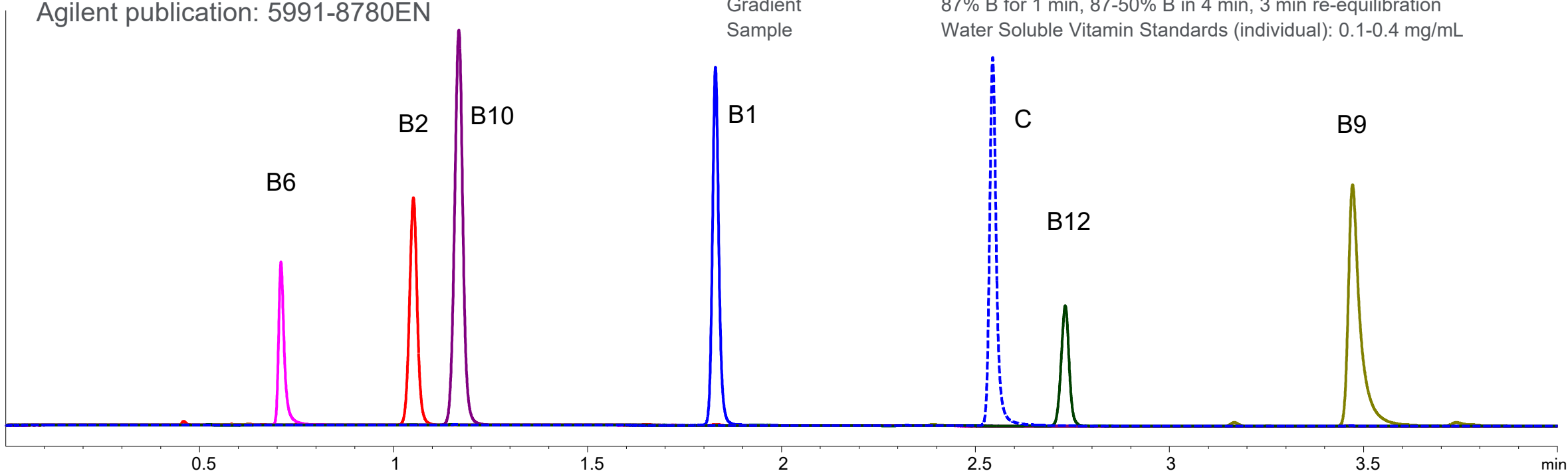
T (min)	%B
0	97
2	90
5	70
5.5	70
5.6	97
7.5	97

