Mass Spectrometry Enables More Definitive Process & Product Development Towards Well-Characterized Biotherapeutics:

A Personal Account

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# Modern Mass Spectrometry (MS) Performance (with Research Grade Instruments)

- At least 40000 FWHM resolution w/ fast acquisition rates
- <2-5 ppm mass accuracy: both MS and MS/MS modes</li>
- Low attomole sensitivity (6 million 50-kDa protein molecules)
- Five orders of magnitude dynamic range
- 50-20,000 m/z mass range (and higher)
- Multiple modes of ion fragmentation (CID, HCD, ETD, EThcD)



# The Rise of Mass Spectrometry in Biotech



# Enduring MS-based Methods for Heightened Product Characterization



# Contemporary MS-based Methods for Heightened Process Characterization



# MS Characterization Roadmap Supporting Product & Process Development

| Molecular Design<br>(Team Supply 0)                                                                                                                                                                                         | Early Dev. Material<br>(Team Supplies 1 & 2)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Pilot Manufacturing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Phase I Clinical<br>Manufacturing                                                                                                                                                   |  |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| <ul> <li>Molecular assessment         <ul> <li>Calculate molecular<br/>properties</li> <li>In silico hotspot prediction</li> </ul> </li> <li>Hotspot analysis on<br/>thermally stressed material<br/>by LC-MS/MS</li> </ul> | <ul> <li>Product characterization         <ul> <li>Intact mass, subunit mass, reduced / non-reduced peptide maps, N-glycan profiling</li> </ul> </li> <li>Process characterization         <ul> <li>Trisulfide analysis (intact mass)</li> <li>LC-MS/MS – HCP analysis</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul> <li>RM characterization         <ul> <li>Intact mass, subunit mass, reduced / non-reduced peptide maps, N-glycan profiling</li> </ul> </li> <li>Process characterization         <ul> <li>Trisulfide analysis (intact mass)</li> <li>LC-MS/MS – misincorporation</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul> <li>IND authoring</li> <li>Off-critical path         <ul> <li>LC-MS/MS – sequence variant analysis (max cell age)</li> <li>Comprehensive PQA report</li> </ul> </li> </ul>     |  |  |
| Make MAM workbook     Phase IIa     (Commercial Process Dev.                                                                                                                                                                | <ul> <li>MAM on stability sample sets</li> <li>Method dev. for new modalities</li> <li>Phase IIb<br/>(Process Nomination)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                          | analysis <ul> <li>LC-MS/MS – HCP analysis</li> </ul> Phase III (Process Validation)                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Multi-attribute method (MAM)   Liquid<br>chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry<br>(LC-MS/MS)   Host-cell protein (HCP)<br>BLA Submission                                          |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Process characterization         <ul> <li>Trisulfide analysis (intact mass</li> <li>LC-MS/MS – misincorporation</li> <li>LC-MS/MS – HCP analysis</li> </ul> </li> <li>Comparability &amp; MAM</li> </ul>           | Characterization method<br>qualification as needed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <ul> <li>Primary RM characterization</li> <li>Forced degradation</li> <li>Comparability</li> <li>Process characterization</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                         | <ul> <li>BLA authoring</li> <li>Reference material (RM)   Investigational New<br/>Drug (IND)   Product quality attribute (PQA)  <br/>Biologics License Application (BLA)</li> </ul> |  |  |
| Biotherapeutics Pharmaceut                                                                                                                                                                                                  | ical Sciences – Analytical Research & Development                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <ul> <li>LC-MS/MS – HCP analysis</li> <li>LC-MS/MS – sequence variant a</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                           | nalysis (max cell age) 6                                                                                                                                                            |  |  |

