

# Lipoprotein profiles in human heterozygote carriers of a functional mutation P297S in scavenger receptor class B1.

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1 **Lipoprotein profiles in human heterozygote carriers of a**  
2 **functional mutation P297S in Scavenger Receptor class B1**

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1 **Abbreviations;**

2 2DE - Two-dimensional gel electrophoresis, ABCA1 - ATP-binding cassette sub-family A  
3 member 1, AREase - Serum Paraoxonase 1 arylesterase activity, apo - apolipoprotein, CEC -  
4 Cholesterol efflux capacity, CETP - cholesteryl ester transfer protein, CVD - cardiovascular  
5 disease, DCF - 2,7-dichlorofluorescein, DCFH - 2,7 dichlorofluorescin, HDL - high density  
6 lipoprotein, HDL-C - high density lipoprotein cholesterol, LCAT - Lecithin-cholesterol  
7 acyltransferase, LDL/VLDL - low-/very low-density lipoprotein, PLS - Partial least square,  
8 SAA - Serum Amyloid A, PON1 - Serum Paraoxonase 1, PONase - Serum Paraoxonase 1  
9 paraoxonase activity, TTR - Transthyretin, SR-B1 - scavenger receptor class B type 1, TBS -  
10 Tris-buffered saline, WB - Western blot

11

12 **Keywords;** apoE, apoL-1, HDL, LDL/VLDL, P297S, SR-B1

13

14 **Highlights**

- 15 - SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> carriers show increased LDL apoE/free apoE compared to family controls
- 16 - SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> carriers show increased apoL-1 in HDL compared to family controls
- 17 - Carriers had equivalent HDL anti-oxidative function and PON1 activities as controls
- 18 - Carriers had significantly increased methionine oxidations in HDL-apoA-I
- 19 - Carriers HDL had similar cholesterol efflux capacity as controls

20

## 1 **Abstract**

2 The scavenger receptor class B type 1 (SR-B1) is an important HDL receptor involved in  
3 cholesterol uptake and efflux, but its physiological role in human lipoprotein metabolism is  
4 not fully understood. Heterozygous carriers of the SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> mutation are characterized by  
5 increased HDL cholesterol levels, impaired cholesterol efflux from macrophages and  
6 attenuated adrenal function. Here, the composition and function of lipoproteins was studied in  
7 SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes.

8

9 Lipoproteins from six SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> carriers and six family controls were investigated. HDL and  
10 LDL/VLDL were isolated by ultracentrifugation and proteins were separated by two-  
11 dimensional gel electrophoresis and identified by mass spectrometry. HDL antioxidant  
12 properties, paraoxonase 1 activities, apoA-I methionine oxidations and HDL cholesterol  
13 efflux capacity were assessed.

14

15 Multivariate modelling separated carriers from controls based on lipoprotein composition.  
16 Protein analyses showed a significant enrichment of apoE in LDL/VLDL and of apoL-1 in  
17 HDL from heterozygotes compared to controls. The relative distribution of plasma apo E was  
18 increased in LDL and in lipid-free form. There were no significant differences in paraoxonase  
19 1 activities, HDL antioxidant properties or HDL cholesterol efflux capacity but heterozygotes  
20 showed a significant increase of oxidized methionines in apoA-I.

21

22 The SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> mutation affects both HDL and LDL/VLDL protein composition. The  
23 increase of apoE in carriers suggests a compensatory mechanism for attenuated SR-B1  
24 mediated cholesterol uptake by HDL. Increased methionine oxidation may affect HDL  
25 function by reducing apoA-I binding to its targets. The results illustrate the complexity of  
26 lipoprotein metabolism that has to be taken into account in future therapeutic strategies  
27 aiming at targeting SR-B1.

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## 1           **1. Introduction**

2   Numerous studies have shown that plasma high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C)  
3   levels are inversely associated with risk for cardiovascular disease (CVD) [1, 2, 3]. Since  
4   there is a need for alternative interventions alongside LDL-cholesterol lowering drugs, these  
5   observations have resulted in the exploration of other targets, such as cholesteryl ester  
6   transfer protein (CETP) inhibitors, to raise HDL-C levels [4]. In addition, a central mediator  
7   of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) metabolism, the scavenger receptor class B type 1 (SR-  
8   B1), is being considered as a drug target [5]. SR-B1 is a multi-functional receptor, abundantly  
9   expressed in liver and steroidogenic tissues [6], and a wide array of native and modified  
10   lipoproteins has been shown to interact with SR-B1 [7]. Regarding the role of SR-B1 in  
11   CVD, it has been shown to protect from diet-induced atherosclerosis in apoE<sup>-/-</sup> mouse  
12   models [8, 9] while SR-B1 deficient mice with high HDL-C, showed increased  
13   atherosclerosis and increased expression of inflammatory markers [7]. Consistent with this, it  
14   has also been shown that a coding variant for SR-B1 (I179N) caused increased  
15   atherosclerosis in LDL-receptor knockout mice on a Western-type diet [10]. In humans,  
16   variation at the *SCARB1* locus (the gene encoding for SR-B1) has been associated to CVD,  
17   albeit in a gender specific way [11, 12, 13]. These findings indicate that a functional SR-B1  
18   receptor may be athero-protective and that high HDL-C levels resulting from reduced hepatic  
19   clearance, by a less functional SR-B1 receptor, may not be beneficial. In accordance, a recent  
20   review concluded that therapies aimed at adjusting the HDL-C levels have so far failed and  
21   that modulation of HDL functions may be a better way to achieve therapies that reduces the  
22   risk for CVD [14]. This also raises the question whether HDL derived from carriers of  
23   *SCARB1* mutations itself has detrimental properties. Consistent with this, it has been  
24   postulated that genetic variation in *SCARB1* may give rise to changes in non-lipid pathways  
25   which affects the CVD risk, such as inflammation and endothelial function [12].

26  
27   In humans, there are three described mutations of SR-B1 that cause increased HDL-C.  
28   Heterozygous carriers of the first identified mutation SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> were characterized by  
29   increased plasma HDL-C mainly in the larger HDL<sub>2</sub> fraction while other lipoprotein fractions  
30   were consistent with the controls, macrophages with impaired capacity to promote cholesterol  
31   efflux to normal HDL, altered platelet function and attenuated adrenal function but without  
32   apparent effects on atherosclerosis [15]. The other two mutations, SR-B1<sup>S112F</sup> and SR-  
33   B1<sup>T175A</sup>, occupying the same extracellular loop as SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup>, are also suggested to be less

1 efficient in mediating cholesterol efflux [16]. Interestingly, also in patients with these two  
2 mutations, clinically observed accelerated atherosclerosis was not found [17]. In summary,  
3 the alterations in SR-B1 of all three mutations caused elevated HDL-C but to our knowledge,  
4 data is still limited regarding possible metabolic consequences. Investigating the lipoprotein  
5 composition of subjects with functional mutations in the SR-B1 receptor may be a useful tool  
6 for improved understanding. Therefore, we have in the present study investigated the protein  
7 composition of HDL and LDL/VLDL and the function of HDL from the heterozygous  
8 carriers of the SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> mutation and from family controls.

