Supporting Information

High-Resolution Filtering for Improved Small Molecule Identification via GC/MS

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Urine Drug Analysis

The following GC gradient was used: 2.5 min isothermal at 60 °C, ramp to 210 °C at 40 °C/min, ramp to 267 °C at 5 °C/min, ramp to 310 °C at 40 °C/min, then 6.2 min isothermal at 310 °C. The MS transfer line and source temperatures were held at 280 °C and 200 °C, respectively. The mass range from 50-500 *m/z* was mass analyzed using a resolution of 30,000 (*m/∆m*), relative to 200 *m/z*. The AGC target was set to 1e6, and electron ionization (70 eV) was used. Lock mass calibration was employed during acquisition of these data. An unanticipated error occurred in calculation of the necessary mass correction, and many scans acquired during these experiments resulted in extreme mass errors (~25ppm). Large distortions in mass accuracy largely inhibit the described HRF approach. As such, during data processing each spectrum was restored to its native-state by removing the applied mass correction as reported in each scan header. Subsequent analyses did not employ this lock-mass correction and mass accuracy was unaffected.

Preparation of a *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* **metabolite extract**

Saccharomyces cerevisiae was grown on media containing dextrose and glycerol. 1x10⁸ cells were isolated by rapid vacuum filtration with a nylon filter membrane, washed with phosphate buffered saline, and submerged into a precooled 1.5 mL plastic tube containing a 2:2:1 acetonitrile/methanol/H₂O mixture.

Pesticide Analysis

The mixture containing 37 EPA 525.2 pesticides was diluted from 500 µg/mL to a working concentration of 3 ng/ μ L in acetone. A 1 μ L aliquot was injected using a 1:10 split at a temperature of 275 ºC and separated at 1.2 mL/min He. The following GC oven gradient was used: isothermal at 100 ºC for 1 min, 8 ºC/min to 320 ºC, and isothermal at 320 ºC for 3 min. Transfer line and source temperatures were maintained at 275 °C and 225 °C, respectively. In each MS scan, the range from 50-650 *m/z* was analyzed using a resolution of 17,500 (*m/∆m*), relative to 200 *m/z*. Maximum injection times of 100 ms were allowed at an AGC target of 1e6. Electron ionization (EI) at 70 eV was used.

Additional Reference Standard Analysis

Stock solutions for all other reported standards were prepared individually at a concentration of 1 mg/mL in appropriate solvents. Mixtures containing ~5-10 reference standards were prepared by combining 20 µL aliquots of each standard using no specific organizational scheme. These mixtures were dried down under nitrogen, resuspended in 100 µL of the MSTFA + 1% TMCS derivatization reagent, capped, vortexed, and heated at 60 ºC for 15 minutes. 100 µL of ethyl acetate was then added to each mixture before being transferred to an autosampler vial. The same GC oven gradient and MS parameters as described in *Urine Drug Analysis* were also used here.

Spectral Deconvolution

Following data collection raw EI-MS spectral data was deconvolved into 'features' and then grouped into individual spectra containing only product ions stemming from a singular parent. This step was critical as the inclusion of extraneous fragment ions in a spectrum can diminish the ability of the algorithm to annotate all observed peaks with exact chemical formulas constrained by the atom set of the parent. Every peak in the raw data file was considered. Peaks observed in at least five consecutive scans having *m/z* values within ±10 ppm of their averaged *m/z* were grouped together as a data feature. Note that mass accuracy is a function of and S/N, and ppm tolerance a function of m/z. The 10 ppm tolerance was empirically observed to yield complete chromatographic profiles which were free of interference from neighboring peaks. Peaks were added successively to these groups and the average *m/z* value was recalculated after each

addition. Following aggregation of peaks into features, smoothed intensity profiles were created for each. Spurious features arising from noise were eliminated from consideration by requiring that each feature exhibit a "peak-like" shape. All features were required to rise to an apex having at least twice the intensity of the first and last peaks included. Any features arising from fragments common to closely eluting precursors were split into separate features at significant local minima. Features reaching an elution apex at approximately the same time were grouped together. Features were first sorted based on apex intensity. Starting with the most intense fragment a discrete time window around the apex was created. All features having an apex within this window were then grouped together. The width of this window was set to include all peaks having an intensity ≥ 96% of the apex peak's intensity as a default. More conservative criteria was used for the extraction of spectra in the urine drug spike-in and discovery metabolomics experiments given the complex background. Here the time window was set to include peaks having an intensity ≥ 99% of the apex. Following feature grouping, a new spectrum was created for each group and populated with peaks representing each feature in the group. Peak *m/z* and intensity values were set equal to the intensity-weighted *m/z* average of all peaks in the corresponding feature and the intensity at the apex, respectively.