# Timeline of CASSS Symposia and MS Topics

CASSS is at the forefront for integrating the MS community with the larger biotherapeutics development & regulation communities to discuss innovative approaches and share experiences & best practices

| 1 <sup>st</sup> CASSS WCBP<br>Symposium<br>(January 1997)                                                                           |      | 1 <sup>st</sup> CASSS Mass<br>Spec Symposium<br>(September 2004)           | ASMS<br>1 <sup>st</sup> Biotherapeutics Session<br>(June 2009)                                                                | 21 <sup>st</sup> CASSS WCBP<br>Symposium<br>(January 2017)                                                                        |  |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1997                                                                                                                                | 2000 |                                                                            | 2010                                                                                                                          | 2020 2022                                                                                                                         |  |  |
| Agenda (characterization)<br>MS - Carbohydrate analysis<br>MS - Posttranslational modifications<br>MS - Sequencing proteins/glycans |      | Agenda<br>Intact protein analysis<br>Antibody characterization<br>MS in QC | Agenda<br>IdeS Enzyme & LC/MS<br>New LC/UHR ESI-QTOF MS<br>Antibody characterization<br>Peptide sequencing<br>Peptide mapping | Agenda (characterization)<br>Multi-attribute Method (LC/MS)<br>Sequence variants<br>Biosimilars<br>High-throughput LC/MS for PQAs |  |  |



CASSS Well-Characterized Biotechnology Products (WCBP) Symposium: Overview – Past, Present & Future; Brian Nunnally, May 2015



# Genetics 🌄 Institute circa 1993

- Structural Biochemistry MS subgroup
  - Hubie Scoble, Director (Sanofi, consultant)
  - Steve Martin, Manager (Waters)
  - James Vath

(Cure Ventures)

Wen Yu

- (AstraZeneca)
- Mike Huberty

JEOL HX-110/ HX-110 4-sector mass spectrometer (equipped w/ fast-atom bombardment [FAB])





- My Postdoc Research Projects
  - Optimized continuous-flow FAB on JEOL HX-110/ HX-110 4-sector mass spectrometer for peptides
  - Benchmarked peptide ion fragmentation by MALDI-PSD to high and low energy CAD on JEOL HX-110/HX-110 4-sector mass spectrometer
  - Developed MALDI cleanup methods for analysis of released N-linked glycans
  - Elucidated N-linked glycan isomers by MALDI, PSD and glycosidases







Rouse, Camphausen, Cornell, Kitchen, Yu, Hardy, Harris, and Scoble, ASMS Conference 1998.

#### Monitoring PSGL-1 "Glyco-Engineering" by MALDI-TOF MS (1994)



# Profiling EndoH-released N-glycans by HPAEC-PED (1995)



## MALDI-TOF MS Analysis of rFVIII HPAEC Fractions (released EndoH N-glycans)



Sequential Glycosidase Digestion of Unknown Fraction 12



## Modern N-Glycan Profiling by LC-FLR/MS: Recombinant Factor IX (rFIX)



#### In 2000, the ESI-Quadrupole Time-of-Flight (Q-TOF) Mass Spectrometer Arrives



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Adapted from schematic of O-Tof-2 (Micromass MS Technologies, Waters Corp.)



Rouse, Abbatiello, Hag, Marzilli, Nemeth-Cawley, Patel, Rathore, Jankowski, Porter, & Scoble, ACS NERM 2001, University of NH

## Comparison of ESI-QTOF & MALDI-TOF MS for Covalent rhBMP-2 Dimer

![](_page_18_Figure_1.jpeg)

Rouse, Abbatiello, Haq, Marzilli, Nemeth-Cawley, Patel, Rathore, Jankowski, Porter, & Scoble, ACS NERM 2001, University of NH

**Pfizer** 

rhBMP-2 Comparability Study: Phenyl RP-HPLC-UV / ESI QTOF MS

![](_page_19_Figure_1.jpeg)

Rouse, Abbatiello, Haq, Marzilli, Nemeth-Cawley, Patel, Rathore, Jankowski, Porter, & Scoble, ACS NERM 2001, University of NH

**Pfizer** 

#### rhBMP-2 Comparability Study: Zero-Charge Mass Spectra

![](_page_20_Figure_1.jpeg)

The mass spectra of intact rhBMP-2 indicated the 3 processes produced comparable DS (according to predetermined acceptance criteria):