## 10 **2. Materials and Methods**

### 11 *2.1. Plasma measurements*

12 Plasma from SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes and matched family controls, previously identified by  
13 screening for individuals with high HDL-C values [15], was collected in EDTA-tubes after an  
14 overnight fast. Total cholesterol and triglycerides levels were measured using standard  
15 assays. ApoA-I concentration was determined using a commercially available assay (Randox,  
16 Wako) on a COBAS MIRA analyzer. HDL-C was measured as cholesterol remaining after  
17 precipitation of apolipoprotein (apo) B-containing lipoproteins. Plasma was frozen  
18 immediately in different aliquots for different analyses and was thawed once before use and  
19 was not re-used for other purposes. Informed consent was obtained from all subjects and the  
20 study was approved by the ethics committee of the Academic Medical Center in Amsterdam.

### 22 *2.2. HDL and LDL/VLDL isolation*

23 HDL and LDL/VLDL isolation of six SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes (2 males and 4 females, age  
24 range 21-67 years) and six family controls (3 males and 3 females, age range 39-78 years)  
25 was performed by ultracentrifugation as described [18]. Briefly, plasma was isolated from  
26 blood samples collected in EDTA by centrifugation for 10 min in 700g at room temperature.  
27 EDTA (1mg/mL) and sucrose (5mg/mL) were added to prevent LDL/HDL oxidation and  
28 aggregation. Five mL of EDTA-plasma was adjusted to a density of 1.24 g/mL with solid  
29 KBr. The plasma samples were layered in the bottom of a centrifuge tube and were gently  
30 overlaid with KBr/PBS with a density of 1.063 g/mL. The first ultracentrifugation step  
31 was performed at 290 000g for 4h at 15°C. HDL, located in the middle of the KBr/PBS  
32 solution and LDL/VLDL located at the top of the tube were then collected with a syringe. An  
33 additional centrifugation step was performed for 2h in KBr/PBS solution with a density of

1 1.24 g/mL. The HDL and LDL/VLDL fractions were again collected from the tube with a  
2 syringe. All fractions were desalted and protein concentrations were measured with the Bio-  
3 Rad protein assay (Bio-Rad, Hercules, CA, USA). Samples were lyophilized prior to 2-DE  
4 analysis.

### 6 2.3. 2-DE

7 Proteins were separated on 2-D gels as described previously [19]. Briefly, 400 µg HDL or  
8 300 µg LDL/VLDL proteins were isoelectrically focused on immobilized pH gradient strips  
9 (pH 3–10) at 46 000 Vh (max 8 000 V), then separated overnight on homogenous (T=14,  
10 C=1.5%) gels and fixed and detected by fluorescent SYPRO Ruby protein stain (Bio-Rad).  
11 Gel images were evaluated using PDQuest 2-D gel analysis software, v. 7.1.0 (Bio-Rad).  
12 Protein abundance was expressed as percent of total 2-D gel fluorescence, multiple isoforms  
13 of proteins added together.

### 15 2.4. Mass spectrometry

16 Protein spots detected on 2-D gels were map-matched [18] and identified with mass  
17 spectrometry. Spots were excised manually and subjected to in-gel trypsin digestion. Peptides  
18 were analysed with MALDI-TOF MS (Voyager DE PRO, Applied Biosystems, Foster City,  
19 CA, USA). Peptides were mixed 1:1 with matrix (2,5-dihydroxybenzoic acid) in 70%  
20 acetonitrile/0.3% trifluoroacetic acid (20 mg/mL). Databases NCBI, Swiss-Prot, and UniProt  
21 were searched using MS-Fit as search engine (<http://prospector.ucsf.edu>). Search criteria  
22 were defined as; isoelectric point, molecular weight, human species, mass tolerance <50 ppm,  
23 methionine oxidation, and cysteine modification by carbamidomethylation.

### 25 2.5. Western blot of apoL-1

26 For Western blot (WB), 25 µg of HDL proteins were separated with SDS-PAGE and  
27 transferred to a PVDF membrane. After blocking 1h (5% milk in tris-buffered saline, TBS)  
28 and incubation over night with anti apoL-1 primary antibodies (Abcam, Ab79282, 1:1000 in  
29 2% milk in Tween-TBS), the membranes were incubated for 1h with HRP-conjugated  
30 secondary antibodies 1:40 000 (2% milk in Tween-TBS) . Proteins were visualised using  
31 ECL plus WB detection system (GE Healthcare, Little Chalfont, UK) and X-ray film. The  
32 apoL-1 intensity (optical density/mm<sup>2</sup>) was calculated with ImageLab (version 3.0.1, Bio  
33 Rad) and the relative quantity of apoL-1 was expressed as percent of the total apoL-1  
34 intensity.

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## 2.6. *FPLC-fractionation and Western spot-blot of apoE*

Lipoprotein (plasma) fractionations were carried out with equal portions of EDTA plasma from carriers for the SR-BI<sup>P297S</sup> mutation (n=4) or matched controls (n=4) (total pool of 1 mL respectively). A superose-6 column combined with an ÄKTA explorer 10S system was used for separation of the lipoprotein fractions (GE Healthcare). The buffer flow was 0.3 mL/min using TBS as flow-buffer (50 mM TRIS, 150 mM NaCl, pH 7.4). A total of 35 plasma fractions (1.0 mL each) of plasma from carriers and controls were collected and further processed for apoE Western spot-blot analysis. Spot-blot analysis was carried out using a 96 wells casting system with a mounted PVDF membrane. Of each fraction, 0.9 mL was blotted on the PVDF membrane by vacuum suction. Subsequently the PVDF membrane was blocked with PBS/0.05% tween-20/Milk 5% (pH 7.4) for 30 minutes and washed between each incubation step with PBS/0.05% Tween-20 (pH 7.4). The first incubation for 2 hours with goat anti-human apoE antibodies (1:1000, Bioconnect) as primary antibody was followed by an 1 hour incubation with anti-goat HRP labeled (1:100000, DAKO) as the secondary antibody, all at room temperature. After the final wash-step the blot was incubated with the detection agent using the ECL staining femto kit (Pierce, Rockford, IL, USA). For reading the apoE chemo luminescence intensity the blot was scanned on a ChemiDoc MP imager (Bio Rad). Values for each fraction were expressed as percent of total apoE staining in all fractions.