Small Molecule Identification via Spectral Matching

Compound identifications for the small molecules analyzed were assigned by comparing deconvolved high-resolution spectra against unit-resolution reference spectra present in the NIST 12 MS/EI Library. All 212,961 unit-resolution reference spectra in the library were exported to a .JDX file through the NIST MS Search 2.0 program and converted to a format suitable for matching against acquired Q Exactive GC spectra. A pseudo-unit resolution copy of each highresolution spectrum was created by combining the intensities of peaks falling within the same nominal mass range. The nominal mass value was reported as peak *m/z* and all intensity values were normalized relative to the spectrum's base peak (set to 999). To calculate spectral similarity

between experimental and reference spectra a weighted dot product calculation was used. First, all peaks in a spectrum were scaled using the following normalization factors reported in the literature which were determined to provide optimal spectral matching results¹:

$$
m/z
$$
_{normalized} = m/z _{measured} x 1.3

 $intensity_{normalized} = intensity_{measured}^{0.53}$

These normalization factors redistribute the weight placed on any given spectral peak in two ways: First, by scaling m/z by a factor of 1.3x, more massive peaks (which are inherently more diagnostic for spectral matching) are given greater weight. Second, by scaling intensity by a factor of $x^{0.53}$ more intense peaks are given relatively less weight. This is done to ensure that no single peak can disproportionately influence spectral matches. The described normalizations were applied to all reference spectra as well. The following dot product equation was used to measure spectral similarity:

$$
100 \times \frac{\sum (m/z[Intensity_{experimental} * Intensity_{reference}]^{0.5})^2}{\sum (Intensity_{experimental} * m/z) \sum (Intensity_{reference} * m/z)}
$$

Although simplistic, this approach was more than adequate for retrieving candidate compounds having similar fragmentation patterns to experimentally derived spectra. To increase search space as much as possible all reference spectra were matched against each unit resolution copy of a Q Exactive GC spectrum in the 'discovery metabolomics analysis'. All compounds reported yielded a confident spectral match with a reference spectrum in the NIST database.

High-Resolution Filtering: Theoretical Fragment Generation

A set of theoretical fragments for each candidate compound was produced by generating all unique combinations of atoms from the set contained in the parent chemical formula which can be calculated by:

$$
x = \sum_{i}^{n} (i_a + 1)
$$

where *x* is the number of theoretical fragments stemming from a given chemical formula, n is the number of unique elements in the formula, and i^a represents the atom count of that element within the formula. The most abundant isotope for each atom was used with the exception of bromine and chlorine. ⁷⁹Br and ⁸¹Br have natural isotopic abundances of 0.5069 and 0.4931, respectively. Similarly, ³⁵Cl and ³⁷Cl have natural abundances of 0.7576 and 0.2424. For each theoretical fragment containing either a bromine or chlorine an additional variant was generated where a heavier isotope was exchanged for its lighter counterpart. This process was repeated in a combinatorial manner for those theoretical fragments containing multiple Br and/or Cl atoms. Generation of additional isotopic theoretical fragments for those candidates containing atoms in the set $\{^{12}C, ^{32}S, ^{28}Si\}$ was done on a case-by-case basis during the theoretical fragment/peak matching process.