# Water Soluble Vitamins on Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z

## InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z

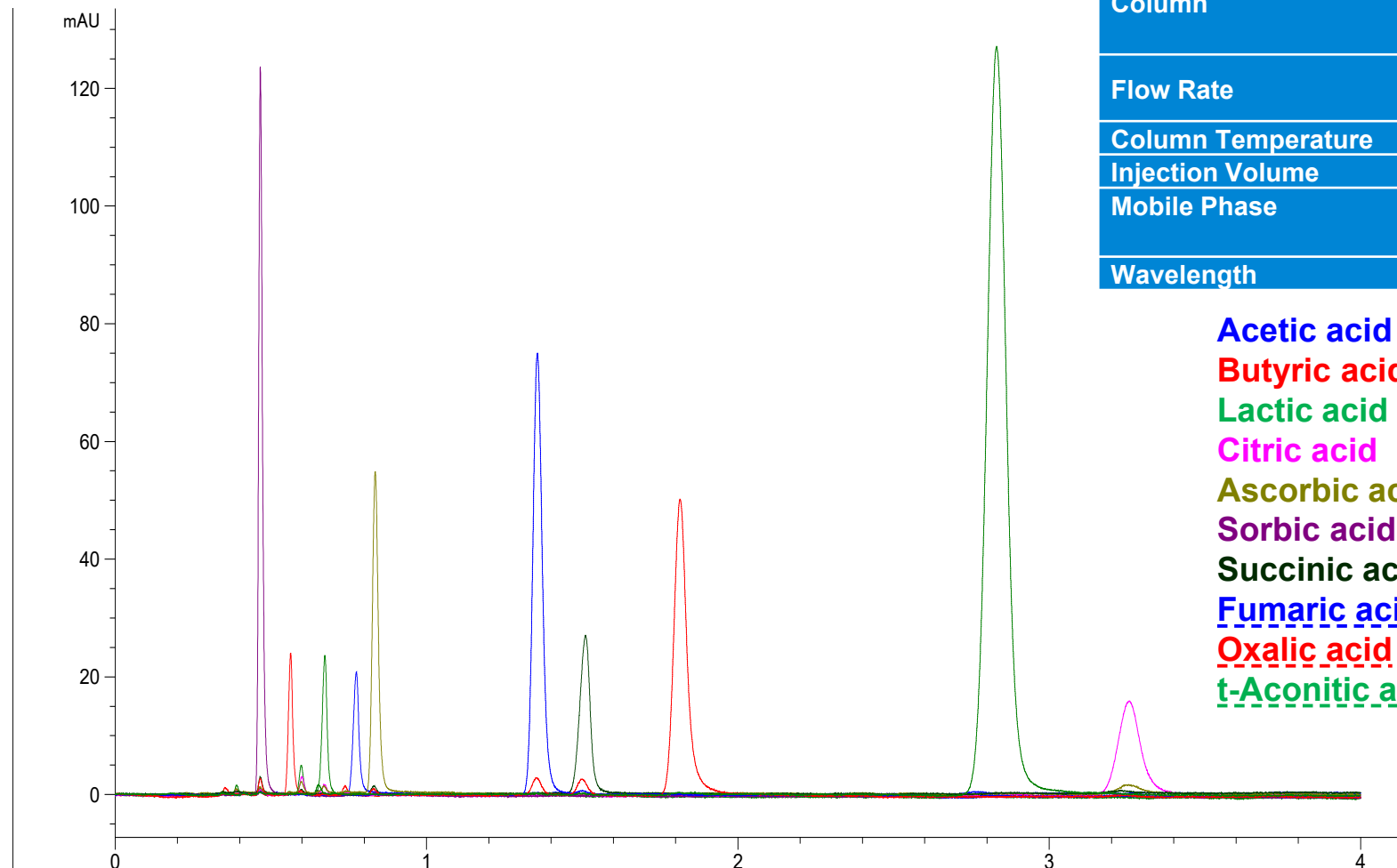
Agilent publication: 5991-8780EN

System	Agilent 1260 Infinity Binary HPLC w/ DAD
Column	InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z, 2.1 x 100 mm (p/n: 685775-924)
Flow Rate	0.5 mL/min
Column Temperature	40 °C
Injection Volume	1 µL
Mobile Phase A	100 mM ammonium acetate + 0.5% acetic acid in water
Mobile Phase B	Acetonitrile
Wavelength	260 nm
Data Rate	80 Hz
Gradient	87% B for 1 min, 87-50% B in 4 min, 3 min re-equilibration
Sample	Water Soluble Vitamin Standards (individual): 0.1-0.4 mg/mL