## 2.7. *Measurements of HDL anti-oxidant properties and paraoxonase 1 antioxidant activities*

HDL was prepared by the dextran-Mg<sup>2+</sup> method [20]. The antioxidant properties of HDL were tested in the presence or absence of oxidized LDL as described [21] with some modifications [22]. In short, 2,7-dichlorofluorescein diacetate (Molecular Probes/Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA, USA) was dissolved in fresh methanol at 2.0 mg/mL and incubated at room temperature for 20 min in the dark, resulting in the generation of 2,7-dichlorofluorescein (DCFH). Upon interaction with oxidants, DCFH is oxidized to fluorescent 2,7-dichlorofluorescein (DCF). Patient and control HDL-C (final concentration 50 µg cholesterol/mL) in the presence or absence of LDL-C (final concentration 100 µg cholesterol/mL) was added into a black 96-well plate in a final volume of 100 µl. The plate was incubated at 37°C on a rotator for 1 h in the dark. At the end of this incubation period, 10 µl of DCFH solution (0.2 mg/mL) was added to each well, mixed, and incubated for an

1 additional 2 h at 37°C with rotation in the dark. Fluorescence was measured with a plate  
2 reader (Fluo-Star Galaxy, BMG, Ortenberg, Germany) at an excitation wavelength of 465 nm  
3 and an emission wavelength of 535 nm.

4  
5 Serum Paraoxonase 1 (PON1) paraoxonase activity (PONase) in HDL, prepared by the  
6 dextran-Mg<sup>2+</sup> method, was determined using paraoxon as substrate [23]. Briefly, the assay  
7 was performed in a final volume of 250 µL containing 5µL of dextran-Mg<sup>2+</sup>-prepared HDL,  
8 5.5 mmol/L paraoxon (paraoxon-ethyl, Sigma-Aldrich, St. Louis, MO, USA), 2 mmol/L  
9 CaCl<sub>2</sub> and 100 mmol/L Tris-HCl, pH 8.0. The rate of p-nitrophenol formed by hydrolysis of  
10 paraoxon was measured by monitoring the increase in absorbance at 405nm for 25min at  
11 room temperature in a microplate spectrophotometer. PON1 activity was expressed as U per  
12 L. 1U is defined as the activity that catalyzes the formation of 1 µmol substrate per min.

13  
14 PON1 arylesterase activity (AREase) was measured in plasma [24]. Briefly, plasma from  
15 heterozygotes and wild-type controls were diluted 1:80 with a salt buffer, containing 20 mM  
16 Tris-HCl and 1.0 mM CaCl<sub>2</sub> in water. A triplicate of 20 µL diluted plasma were added to the  
17 wells in an UV-transparent 96-well plate (Sigma-Aldrich). 200 µL of phenyl acetate solution,  
18 containing 3.26 mM phenyl acetate in salt buffer, were added to each well and the absorbance  
19 of produced phenol was measured at 270 nm with 250 nm as background in a SpectraMax  
20 190 plate reader (Molecular Devices, Sunnyvale, CA, USA). The initial period when the  
21 reaction was linear were used for calculation of activity, expressed as U/mL, using an  
22 extinction coefficient of phenol of 1310 M<sup>-1</sup>cm<sup>1</sup>.

#### 23 24 *2.8. Measurement of apoA-I methionine oxidations in HDL by LC-MS/MS*

25 Desalted HDL obtained by ultracentrifugation, was digested with trypsin (1:25  
26 trypsin:protein ratio) in a sonicator bath for 30 min at 37°C. Peptide solution was dried by a  
27 vacuum centrifugation system before resuspension in 0.1% formic acid in dH<sub>2</sub>O. Peptides  
28 were analyzed using a nanoflow liquid chromatography system coupled to an Orbitrap Velos  
29 Pro (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA, USA). Separation was performed during a 90  
30 min linear increase from 2 to 40% ACN with 0.1% FA. Peptides were analyzed by a data-  
31 dependent acquisition mode in which spectra were obtained using Fourier Transmission MS  
32 (Orbitrap) and the top 20 peaks selected for CID using linear ion trap. Obtained data was  
33 processed in MaxQuant v1.5.12 (Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry, Martinsried,  
34 Germany) to search against human ApoA-I. Search was performed using 5 ppm mass

1 tolerance for MS and 0.5 Da for MS/MS. Peptides with a false-discovery rate of less than 1%  
2 was retained. Variable modifications searched were methionine oxidation and a minimum  
3 score of 40 were needed for accepting modified peptides. Results are expressed as average  $\pm$   
4 SD for the intensity of peptides with methionine oxidations as well as the ratio between  
5 modified and unmodified peptides as obtained through the MaxQuant software.

### 6 7 *2.9. Cholesterol efflux capacity (CEC) assay*

8 The cholesterol efflux capacity (CEC) of HDL was quantified as previously described [25,  
9 26]. In brief, J774 mouse macrophages plated in 48-well plates were labeled with 0.2 ml of  
10 labeling medium (0.25  $\mu$ Ci/ml 4[<sup>14</sup>C] cholesterol in DMEM (high glucose) supplemented  
11 with 0.2% (w/v) BSA). Based on the findings of Li et al, an acyl-coenzyme A:cholesterol  
12 acyltransferase inhibitor was not used [26]. Following 24 h of labeling and washing, cells  
13 were equilibrated for 24 h with 0.3 mM 8-(4-chlorophenylthio)-cAMP in 0.2 ml of DMEM  
14 (high glucose) supplemented with 0.2% (w/v) BSA. Subsequently efflux media containing  
15 HDL, prepared by the dextran-Mg<sup>2+</sup> method, at a final concentration of 10  $\mu$ g apoA-I/mL  
16 (determined in serum) in 0.2% (w/v) BSA/DMEM (high glucose) were added for 4 hours. At  
17 the end of the incubation, the supernatants were collected and the cells were lysed in 200  $\mu$ l  
18 of lysis buffer (PBS containing 1 % (v/v) Triton X-100) for 30 min at room temperature by  
19 gentle shaking. The radioactivity in 50  $\mu$ l of the supernatant and 100  $\mu$ l of cell lysate was  
20 determined by liquid scintillation counting. The percentage of secreted [<sup>14</sup>C]-cholesterol was  
21 calculated by dividing the medium-derived counts by the sum of the total counts present in  
22 the culture medium and the cell lysate. To calculate the net cholesterol efflux that is promoted  
23 by each HDL sample, the percentage of secreted [<sup>14</sup>C]-cholesterol in the absence of HDL  
24 (control sample) was subtracted from the percentage of secreted [<sup>14</sup>C]-cholesterol in the  
25 presence of HDL. HDL samples were prepared freshly and assays were performed in  
26 duplicate. All samples were analyzed simultaneously on the same plate.