High-Resolution Filtering: Theoretical Fragment/Peak Matching

It is assumed that all fragment peaks in an EI-MS spectrum are radical cations. Accordingly, the mass of an electron was subtracted from the monoisotopic mass of each fragment in the set of candidates. Starting with the least massive peak in the Q Exactive GC spectrum, theoretical fragments falling within a ± 10 ppm tolerance centered around the peak's measured *m/z* were found. This tolerance was empirically determined to be the optimal allowed mass tolerance as it enabled annotation of low S/N fragments where mass accuracy is diminished while maintaining discrimination against spurious chemical formulas (**Supplementary Figure 6**). If no fragments were present within this range, the algorithm moved to the next most massive peak and repeated the process. If a single fragment was found within this range, isotopic variants containing substituted ¹³C, ³³S, ³⁴S, ²⁹Si, or ³⁰Si atoms were generated where appropriate and added to the list of candidate fragments. If multiple fragments were found within the allowed tolerance each

fragment was independently evaluated to determine how many additional peaks/signal could be matched. The theoretical fragment resulting in the largest amount of additional matched signal was assumed to be correct and substituted isotopic theoretical fragments were added to the list of candidate theoretical fragments. All peaks which had matching theoretical fragments were stored. After all peaks were considered the total ion current that was matched to a theoretical fragment by: as as calculated by:

$$
\sum (mz*intensity)_{annotated} / \sum (mz*intensity)_{observed}
$$

was returned. This scoring calculation was deemed appropriate as it gives additional weight to larger ions which are inherently more diagnostic of a given precursor than less massive ions. Conceptually, there are fewer molecules in existence which can theoretically produce a fragment at 300 *m/z* than there are which can produce a fragment at 200 *m/z*. An analysis of execution time (on a desktop PC) of the high-resolution filtering process using 232 metabolite spectra and 50 candidate matches to each spectrum is highlighted in **Supplementary Figure 7**.

References

(1) Kim, S.; Koo, I.; Wei, X.; Zhang, X. *Bioinformatics* **2012**, *28* (8), 1158–1163.

Supplementary Figure 1. Global high-resolution filtering results. For all 105 reference spectra analyzed in this study 60,560 HRF scores were calculated using a unique chemical formulas from the NIST 12 EI reference library. Shown here are the results of that analysis for all reference spectra (1-105) ordered by increasing monoisotopic mass. The calculated scores are separated into two categories; formulas yielding HRF scores less than the true parent score (blue), and formulas yielding HRF scores greater than or equal to the true parent score (red). More detailed results are shown in **Supplementary Table 2**. Note that for the majority of considered spectra a very small percentage of formulas can produce a similarly high (or higher score) with few exceptions. Cursory analysis of the cases where a large percentage of formulas can produce high-quality results (1, 23, 24, 35.) indicates that such compounds tend to have more simplistic formulas (C₁₀H₁₅N, C₁₂H₁₄N₂O₂, C₁₅H₁₀O₂, C₁₆H₁₇NO, respectively). We note that these compounds are comprised exclusively of the four most common organic elements, namely carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, and oxygen. For compounds with increased chemical complexity the method exhibits increased specificity, as anticipated.

Supplementary Figure 2. Individual analyses of drugs spiked into human urine at variable concentration. (**a-i**) Shown here are the measured spectral match and HRF scores for all deconvolved spectra extracted from the urine spike-in data set. These data are the same as that shown in **Fig. 3b**. Corresponding spectral match and HRF score lines are plotted together for clarity. It is noted that at reduced concentrations observed spectral match score tends to decline while the HRF metric remains high.

Supplementary Figure 3. HRF Specificity. Two spectra for each of the drugs analyzed were extracted, one at the highest measured concentration and one at the lowest. Given that these drugs are relatively small these formulas were assumed to more accurately reflect a pool of potential candidate molecules, rather than utilizing all formulas in the database. 55,229 HRF scores were calculated using unique formulas (0-500 Da) from the NIST 12 EI reference library. Cumulative distributions of these scores are shown for each spectrum at high concentration (**a**) and low concentration (**b**). These data are the same as that shown in **Figure 3d** but are color-coded here for clarity. The specificity of the method does not appear to change whether a "peak-rich" or a "peak-depleted" spectrum is considered as similar cumulative curves are generated for each drug. This data suggests that even spectra collected at diminished concentrations will contain sufficient information for the method to maintain specificity.

