

1 **Original Research Article**

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3 **Quantitative Proteomics Analysis of *Plasmodium vivax* Induced**  
4 **Alterations in Human Serum during the Acute and Convalescent**  
5 **Phases of Infection**

6 Sandipan Ray<sup>1\*†</sup>, Sandip K. Patel<sup>1\*</sup>, Apoorva Venkatesh<sup>1</sup>, Gangadhar Chatterjee<sup>3</sup>, Naziya N.  
7 Ansari<sup>1</sup>, Nithya J. Gogtay<sup>2</sup>, Urmila M. Thatte<sup>2</sup>, Prajakta Gandhe<sup>2</sup>, Santosh G. Varma<sup>3</sup>, Swati  
8 Patankar<sup>1</sup> and Sanjeeva Srivastava<sup>1#</sup>

9 <sup>1</sup>Department of Biosciences and Bioengineering, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Powai,  
10 Mumbai 400076, India

11 <sup>2</sup>Departments of Clinical Pharmacology, Seth GS Medical College & KEM Hospital, Parel,  
12 Mumbai 400012, India

13 <sup>3</sup>Dept of Biochemistry, Grant Govt Medical College and Sir JJ Group of Hospitals, Byculla,  
14 Mumbai 400008, India

15

16 †Present address: Department of Clinical Biochemistry, Metabolic Research Laboratories,  
17 Wellcome Trust-Medical Research Council Institute of Metabolic Science, University of  
18 Cambridge, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge CB2 0QQ, United Kingdom

19

\*These authors contributed equally to this work

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<sup>#</sup>Correspondence: Dr. Sanjeeva Srivastava; E-mail: sanjeeva@iitb.ac.in

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Phone: +91-22-2576-7779, Fax: +91-22-2572-3480

22 **ABSTRACT**

23 The radial distribution of *Plasmodium vivax* malaria burden has evoked enormous concern  
24 among the global research community. In this study, we have investigated the serum proteome  
25 alterations in non-severe vivax malaria patients before and during patient recuperation starting  
26 from early febrile to defervescence, and convalescent stages of the infection. We have also  
27 performed an extensive quantitative proteomics analysis to compare the serum proteome profiles  
28 of vivax malaria patients with low (LPVM) and moderately-high (MPVM) parasitemia with  
29 healthy community controls. Interestingly, some of the serum proteins like Serum amyloid A,  
30 Apolipoprotein A1, C-reactive protein, Titin and Haptoglobin, were found to be sequentially  
31 altered with respect to increased parasite counts. Analysis of a longitudinal cohort of malaria  
32 patients indicated reversible alterations in serum levels of some proteins such as Haptoglobin,  
33 Apolipoprotein E, Apolipoprotein A1, Carbonic anhydrase 1, and Hemoglobin subunit alpha  
34 upon treatment; however, the levels of a few other proteins did not return to the baseline even  
35 during the convalescent phase of the infection. Here we present the first comprehensive serum  
36 proteomics analysis of vivax malaria patients with different levels of parasitemia and during the  
37 acute and convalescent phases of the infection.

38

39 **KEYWORDS:** Vivax malaria, Serum proteomics, *Plasmodium*, Parasitemia, Mass  
40 spectrometry, Longitudinal cohort, Acute infection, Convalescent phase

41

## 42 INTRODUCTION

43 *Plasmodium vivax* is the most widely distributed species of the five parasites responsible for  
44 malaria in humans. Even though this plasmodial infection was generally considered as benign,  
45 reported case series appeared mostly during the last 15 years from different endemic countries  
46 evidently indicated severe manifestations associated with *P. vivax* mono-infection<sup>1</sup>.  
47 Worrisomely, apart from the incidence of a very high level of parasitemia all the other  
48 complications of severe falciparum malaria, including cerebral syndromes and fatal outcomes  
49 have been observed in acute *P. vivax* infections<sup>2,3</sup>. Importantly, *P. vivax* causes severe and fatal  
50 manifestations even at a very low-grade parasitemia<sup>4,5</sup> and elicits a greater host response than *P.*  
51 *falciparum*<sup>6</sup>. Insufficient knowledge about the invasion biology of *P. vivax*<sup>7</sup>, and poor  
52 understanding of host-parasite interactions are primarily due to the lack of an enduring *in vitro*  
53 culture system for this malaria parasite. The increasing global burden of vivax malaria,  
54 especially in infants and young children<sup>8-11</sup> and emerging resistance of this pathogen against  
55 commonly used anti-malarials<sup>12</sup> suggest an urgent need for intensive research in vivax malaria  
56 <sup>4,13-16</sup>.