# Organic Acids on Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z

## Agilent 1260 Infinity Binary HPLC with DAD



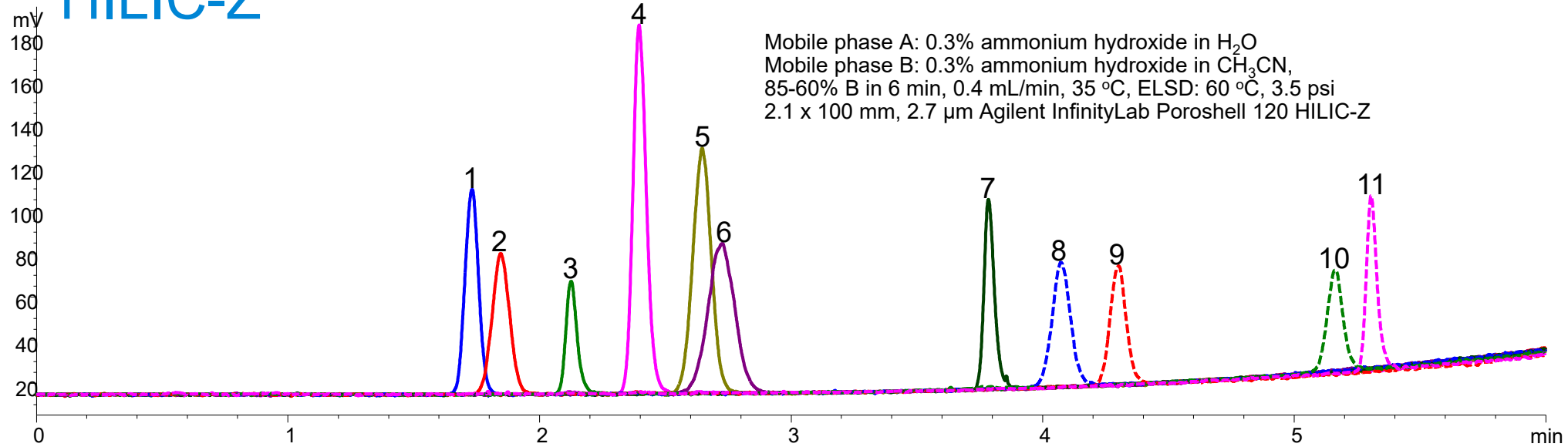
Column	InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z, 2.1 x 100 mm, 2.7 $\mu$ m (p/n: 685775-924)
Flow Rate	0.5 mL/min
Column Temperature	30 $^{\circ}$ C
Injection Volume	1 $\mu$ L
Mobile Phase	30% 30 mM sodium phosphate + 0.075% phosphoric acid, pH ~6.7, 70% ACN*
Wavelength	214 nm

Acetic acid  
Butyric acid  
Lactic acid  
Citric acid  
Ascorbic acid  
Sorbic acid  
Succinic acid  
Fumaric acid  
Oxalic acid  
t-Aconitic acid

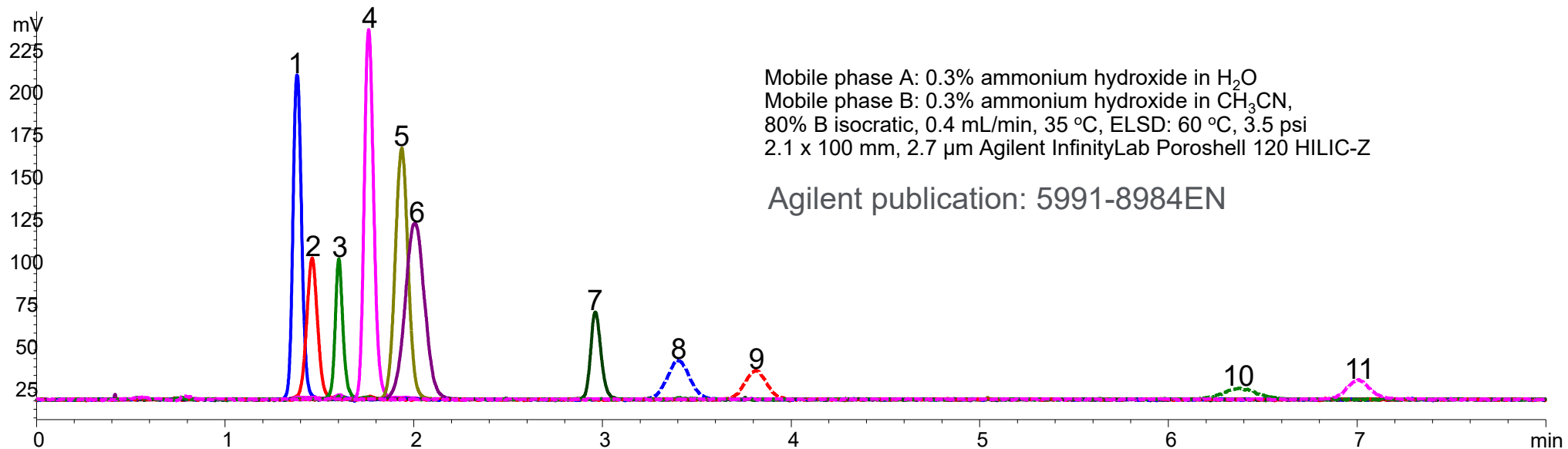
- \*Sodium phosphate is not soluble in high % ACN.**
- Do not increase salt concentration in mobile phase A.**
- Do not increase %B**
- If using ELSD or MS, use similar pH/concentration ammonium acetate instead**