- $\checkmark$ Mass differences between the same isoforms were < 1.3 Da
- ✓ All isoform masses were < 1.6 Da</p> (50 ppm) from theoretical values
- $\checkmark$ Similar isoform distributions were observed (slight redistribution in process 2)
- $\checkmark$ No new isoforms were detected

All routine testing and characterization studies together supported structural and functional comparability of rhBMP-2 DS

Rouse, Abbatiello, Hag, Marzilli, Nemeth-Cawley, Patel, Rathore, Jankowski, Porter, & Scoble, ACS NERM 2001, University of NH

![](_page_21_Figure_0.jpeg)

![](_page_21_Figure_1.jpeg)

Derzi et al. Adv. Ther. (2016) 33:1964-1982.

![](_page_22_Figure_0.jpeg)

Werle et al. Molecular Therapy: Methods & Clin. Dev. 2021, 23, 254.

0.58

![](_page_22_Figure_2.jpeg)

![](_page_22_Figure_3.jpeg)

![](_page_22_Figure_4.jpeg)

Chemical Modifications in Complementarity-Determining Regions (CDRs)

![](_page_23_Figure_1.jpeg)

# Elucidated & Cataloged CDR Sequence Instabilities across 95 mAbs

...provided enhanced S-F & molecular design knowledge, and laid groundwork for in silico hotspot prediction

![](_page_24_Figure_2.jpeg)

Lisa Marzilli, Jason Rouse, and Pfizer Structural & Computational Biology Team Trastuzumab Light Chain CDR-1 CDRL3 Trastuzumab CDRL1 CDRH3 (4HKZ) **D**<sup>28</sup>**V** CDRH2 CDRL2 L-CDR1 CDRH1 Variable Region N30. Light Heavy CH C Chain Chain Hotspot Database **D**<sup>28</sup>V N<sup>30</sup>T (L-CDR1) C **Trastuzumab Material** L-CDR1) Asn / Asp / isoAsp / Asu T=0 control ND 88.8 / 9.7 / 0.8 / 0.7 4w, 40C, Tris pH 7.5 ND 28.2 / 69.8 / 0.6 / 1.4 4w, 40C, His pH 5.8 ND 75.7 / 12.2 / 2.9 / 9.2 mAb Antigen Binding Fragment 4w, 40C, Glu pH 4.5 ND 89.2 / 2.7 / 2.3 / 5.8 (Fab) Region Harris et al. 2001 (%) ~15% (CEX-HPLC) ---Pfizer **Biotherapeutics Pharmaceutical Sciences – Analytical Research & Development** Sydow et al. 2014 (%)  $11\% \rightarrow 24\%$  (His, pH 6) ---

Elaine Stephens, Roger Theberge, Leah Wang, Mellisa Ly, Peilu Liu, Dennis Gessmann,

# New Structure-based mAb CDR "Hotspot Prediction" Algorithm

![](_page_26_Figure_1.jpeg)

(T=0)

hzer

#### Motif-based prediction (91% false discovery rate)

| rastuzumab Heavy Chain                                                                                   |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>1</b> evqlvesggglvqpggslrlscaas <u>gfnikdtyih</u> wvrqapgkglewva <u>riypt<mark>ng</mark>ytry</u>      | 60  |
| 61 <u>ads</u> vkgrftisadtsk <b>nt</b> aylq <b>mns</b> lraedtavyycsr <mark>wggdgfyamdyw</mark> gqgtlvtvss | 120 |
| wastus unab Lisht Chain                                                                                  |     |

#### Trastuzumab Light Chain

1DIQMTQSPSSLSASVGDRVTITCRASQDVNTAVAWYQQKPGKAPKLLIYSASFLYSGVPS 60 61RFSGSRSGTDFTLTISSLQPEDFATYYCQQHYTTPPTFGQGTKVEIKRTVAAPSVFIFPP 107