57 Early diagnosis and effective treatment against both the blood and liver stages of the  
58 parasite is an absolute necessity for vivax malaria control. To this end, microscopic examination  
59 of thick and thin blood smears often leads to inaccurate diagnosis, since *P. vivax* preferentially  
60 invades reticulocytes, resulting in low levels of parasitemia, requiring the need for trained  
61 experts with good microscopic skills for proper diagnosis<sup>16</sup>. Polymerase chain reaction (PCR)-  
62 based molecular diagnostics are sensitive but not easy to use in point-of-care settings; while  
63 rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) are routinely used for malaria diagnosis due to their ease and  
64 simplicity<sup>17,18</sup>. However, overall sensitivity of RDTs for low-parasite density in *P. vivax* samples

65 are much lower than that of *P. falciparum*<sup>19,20</sup>, actuating the need for development of new  
66 diagnostic approaches. In this context, blood biomarkers and surrogate host markers for malaria  
67 could be used for early diagnosis, prognosis, monitoring responses to therapy and predicting  
68 outcomes.

69 In recent years, proteome level analyses are found to be informative to comprehend  
70 different aspects of malaria pathogenesis<sup>21,22</sup>. Earlier studies on the serum/plasma proteome of  
71 *P. falciparum* infected patients have led to the identification of multiple surrogate protein  
72 markers of infection and severity<sup>23-27</sup>. Presence of various muscle proteins in plasma samples of  
73 children with cerebral falciparum malaria identified through affinity proteomics indicate that  
74 plasma levels of carbonic anhydrase III, creatine kinase and myoglobin could serve as the  
75 indicators of cerebral malaria in children<sup>26</sup>. Compared to the studies on *P. falciparum*, research  
76 on *P. vivax* is awfully limited, necessitating further investigation in this front. Previously, we  
77 have reported serum proteome analysis of vivax malaria patients with identification of several  
78 differentially abundant proteins and associated physiological pathways to provide some  
79 imperative insights into disease pathogenesis and host immune responses in *P. vivax* infection<sup>28</sup>,  
80 while proteomic analyses of the parasite directly isolated from the human blood and *Saimiri*  
81 *boliviensis* monkey host have further strengthened our understanding of pathogenesis and host-  
82 parasite interactions in vivax malaria<sup>29,30</sup>. In this present study we investigated serum proteome  
83 profiles in low and moderately-high parasitemic vivax malaria patients to evaluate whether there  
84 is any possible correlation between serum abundance of diverse classes of proteins and parasite  
85 levels in peripheral blood. Furthermore, we aimed to explore the alterations in the host serum  
86 proteome profiles during the acute and remission phases (pre- and post-treatment time points) of  
87 the infection through analysis of a longitudinal cohort of vivax malaria patients.

88

## 89 **METHODS**

### 90 **Ethics statement**

91 This study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committees of Seth GS Medical College &  
92 King Edward Memorial (KEM) Hospital, Mumbai and Grant Govt. Medical College and Sir JJ  
93 Group of Hospitals, Mumbai. After providing detailed explanations about the experimental  
94 procedure in the language best understood by the potential participants, written informed consent  
95 was obtained from each individual before recruitment. Experiments involving human subjects  
96 were carried out in accordance with the relevant guidelines and regulations. The Strengthening  
97 the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology (STROBE) guidelines<sup>31</sup> were followed  
98 for reporting the findings obtained from these observational studies (Supplementary information  
99 A).

### 100 **Subject recruitment and sample collection**

101 Twenty-three low parasitemic (LPVM, parasite count < 200/ $\mu$ L of blood) and 40 moderately-  
102 high parasitemic (MPVM, parasite count > 2000/ $\mu$ L of blood) non-severe vivax malaria patients  
103 classified according to the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines<sup>19</sup> along with 40 age  
104 and gender-matched healthy controls (HC) were enrolled for the study from the Seth GS Medical  
105 College & King Edward VII Memorial Hospital. The cross-sectional vivax malaria cohorts were  
106 treated with Coartem [artemether + lumefantrine (20 mg + 120mg)]; total course over 3 days, 24  
107 tablets). Patients exhibiting symptoms for severe malaria in accordance with the WHO standard  
108 guidelines were excluded from this study. In addition, 7 patients suffering from dengue fever  
109 (DF) were also enrolled in this study to serve as a non-malaria febrile infection for a comparative  
110 analysis.