Agilent publication: 5991-8985EN

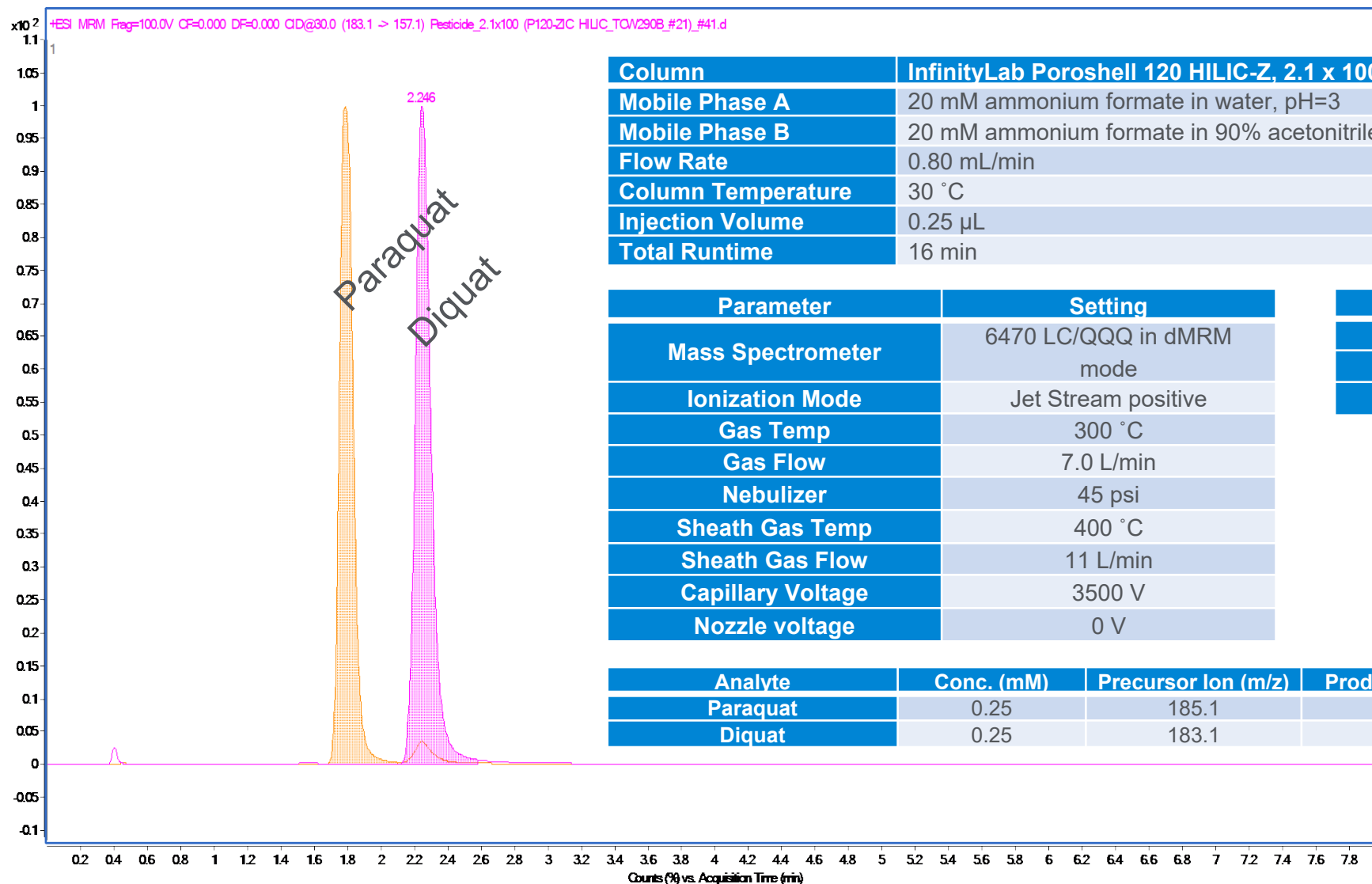
# Separation of 11 Sugars on Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z