### 27 28 *2.10. Statistical analyses*

29 To identify alterations important for discrimination between heterozygotes and wild-types,  
30 multivariate modeling by Partial least squares (PLS) using the NIPALS algorithm was  
31 performed on 2-DE, plasma lipid/protein, PON1 activities, apoA-I methionine oxidation and  
32 CEC data in Statistica (Statsoft, Tulsa, OK, USA). The same factors were investigated by  
33 comparing heterozygotes to wild-type controls using t-test in Statistica. Non-gaussian  
34 distributed proteins were log-transformed before t-test. Significant variables were also tested

1 with age-adjusted main effects ANOVA in Statistica. Pearson correlation analysis of apoL-1  
2 staining in 2-DE and WB was performed in Statistica. Anti-oxidant properties and PON1  
3 activities were investigated by t-test in Graphpad (Graphpad Software, La Jolla, CA, USA).

### 4 5 **3. Results**

6 The SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> mutation was found in a family in a previous study involving screening of  
7 individuals with HDL-C above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile [15]. The carriers of the novel mutation  
8 showed increased plasma HDL-C and apoA-I as well as slightly decreased apoB compared to  
9 their family controls. In the present study, a subgroup of heterozygous SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> carriers  
10 and controls were analyzed showing similar differences in plasma lipid and protein levels  
11 (Table 1). For HDL and LDL/VLDL proteomics, 2-DE and mass spectrometry was used and  
12 representative protein patterns are illustrated in Figure 1 and protein identities are presented  
13 in Table 2.

14  
15 To study differences in SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes compared to wild-type controls, 2-DE  
16 protein intensities, plasma lipid/protein data, HDL CEC, PON1 activities and apoA-I  
17 methionine oxidations were investigated by multivariate modelling with PLS. Two  
18 components were used and the score plot showed a clear separation of the individuals in the  
19 two groups along the predictive x-axis (Figure 2A, x-axis;  $R^2=0.25$ ,  $Q^2=0.47$ ). The variables  
20 with the greatest score contribution (defined as the average sample contributions in each  
21 group), and thereby the most important values for separating the carriers from the controls,  
22 were apoE in LDL/VLDL and apoL-1 in HDL (score contribution of 1.05 and 1.17 for the  
23 heterozygotes, respectively). As illustrated in figure 2B, these two variables were located  
24 close to the heterozygote node in the loading plot. In addition, univariate statistics of the 2-  
25 DE data showed a significant increase of apoE in the LDL/VLDL and a significant increase  
26 of apoL-1 in the HDL fraction (Table 2,  $p<0.05$ ). Confirming the 2-DE analysis, western blot  
27 of apoL-1 in HDL showed a significant increase in the heterozygotes compared to the wild-  
28 type controls (Figure 3A-B) and further supporting the data, western blot intensities were  
29 positively correlated to the 2-DE intensities (Figure 3C,  $r=0.75$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Moreover, plasma  
30 was fractionated using FPLC and the relative levels of apoE in different lipoprotein fractions  
31 were analyzed by western spot-blot. The analysis showed a pronounced increase of apoE in  
32 LDL, while the increase in the less dense HDL fraction and the decrease in the denser HDL  
33 fraction of the heterozygotes as compared to the wild-type controls (Figure 4) are in

1 accordance with the previously described shift towards larger HDL particles in the  
2 heterozygotes. Interestingly, an increase in lipid-free apoE was also found.

3  
4 The in vitro anti-oxidative capacity of HDL in SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> carriers and controls were  
5 measured by incubating HDL with oxidized LDL and the ability of HDL to inhibit oxidized  
6 LDL from forming DCF was measured. There were no significant changes in the anti-  
7 oxidative capacity of HDL in SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> carriers compared to the controls (Figure 5A). The  
8 PONase and AREase activities of PON1 were also measured, and consistent with unchanged  
9 anti-oxidative capacity, no significant difference between carriers and controls was observed  
10 (Figure 5B and 5C).

11  
12 Methionine oxidations in HDL apoA-I was investigated using LC-MS/MS. Three positions  
13 with methionine oxidations were found; methionine 110, 136 and 172 (including pre- and  
14 propeptide). Methionines at positions 136 and 172 showed a significant increase of oxidized  
15 peptide intensity as well as the ratio of modified to unmodified peptides for the specific  
16 position in SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes compared to wild-type controls (Table 3).

17  
18 The CEC of heterozygote and control HDL was investigated by measuring cholesterol efflux  
19 from J774 mouse macrophages. Results showed that HDL from heterozygotes had no  
20 significant differences in their CEC, compared to the controls (Figure 6).

#### 21 **4. Discussion**

22 Here, multivariate modeling in the form of PLS was utilized to investigate differences  
23 between controls and SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes regarding LDL/VLDL and HDL proteomics,  
24 plasma lipid/protein data, HDL CEC as well as PON1 activity data (Figure 2). The modelling  
25 investigates which factors are responsible for separating the groups. The PLS analyses  
26 showed that increased levels of apoE in LDL as well as increased levels of apoL-1 in HDL  
27 were important for discriminating between heterozygote carriers for SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> and wild-  
28 type controls. The model also contained plasma lipid/protein data which reflected the  
29 apparent increase of apoA-I and HDL-C as well as the decrease of apoB and LDL-C in  
30 carriers compared to controls.