Supplementary Figure 4. Discovery Metabolomics Dataset Overview. Deconvolution of a raw data file from the 30-minute analysis of an extracted/TMS-derivatized yeast metabolome yielded 19,367 features which met the requirements for consideration as a true analyte feature. The distribution of feature intensities and m/z values are shown above (**a, b**). These extracted features were subsequently placed into 554 groups. For our analyses we isolated only those feature groups which contained 10+ peaks and were not found in a corresponding background run. The distribution of included/excluded feature groups in shown in **c**. The 232 feature groups (read: spectra) included in our analyses were assumed to be biological in nature and contained a median of 20 features per group (**d**).

Supplementary Figure 5. HRF Specificity in Discovery Metabolomic Analysis. For each of the 232 metabolite spectra in our dataset the top 20 spectral matches were retrieved using a database search, and a corresponding HRF score was calculated for each. The uniqueness of these 20 matches with regards to chemical formula and associated HRF score are shown in **a**. Given these distributions, it is apparent that many formulas which are chemically inequivalent can produce identical HRF scores. We predicted that in such instances, individual peaks were being annotated with conserved subsets of atoms from different formula precursors. For each *m/z* peak in each spectrum considered, we show the distribution of unique annotations assigned to that peak from all 20 matched precursors (**b**). These data show that often only a single formula annotation is ever assigned to a given *m/z* peak suggesting that only formulas containing the appropriate set of atoms from a given precursor will be able to achieve a high score.

Supplementary Figure 6. HRF Theoretical-Fragment-to-Peak Matching Mass Tolerances. Using the set of 105 spectra from pure reference standards we calculated HRF scores from the true parent chemical formula using allowed mass tolerances ranging from 0-30 ppm. The gray curves above highlight the associated score at a given ppm tolerance for each spectrum. The curve in blue is the average of all 105 curves at each data point. Ideally this tolerance is kept very small as to prevent spurious annotations from being assigned. However PPM tolerance width is a function of *m/z* and we acknowledge that mass accuracy is diminished in times of reduced S/N. Based on these data we opted to use a 10 ppm mass tolerance for all analyses.

Supplementary Figure 7. HRF Execution Time. To demonstrate the feasibility of the HRF approach for routine discovery metabolomic data analysis we characterize the total time needed to generate all theoretical fragments from 60,560 different chemical formula inputs (a). We find a linear relationship between fragment generation time and the number of theoretical fragments and note that nearly 1e6 theoretical fragments can be generated in less than one second. Additionally, we characterize the total HRF execution time (theoretical fragment generation + theoretical fragment-peak matching) using the top 50 matched formulas to 232 metabolite spectra (11,600 HRF scores in total) in **b**. The box designates the innerquartile range (IQR) and the whiskers represent 1.5x the upper/lower IQR, respectively. Open-circles represent outliers. Here we find a median total HRF execution time of 16 ms with a standard deviation of 859 ms. All analyses described in this work were carried out on a personal computer with an Intel I5-4570 3.2 GHz quad-core processor and 16 GB of RAM running Windows 7 Professional.

Supplementary Table 1. Shown here are results from all analyzed reference compounds complete with raw file name, retention time, HRF score, spectral match score, peak count, and the reference spectrum name as reported in NIST 12.

Supplementary Table 2. Global HRF analysis. Shown here is a summary of the returned HRF results when calculating scores for the 105 dataset spectra against 60,560 unique chemical formulas. Compounds are ranked by ascending monoisotopic mass. The raw number of formulas which produce a HRF score less than, or greater than or equal to the true parent are shown in columns labeled HRF < Parent Score and HRF >= Parent Score. Using the pool of formulas which yielded a HRF Score>= the true parent HRF score the number of true and false supersets were determined. A superset is a formula where all of the atoms in the true parent set are also contained. Non-supersets were those formulas which failed to meet this condition. For those non-supersets the average percentage of atoms shared with the true parent was calculated, along with the average and median number of additional atoms held by the formula in question. We find that these non-supersets which can achieve similarly high HRF scores as the true parent often share a large percentage of atoms with the correct precursor (93.574%) and contain a substantial number of additional atoms on average (19.506)

Supplementary Table 3. Shown here are the associated spectral match score, HRF score, and peak count for all extracted spectra in the drug spike-in dataset. All spectra considered contained at least 10 peaks.