111 In order to perform a longitudinal study, 15 non-severe vivax malaria patients admitted at  
112 Grant Govt. Medical College and Sir JJ Group of Hospitals were followed up. Serum samples  
113 were collected during early febrile phase immediately after diagnosis (FEB; day 0),  
114 defervescence (DEF; day 2) and convalescence (CON; day 15 ± 3) stages. We also recruited age  
115 and gender-matched 15 HC participants for a comparative analysis. Diagnosis was confirmed by  
116 microscopic examination of thick and thin peripheral blood smear by trained microscopists and  
117 RDT. Those patients who were recruited for the longitudinal analysis were treated with  
118 intravenous Artesunate (2.4 mg/kg) given after confirmation of diagnosis (time = 0), which was  
119 repeated after 12 and 24 h, and then once a day from day 1-3. This was followed by an oral  
120 Artemisinin-based Combination Therapy (ACT), which includes Artemether (20 mg) and  
121 Lumefantrine (120 mg) for three days. Additionally, 14 daily doses of primaquine (0.50 mg/kg)  
122 were provided to the vivax malaria patients as a therapy for radical cure of *P. vivax*.  
123 Demographic, epidemiological and clinicopathological details, together with past history of  
124 diseases of all the malaria patients and controls enrolled for this study was documented. Sample  
125 collection and storage was performed as described previously<sup>32</sup>.

#### 126 **Analysis of clinicopathological parameters**

127 Hematological parameters analyzed in the blood samples collected from LPVM, MPVM, DF  
128 patients and HC subjects included hemoglobin level (g/dL), platelet count (thousand/ $\mu$ L),  
129 erythrocyte sedimentation rate (mm in 1<sup>st</sup> hr) and RBC count (millions/ $\mu$ L). Biochemical  
130 parameters including liver function tests [alanine aminotransferase (ALT) (IU/L), aspartate  
131 aminotransferase (AST) (IU/L), total bilirubin (mg%) and alkaline phosphatase (ALP) (IU/L)]  
132 were measured in serum samples. In the longitudinal study, hematological parameters such as  
133 hemoglobin (g/dL), platelets (thousand/ $\mu$ L), erythrocyte sedimentation rate (mm in 1<sup>st</sup> hr) and

134 RBC (millions/ $\mu$ L), total WBC (counts/ $\mu$ L), neutrophils (%), monocytes (%), eosinophils (%)  
135 and lymphocytes (%), and biochemical parameters such as renal function tests [urea (mg/dL),  
136 creatinine (mg/dL), uric acid (mg/dL)], liver function tests [ALT (IU/L) and AST (IU/L), total  
137 protein (g/dL), globulin (g/dL) and albumin (g/dL)] were measured in non-severe vivax patients  
138 at three different time points. Hematological investigations were carried out in a fully automated  
139 cell counter (Abacus<sup>R</sup> 5 CT, Diatron, USA), ESR was measured by Westergreen's method<sup>33</sup>, and  
140 biochemical tests were carried out using a fully automated chemical analyzer (Advia1800<sup>R</sup>,  
141 Siemens Inc. Germany). Kruskal–Wallis test was carried out to find out any statistically  
142 significant difference among the multiple study cohorts; if this multiple comparison test  
143 exhibited a significant difference, further statistical analysis was performed using Mann Whitney  
144 U test at 5% significance. GraphPad Prism software package (*version* 6.0) was used to generate  
145 graphical representations of the datasets.

#### 146 **Sample processing and gel-based proteomics (2D-DIGE)**

147 The optimal sample size required to present sufficient statistical power at our selected level of  
148 significance in two-dimensional difference in-gel electrophoresis (2D-DIGE) analysis was  
149 calculated following the protocol as described by Hunt et al. 2005<sup>34</sup>. Protein extraction from  
150 serum samples for 2D-DIGE was performed as described earlier<sup>32</sup>. In brief, the high abundant  
151 proteins were depleted using Albumin & IgG Depletion SpinTrap (GE Healthcare) following the  
152 manufacturer's instructions. Protein extraction from depleted serum samples was performed  
153 using trichloroacetic acid (TCA)-acetone precipitation method. Extracted serum proteins  
154 (LPVM/MPVM and HC; n = 8) were labeled with fluorescent dyes Cy3 and Cy5, while a  
155 mixture of equal amounts from each sample to be analyzed was regarded as an internal standard  
156 and was labeled with Cy2 according to the manufacturer's instructions (GE Healthcare). After

157 labeling, protein samples were pooled, diluted with rehydration buffer and loaded onto 18 cm, 4-  
158 7 pH immobilized pH gradient (IPG) strips. Subsequently, isoelectric focusing (IEF) and SDS-  
159 PAGE separation were performed following the same protocol as reported earlier<sup>32</sup>.