1 ApoE, being an LDL receptor ligand, mediates the cellular uptake of triglyceride-rich  
2 lipoproteins [27] and is regarded to have anti-atherosclerotic and anti-oxidative properties  
3 [28]. Interestingly, in the present study, we found an enrichment of apoE in LDL/VLDL from  
4 SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes, which is consistent with the previously indicated increase of  
5 plasma apoE in heterozygotes from the same family [15] and with SR-B1 mutant mice having  
6 elevated levels of apoE in LDL [29]. To further study the apoE distribution in the carriers, the  
7 relative distribution of apo E in different plasma fractions was assessed after FPLC size-  
8 exclusion chromatography. More apoE was found in the LDL fraction while less was present  
9 in the HDL3 fraction (smaller more dense HDL particles) compared to the HDL2 fraction  
10 (cholesterol loaded, larger less dense HDL particles) in carriers compared to controls (Figure  
11 4), which may be explained by the previously found shift from HDL3 towards HDL2 in the  
12 heterozygotes [15]. Interestingly, the FPLC-separation also revealed an increase of lipid-free  
13 apoE in the heterozygotes compared to the controls. Free circulating apoE is normally found  
14 at very low concentrations in the circulation and it has been proposed that tissues with  
15 increased need for cholesterol such as liver and adrenal gland may secrete free apoE to  
16 facilitate the SR-B1 mediated cholesterol uptake, a process in which apoE directly binds to  
17 SR-B1 and contributes to increased cholesteryl ester uptake from both HDL and LDL [30].  
18 Further supporting these findings, overexpression of apoE in mice has been shown to increase  
19 the uptake of cholesterol via SR-B1 [31]. Enrichment of apoE in LDL/VLDL combined with  
20 increased free apoE, as found in the present study, may therefore reflect compensatory  
21 mechanisms for attenuated cholesterol uptake in the SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> carriers. Also supporting our  
22 data, apoC-I in HDL showed a trend towards lower level in the heterozygotes, as well as  
23 being the protein with least association to heterozygotes in the multivariate model (largest  
24 negative score contribution with -0.33 in the PLS model). ApoC-1 is a known inhibitor of  
25 SR-B1 and CETP action [32, 33] and a reduction of apoC-1 may therefore be a consequence  
26 of reduced need for inhibition of SR-B1 pathways in carriers. Considering the increase in apo  
27 E, the lower LDL/apoB levels and the absence of reported vascular complications in the  
28 heterozygotes, future studies should include investigations of apoB/E receptor mediated  
29 cholesterol uptake in subjects with functional SR-B1 mutations.

30

31 Interestingly, the multivariate analysis pointed out apoL-1 in HDL as a key component to  
32 discriminate heterozygotes from controls regarding lipoprotein patterns. Accordingly, apoL-1  
33 was significantly enriched in HDL in the 2-DE patterns from carriers vs controls, The apo L-  
34 1 increase was then further confirmed by western blots. As illustrated in figure 4, two 37

1 kDa bands of apoL-1 were detected by immunoblotting, probably corresponding to  
2 glycosylated and non-glycosylated apoL-1 [34]. The main increase was found to be in the  
3 lower, non-glycosylated band. The function of the glycosylation in apoL-1 is not clear, but  
4 enzymatic glycosylation in general is known to provide increased solubility, correct folding  
5 or increased stability to the protein. The cause for the increase of the non-glycosylated  
6 isoform in the SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes is not known but may depend on de-glycosylation,  
7 possibly due to increased retention time of apoL-1 in the circulation but may also reflect  
8 increased synthesis, with disturbed glycosylation. In addition, a challenging finding was that  
9 an additional 25 kDa band was detected only in heterozygotes. This band may represent an  
10 enzymatically modified or truncated form of apoL-1 but was not included in the quantitative  
11 analysis since the abundance was too low for identification by MS. ApoL-1 is a HDL-  
12 associated apolipoprotein which has been reported to exert several extra- and intracellular  
13 functions in host defence and hemostatic mechanisms [35, 36]. Although previously mostly  
14 studied for its role in trypanosomal lysis [37] recent research has shown polymorphisms in  
15 apoL-1 associated to an increased risk for CVD [38]. Thus, indicating a possible, but yet to  
16 be identified, function for apoL-1 in CVD development. Notably, apoL-1 plasma levels have  
17 been found to be significantly increased in patients with primary cholesteryl ester transfer  
18 protein (CETP) deficiency [39], a condition that, as the SR-B1 mutation, results in increased  
19 HDL-C levels. The apoL-1 containing HDL subpopulation has previously been shown to  
20 represent about 10 % of total HDL [36] and apoL-1 has been reported to preferentially  
21 associate with the more dense HDL3 fraction [18, 40]. In contrast, the SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup>  
22 heterozygotes in the present study have a shift towards more large cholesterol loaded HDL2  
23 particles [15] but still increased levels of apoL-1. Further studies are warranted to clarify the  
24 role of apoL-1 and how enrichment in HDL may affect HDL functionality in SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup>  
25 carriers.

26 Based on the suggestion that mutations in SR-B1 may increase CVD risk by non-lipid  
27 pathways [12], an important aspect to investigate is HDL function where PON1 is a vital  
28 component due to its ability to hydrolyze lipid peroxides in LDL [41]. However, in the  
29 present study, no differences in anti-oxidative properties of HDL or PONase and AREase  
30 activities could be found in SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> carriers compared to controls. These results are  
31 consistent with a previous study investigating heterozygous carriers of a CETP deficiency  
32 mutation, also with increased levels of HDL-C, where carriers did not show any change in  
33 anti-oxidant capacity or PON1 activity as compared to controls [42]. Regarding other factors

1 that may have impact on cholesterol metabolism, we did find significantly increased levels of  
2 methionine oxidations at two positions in HDL-apoA-1 of the heterozygotes compared to the  
3 controls. Oxidation of methionine 172 have previously been linked to a reduction in Lecithin-  
4 cholesterol acyltransferase (LCAT) activation [43] as well as reduced ATP-binding  
5 cassette sub-family A member 1 (ABCA1) mediated cholesterol efflux [44]. The increased  
6 oxidation found in the SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes may result from prolonged retention time of  
7 HDL in the circulation, which is a realistic consequence of reduced SR-B1-mediated uptake  
8 by the liver and steroidogenic tissues.

9

10 The HDL CEC has been shown to be inversely associated to markers of CVD and may be a  
11 better tool for CVD prediction than HDL-C [25, 45]. However, the CEC assay showed that  
12 HDL from SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes had similar capacity to accept cholesterol from J774  
13 mouse macrophages as the controls, despite increased methionine oxidations in apoA-I. The  
14 unaffected cholesterol efflux capacity may be related to other factors such as the apparently  
15 increased apoE or possibly apo L-1 that may normalize the total cellular cholesterol uptake,  
16 by redirection or facilitation. Investigating apo E abundance as well as cholesterol uptake via  
17 other cholesterol accepting receptors in families with functional mutations in SR-B1 would  
18 be highly interesting in future studies.