1. Xylose
2. Arabinose
3. Fructose
4. Mannose
5. Glucose
6. Galactose
7. Sucrose
8. Maltose
9. Lactose
10. Maltotriose
11. Raffinose



# InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z Analysis of Paraquat/Diquat



<b>Column</b>	InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z, 2.1 x 100 mm
<b>Mobile Phase A</b>	20 mM ammonium formate in water, pH=3
<b>Mobile Phase B</b>	20 mM ammonium formate in 90% acetonitrile in water, pH=3
<b>Flow Rate</b>	0.80 mL/min
<b>Column Temperature</b>	30 °C
<b>Injection Volume</b>	0.25 µL
<b>Total Runtime</b>	16 min

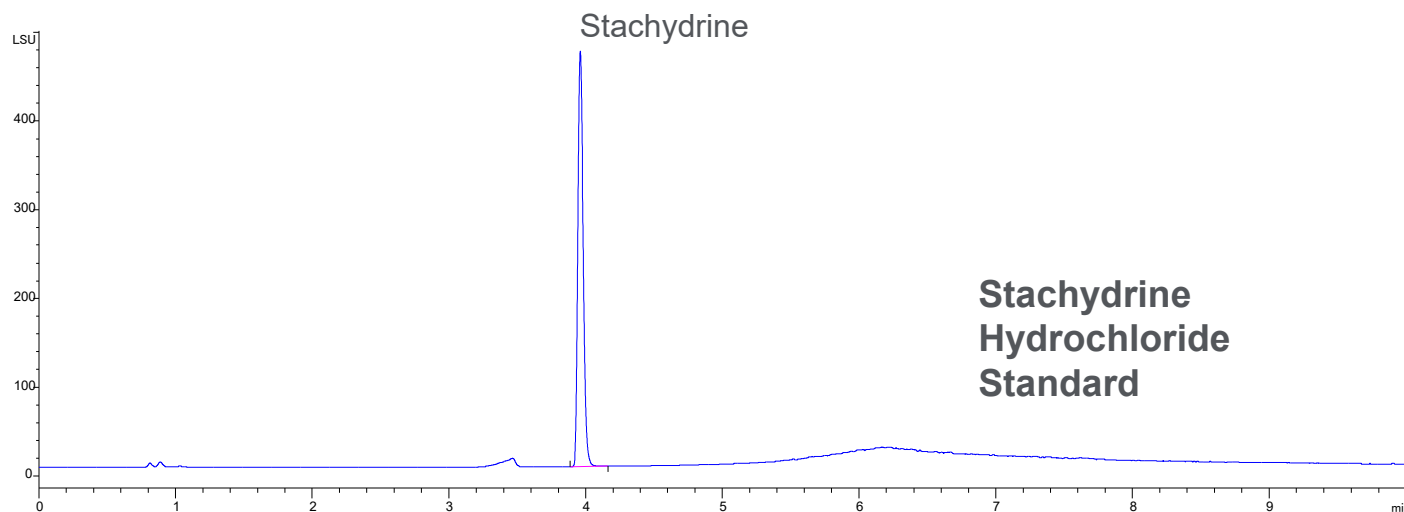
Parameter	Setting
<b>Mass Spectrometer</b>	6470 LC/QQQ in dMRM mode
<b>Ionization Mode</b>	Jet Stream positive
<b>Gas Temp</b>	300 °C
<b>Gas Flow</b>	7.0 L/min
<b>Nebulizer</b>	45 psi
<b>Sheath Gas Temp</b>	400 °C
<b>Sheath Gas Flow</b>	11 L/min
<b>Capillary Voltage</b>	3500 V
<b>Nozzle voltage</b>	0 V