#### Structure-based prediction (96% accuracy rate; 68% false discovery rate)

| + | mAb         | CDR    | Site | Motif | %ASA<br>(x) | %ASA<br>(x+1) | B-turn<br>Type | B-turn<br>Position | Sec.<br>Structure | Predicted<br>Hotspot >5% | Exp. Hotspot<br>Level (%) † |
|---|-------------|--------|------|-------|-------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
|   | Trastuzumab | L-CDR1 | 28   | DV    | 66.8        | 0             |                |                    | Loop              | No                       | ND                          |
|   | (4hkz)      |        | 30   | NT    | 70.6        | 48.5          | II'            | 2&3                | Loop              | Investigate              | 71.8                        |
|   |             | H-CDR1 | 28   | NI    | 84.1        | 1.0           | Ι              | 1&2                | Loop              | No                       | 0.2                         |
|   |             |        | 31   | DT    | 78.7        | 3.5           | I              | 3&4                | Helix             | No                       | ND                          |
|   |             | H-CDR2 | 55   | NG    | 54.8        | 68.6          | I              | 4&                 | Loop              | Investigate              | 7.3                         |
|   |             |        | 62   | DS    | 92.1        | 64.3          | I              | 2&3                | Loop              | Investigate              | 0.2                         |
|   |             | H-CDR3 | 99   | W     | 18.8        |               |                |                    | Sheet             | No                       | 0.6                         |
|   |             |        | 102  | DG    | 83.0        | 84.0          | ľ              | 2&3                | Loop              | Investigate              | 43.3                        |
|   |             |        | 107  | М     | 0.7         |               |                |                    | Loop              | No                       | 0.6                         |
|   |             |        | 108  | DY    | 0.2         | 34.5          |                |                    | Loop              | No                       | ND                          |

Provides hotspot access to more colleagues ● Speeds-up hotspot analysis ● Create MAM workbooks at risk ● Cross-check MS assignments

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Peilu Liu, Victor Beaumont, Omar Davulcu, Jason Rouse, and Pfizer Structural & Computational Biology Team

# Important Mass Spectrometer Characteristics & New Directions

Research-grade mass spectrometers are defined by ultimate performance such as sensitivity, resolution, and mass accuracy

![](_page_27_Figure_2.jpeg)

New "Smart" UHPLC mass detectors are being developed with improved "ease-of-use" for hardware/software operation

✓ Opens-up LC/MS access to more colleagues (w/ more manageable training) for supporting routine MS workflows!

![](_page_27_Picture_5.jpeg)

•

Biotherapeutics Pharmaceutical Sciences – Analytical Research & Development

![](_page_27_Picture_7.jpeg)

### Modern View of Mass Spectrometry in Process & Product Dev. Labs

![](_page_28_Figure_1.jpeg)

# Summary

- MS has evolved significantly over 25+ years, providing more in-depth, high-quality information faster
  - MS is the analytical characterization workhorse for definitive elucidation of primary structure & modifications
- MS is a decisive characterization tool during molecular assessment and early process development
  - If needed, minor improvements to the platform process can occur in "real-time" without affecting timelines
- MS is an essential element of commercial process dev. and comparability (similarity) exercises
  - Rapidly assess effect of manufacturing improvements on product quality attributes & batch consistency
  - Directly visualize the intact protein isoforms that constitute pre-change & post-change comparability batches
- The pace and breadth of biotherapeutics process & product development is increasing every year!
  - Demand is shifting to smaller, more reliable, easier-to-use instruments with automatic calibration & tuning
    - Automated sample preparation/data analysis, and in silico prediction tools, will improve access & productivity
  - Continued quantum leaps in capability, performance & ease-of-use from our vendor partners are essential!

![](_page_29_Picture_12.jpeg)

### Acknowledgements

#### Mass Spectrometry and Biophysical Characterization (MSBC)

![](_page_30_Picture_2.jpeg)

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- Chris Yu
- Eric Carlson

- Drake Zhang
- Mark Rogers
- Chris Ziegenfuss
- Rich Rogers
- Jonathan Josephs
- ...and many more

![](_page_31_Figure_0.jpeg)

![](_page_31_Picture_1.jpeg)

![](_page_31_Picture_2.jpeg)