19

#### 20 *Limitations of the study*

21 SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> is a rare mutation and a major limitation of the study is the small number of  
22 samples analyzed. Therefore, we cannot exclude the possibility of false negative results due  
23 to limited statistical power. For example, apo C-1, apoA-II, apoE and transthyretin in HDL  
24 showed trends towards alterations but were not statistically different from controls. On the  
25 other hand, multiplex techniques such as 2-DE invites the presence of false positive results.  
26 However, in the case of apoE and apoL-1 this possibility is highly unlikely since the 2-DE  
27 results were confirmed by both immunological assays and multivariate statistics. Another  
28 limitation is that 2-DE analysis is not optimal for large, hydrophobic, low abundant proteins.  
29 In HDL there are two well-known examples of proteins that are underrepresented; apoA-II  
30 which is the second most abundant protein in HDL while relatively low abundant in the 2-  
31 DE pattern and PON-1 that most often is not detected in HDL by 2-DE. Finally, this study  
32 focus on the protein composition of the lipoprotein particles and additional analyses of the  
33 lipid composition may contribute to improved understanding and thereby enhance the  
34 possibility to elucidate relevant functional implications.

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#### **4. Concluding remarks**

The present study indicates how the functional mutation SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> affects lipoprotein composition and contributes to methionine oxidation of apoA-I but does not affect PON-1 activities, HDL antioxidant properties or HDL cholesterol efflux capacity. The increase of apoE in carriers may indicate a compensatory mechanism for attenuated SR-B1 mediated cholesterol uptake by HDL but further studies are warranted to fully understand the complexity of altered lipoprotein composition in subjects with functional mutations in SR-B1.

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#### **6. Conflicts of interest statement**

All authors have filled in ICMJE disclosure form for Potential Conflicts of Interest. Dr. Kastelein reports personal fees from Cerenis, The Medicines Company, CSL Behring, Amgen, Regeneron, Eli Lilly, Genzyme, Aegerion, Esperion, AstraZeneca, Omthera, Pronova, Vascular Biogenics, Boehringer Ingelheim, Catabasis, AtheroNova, UniQure, Novartis, Merck, Isis Pharmaceuticals, Kowa, Dezima Pharmaceuticals and Sanofi, not connected to the submitted work.

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1 **Table 1. Plasma lipid and protein data.**

	<b>Controls (n=6)</b>	<b>SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> Heterozygotes (n=6)</b>
Total Cholesterol (mmol/L)	4.7 ± 1.0	4.2 ± 1.3
HDL-C (mmol/L)	1.1 ± 0.3	1.6 ± 0.6
LDL-C (mmol/L)	3.0 ± 0.7	2.5 ± 1.1
Triglycerides (mmol/L)	1.5 ± 0.6	1.0 ± 0.3
ApoA-I (mg/dL)	146 ± 22	177 ± 36
ApoB (mg/dL)	91 ± 20	66 ± 20

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3 Lipid and lipoprotein levels in SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes (n=6) and family controls (n=6).

4 Values are mean ± SD.

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1 **Table 2:** Data from protein identification by 2-DE/ MALDI TOF MS. Protein intensities on  
 2 2-D gels are normalized by relative quantification.

Protein	Seq. Cov. (%)	No. of pept.	kDa/pI	Controls	SR-BI <sup>P297S</sup> Heterozygotes
<b>HDL</b>					
<b>ApoA-I</b>	31.5	14	29/5.4	46.15 ± 7.05	44.16 ± 3.98
<b>ApoA-II</b>	21.0	3	9/6.5	1.08 ± 0.87	0.53 ± 0.84
<b>ApoA-IV</b>	49.7	20	43/5.2	0.27 ± 0.12	0.23 ± 0.11
<b>ApoC-I</b>	65	7	7/7.9	0.13 ± 0.19	0.02 ± 0.03
<b>ApoC-II</b>	50.5	5	9/4.7	0.22 ± 0.29	0.28 ± 0.38
<b>ApoC-III</b>	37.4	4	9/4.7	3.34 ± 2.69	2.82 ± 1.70
<b>ApoE</b>	64	23	34/5.5	1.52 ± 0.95	2.30 ± 1.23
<b>ApoL-1</b>	32	16	41/5.7	0.03 ± 0.04	0.15 ± 0.10*
<b>ApoM</b>	18.1	4	21/5.7	0.17 ± 0.1	0.23 ± 0.17
<b>SAA1</b>	25.4	3	12/5.9	0.13 ± 0.17	0.16 ± 0.18
<b>SAA4</b>	50	10	13/9.2	5.37 ± 2.68	4.26 ± 3.52
<b>TTR</b>	25.2	3	14/5.3	0.20 ± 0.26	0.06 ± 0.07
<b>LDL/VLDL</b>					
<b>ApoA-I</b>	59.2	20	29/5.4	2.84 ± 2.38	2.88 ± 0.88
<b>ApoC-II</b>	34.7	2	9/4.7	0.06 ± 0.04	0.40 ± 0.52
<b>ApoC-III</b>	37.4	4	9/4.7	2.21 ± 0.54	3.13 ± 0.94
<b>ApoE</b>	64	22	34/5.5	1.59 ± 0.45	8.62 ± 2.91*
<b>ApoJ</b>	18.3	9	50/5.9	0.13 ± 0.06	0.21 ± 0.17
<b>ApoM</b>	23.4	5	21/5.7	1.85 ± 1.39	3.04 ± 0.85
<b>SAA4</b>	32.3	4	13/9.2	1.56 ± 0.43	1.07 ± 0.78

3 Protein differences in HDL and LDL/VLDL from heterozygotes with an SR-BI<sup>P297S</sup> mutation  
 4 compared to family controls. Values are mean ± SD expressed as percent of total 2-D gel  
 5 fluorescence. \* = p<0.05 as compared to controls.

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1 Table 3. Apolipoprotein A-I methionine oxidations in SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes (Het)  
 2 and wild-type (WT) controls.

Position	Oxidized Peptide Intensity		Ratio Modified/Unmodified Peptide	
	WT	SRB1 P297S Het	WT	SRB1 P297S Het
<b>Methionine-110</b>	0.9E+7 ± 2.1E+7	2.6E+7 ± 3.2E+7	0.02 ± 0.04	0.03 ± 0.03
<b>Methionine-136</b>	6.4E+7 ± 6.5E+7	17.7E+7 ± 5.5E+7 **	0.06 ± 0.06	0.20 ± 0.07 **
<b>Methionine-172</b>	3.6E+7 ± 2.5E+7	9.9E+7 ± 3.9E+7 **	0.04 ± 0.01	0.19 ± 0.06 ***

3 Values are mean ± SD. Indicated positions are the amino acid positions of apoA-I, including  
 4 pre- and propeptide. \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001 as compared to wild-type controls.