Time (min)	Percentage B
0	100
10	70
11	100

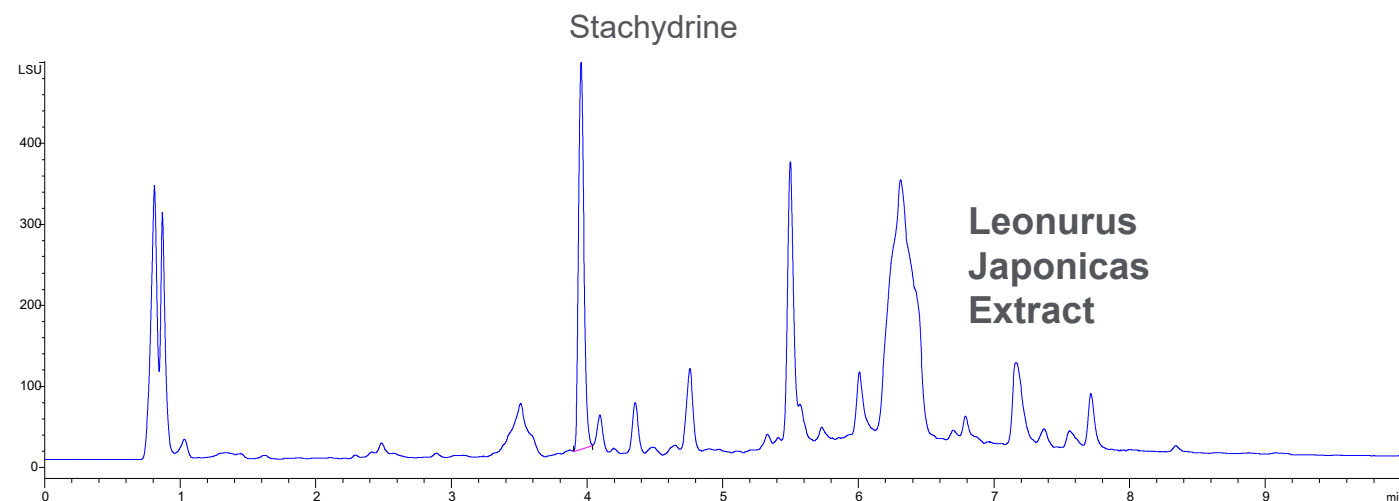
Agilent Pub # 5991-8830EN

Analyte	Conc. (mM)	Precursor Ion (m/z)	Product Ion (m/z)	Fragmentor (V)	Dwell Time (ms)
Paraquat	0.25	185.1	170.1	100	10
Diquat	0.25	183.1	157.1	100	10

# Analysis of Polar Compounds in Plant Materials: Quantitation of Stachydrine in Chinese Motherwort (*Leonurus japonicas*) by InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z



Stachydrine  
Hydrochloride  
Standard



Leonurus  
Japonicas  
Extract

## Agilent 1260 Infinity II HPLC

Column	InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z, 2.1 x 100 mm (p/n 685775-924)
Mobile Phase A	10 mmol ammonium acetate
Mobile Phase B	Acetonitrile
Flow Rate	0.30 mL/min
Gradient	95-60% B in 10 min
Column Temperature	30 °C
Injection Volume	2 µL

## Agilent 1290 Infinity II ELSD

Nebulizer Temperature	40 °C
Evaporator Temperature	40 °C
Gas flow rate	1.6 SLM
Data Rate	40 Hz