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## 1 **Figure texts**

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3 Figure 1. 2-DE pattern of HDL and LDL/VLDL proteins from SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes and  
4 family controls. The 2-DE patterns illustrate increased abundance of apoL-1 in HDL (A) and  
5 increased abundance of apoE in LDL/VLDL (B) in heterozygous carriers of SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup>  
6 mutation compared to family controls. 400 µg and 300 µg of proteins were loaded on HDL  
7 and LDL/VLDL gels respectively. Proteins were visualized by Sypro Ruby staining and  
8 identified by MALDI-TOF MS.

9

10 Figure 2. Partial least squares model of HDL and LDL/VLDL 2-DE results, plasma  
11 lipid/protein data, HDL cholesterol efflux capacity (CEC) and Paraoxonase 1 activities in  
12 SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> carriers and controls.

13 A. Score plot showing the separation between the two groups in the model. X-axis represents  
14 the separation between the two groups and the Y-axis individual variation in the two groups.

15 B. Loading plot of the variables showing an association between heterozygotes and proximal  
16 variables apoL-1 in HDL as well as apoE in LDL/VLDL.

17 WT-wild-type controls, Het – SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes. Apo – apolipoprotein, SAA – serum  
18 amyloid A, TTR – transthyretin.

19

20 Figure 3. ApoL-1 levels in HDL from SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> heterozygotes and family controls.

21 A. Western blot of apoL-1, 25 µg of HDL loaded in each well. B. Graph representing results  
22 from of ApoL-1 Western blot. The values are mean ± SD percent of total apoL-1 intensity,

23 \* p < 0.05 as compared to controls. C. Correlation between apoL-1 levels determined by 2-  
24 DE/Sypro Ruby staining and the Western blot.

25

26 Figure 4. ApoE distribution in the main lipoprotein classes.

27 Fractionation was performed by FPLC of plasma from heterozygous carriers of the  
28 SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> mutation compared to controls. After spot blot of all fractions (0.9 ml) of carriers  
29 (Het) and controls (WT) on PVDF membrane the relative abundance (%) of each apoE

30 fraction of the SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> carriers (■) and controls (▲) was determined. The main fractions  
31 (VLDL, LDL, HDL and lipid-free) have been indicated in the graph. For comparison,

32 lipoprotein cholesterol profiles are presented in the previous paper of this family (Ref 15;  
33 Vergeer et al 2011).

34

1 Figure 5. HDL antioxidant properties and PON1 activities of HDL from SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> mutation  
2 heterozygotes and family controls. A: Antioxidant properties of HDL analyzed by the DCF  
3 assay. The fluorescence intensity resulting from oxidation of DCFH by HDL in the presence  
4 or absence of LDL was measured in a spectrofluorometer and expressed in arbitrary units  
5 (AU). B: HDL-associated PON1 paraoxonase (PONase) activity, expressed as units/L (U/L).  
6 C: Plasma PON1 arylesterase (AREase) activity, expressed as units/mL (U/mL). WT = wild-  
7 type control; Het = heterozygote.

8

9 Figure 6. Cholesterol efflux capacity (CEC) of HDL from SR-B1<sup>P297S</sup> mutation heterozygotes  
10 and family controls. Measurement of the capacity of HDL (10 µg apoA-I/mL) to promote  
11 total cholesterol efflux from J774 mouse macrophages. The results are mean of two  
12 independent experiments performed in duplicate. Values are expressed as % cholesterol  
13 efflux of total cell cholesterol. WT = wild-type control; Het = heterozygote

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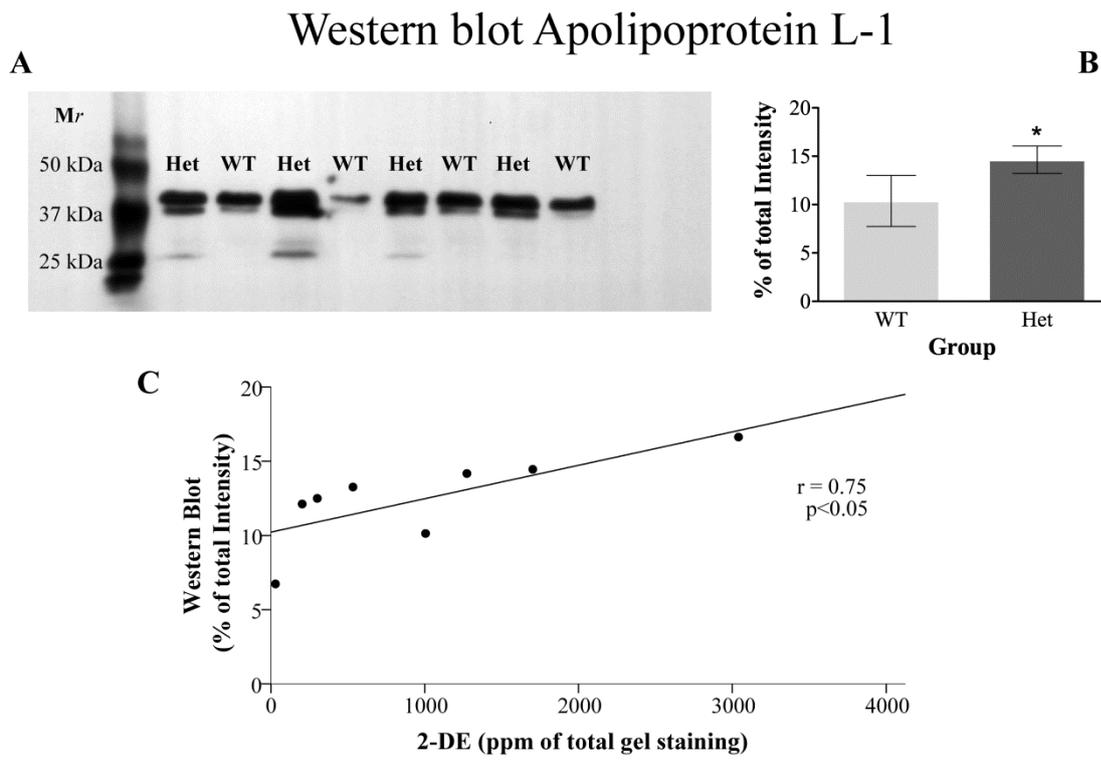
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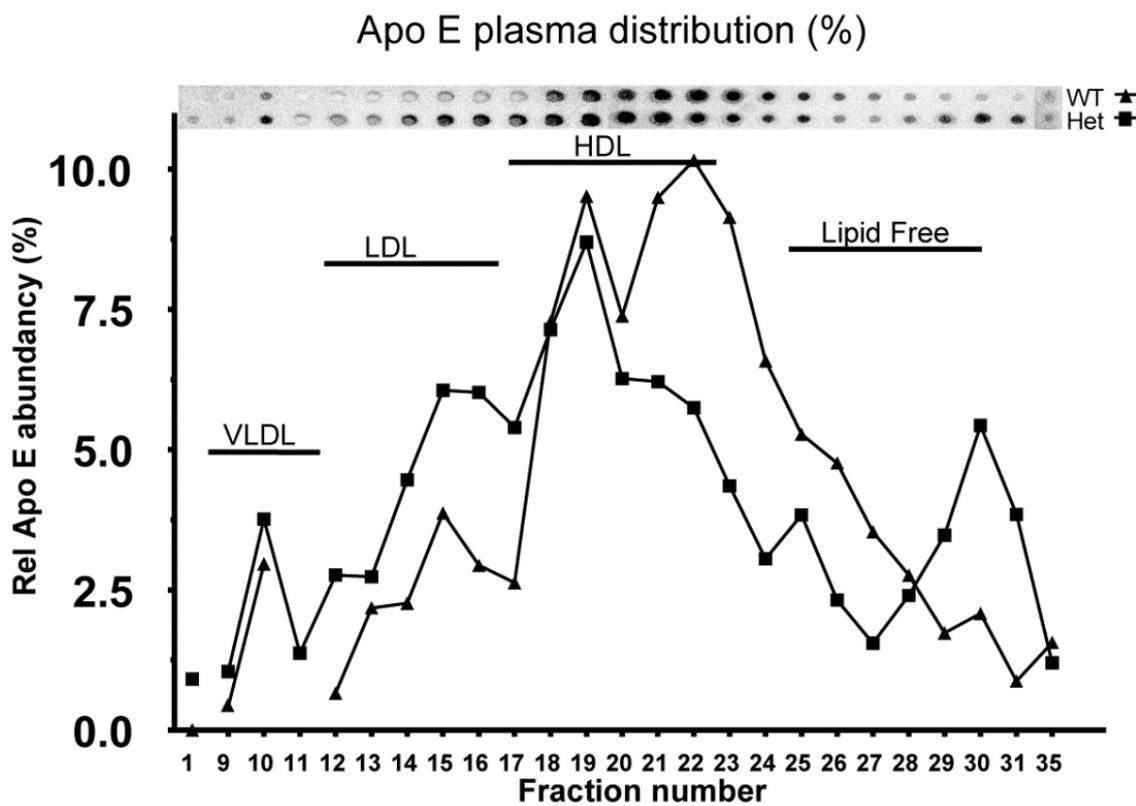


Fig 3



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Fig 4

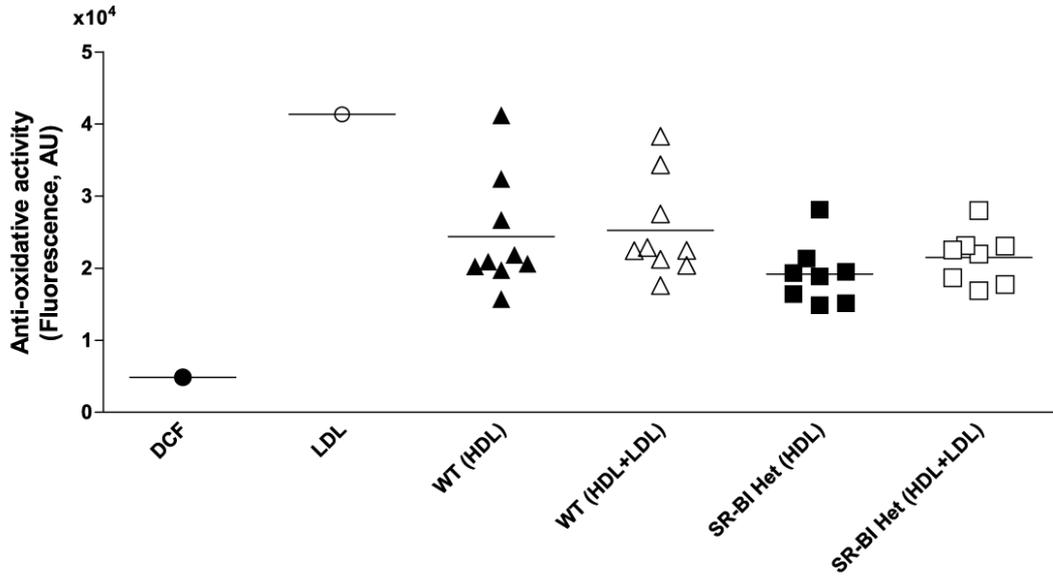


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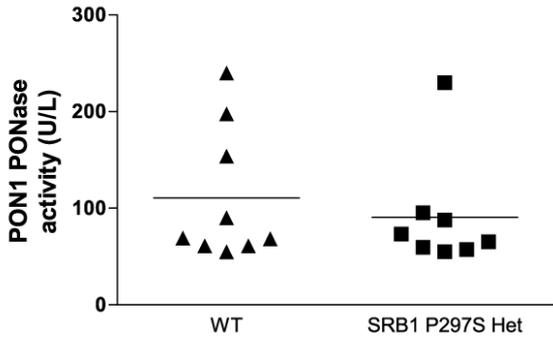
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**Fig 5**

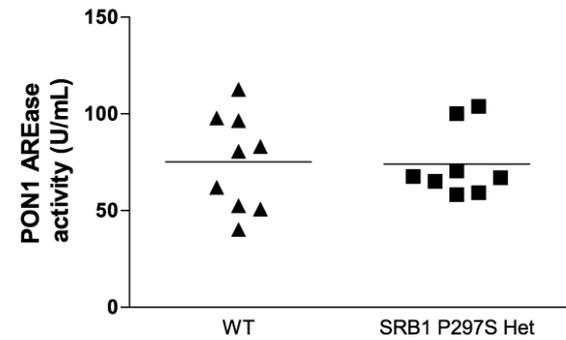
**A**



**B**



**C**



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**Fig 6**