Agilent publication: 5991-8617EN

# Analysis of Metals, Halides, and Inorganic Ions on Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell HILIC-Z

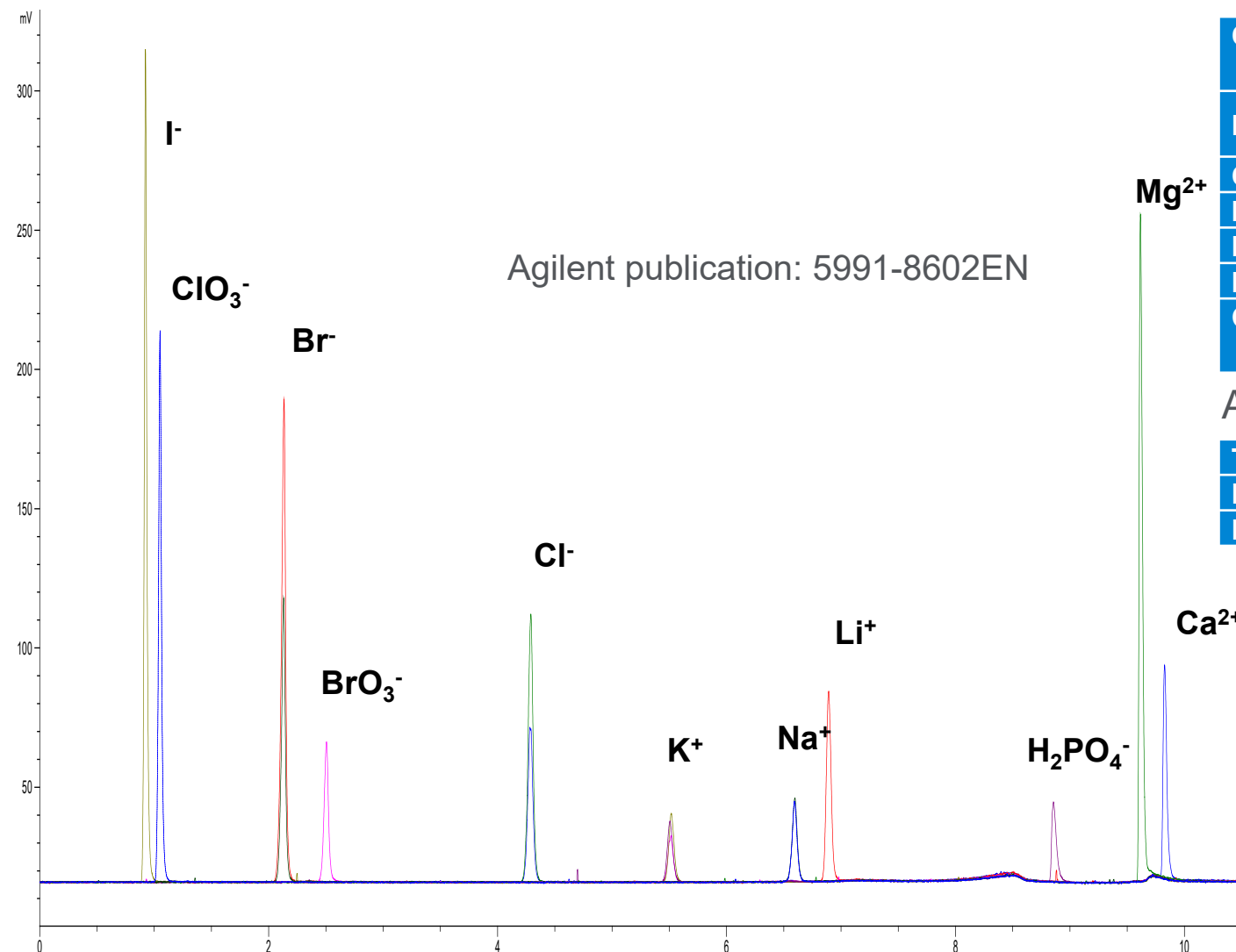
## Agilent 1260 Infinity Binary HPLC

<b>Column</b>	InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z, 2.1 x 100 mm, 2.7 μm (p/n 685775-924)
<b>Flow Rate</b>	0.40 mL/min
<b>Column Temperature</b>	30 °C
<b>Injection Volume</b>	1 μL
<b>Mobile Phase A</b>	100 mM ammonium formate in water at pH=3
<b>Mobile Phase B</b>	Acetonitrile
<b>Gradient</b>	91% B for 1 min, 91-80% B in 5 min, 80-20% B in 5 min, 3 min re-equilibration

## Agilent G4218A ELSD

<b>Temperature</b>	40 °C
<b>Pressure</b>	3.5 psi
<b>Data Rate</b>	30 Hz

Agilent publication: 5991-8602EN



### Samples:

Calcium chloride

Magnesium chloride

Potassium iodide

Sodium bromide

Lithium bromide

Potassium bromate

Potassium phosphate

Sodium chlorate