160 In order to perform a comparative serum proteomic analysis of a longitudinal cohort of  
161 vivax malaria patients at three different time points against healthy controls, three different sets  
162 of experiments were carried out. Sera from HC were pooled and labeled with Cy3 and sera  
163 obtained from patients during the FEB, DEF and CON stages were each labeled with Cy5, and  
164 individually used in different sets of experiments in comparison with HC (in three technical  
165 replicates). In every DIGE experiments, dye swapping was carried out while labeling the malaria  
166 and control samples to avoid labeling bias.

#### 167 **Image acquisition and software analysis**

168 A Typhoon 9400 variable mode imager (GE Healthcare) employing suitable excitation/emission  
169 wavelengths for CyDyes [(Cy3 (523/580nm), Cy5 (633/670nm), Cy2 (488/520 nm)] was used to  
170 scan the 2D-DIGE gels, which were further analyzed by DeCyder 2D software, version 7.0 (GE  
171 Healthcare). Initially, a comparative analysis of LPVM vs. HC and LPVM vs. MPVM was  
172 performed separately, and subsequently the multiple biological variation analysis (BVA)  
173 modules were combined for a cross comparison of the abundances of the serum proteins across  
174 the HC, LPVM and MPVM study populations. In the longitudinal analysis, comparison of the  
175 three stages [febrile (FEB), defervescence (DEF) and convalescent (CON)] individually against  
176 the HC was performed using differential in-gel analysis (DIA) and biological variation analysis  
177 (BVA) modules. Differentially abundant protein spots for subsequent mass spectrometric  
178 analysis (MS) were selected on the basis of statistical significance ( $p < 0.05$ ) of their differential  
179 abundance using Student's t-test and one-way ANOVA.



180 **In-gel digestion, MALDI-TOF/TOF analysis and protein identification**

181 Differentially abundant protein spots (with statistical significance;  $p < 0.05$ ) were manually  
182 excised from GelCode Blue stained preparative gels and subjected to in-gel digestion and matrix-  
183 assisted laser desorption/ionization - time-of-flight tandem mass spectrometry (MALDI-  
184 TOF/TOF) analysis as described earlier<sup>32</sup>. Protein identification was performed by MS/MS ion  
185 search using MASCOT version 2.1 (<http://www.martixscience.com>) search engine against the  
186 Swiss-Prot database with the following parameters: all entries taxonomy, trypsin digestion with  
187 one missed cleavage, fixed modifications: carbamidomethylation of cysteine residues, variable  
188 modifications: oxidation of methionine residues, mass tolerance 75 ppm for MS and 0.4 Da for  
189 MS/MS. Identified proteins having at least two unique matched peptides were selected for  
190 further analysis. Only those proteins with a protein identification confidence interval of  $\geq 95\%$   
191 were considered for further analysis.

192 **In-solution digestion, iTRAQ labeling and OFFGEL fractionation**

193 Further to the gel-based proteomics, gel-free isobaric tag for relative and absolute quantitation  
194 (iTRAQ)-based quantitative proteomics analysis was performed on HC, LPVM and MPVM  
195 cohorts using the pooled samples (each pool consists of 20 samples). Sample labeling strategy  
196 for differential proteomic analysis was; HC-114, LPVM-115 and MPVM-116. Comparative  
197 serum proteome analysis of vivax malaria patients at three different time points against healthy  
198 controls was also performed using iTRAQ. 10 selected serum samples from each of the study  
199 cohorts (FEB, DEF, CON and HC) were split into three pools- Set 1 ( $n = 4$ ); Set 2 ( $n = 3$ ) and Set  
200 3 ( $n = 3$ ). Apart from these biological replicates, a pool containing all 10 samples (FEB, DEF,  
201 CON and HC) was also analyzed. HC samples were labeled with the 114 iTRAQ reagent, while  
202 the three different time-point samples (FEB, DEF and CON) were labeled with 115, 116 and 117

203 labels, respectively. Buffer exchange (from rehydration solution to TEAB buffer) for all the  
204 samples was performed using Amicon Ultra 0.5 mL centrifugal 3 kDa filters (Millipore,  
205 Watford, UK) prior to in-solution digestion.

206 In-solution digestion, iTRAQ labeling and OFFGEL fractionation were performed as  
207 previously described<sup>35</sup>. Briefly, 75µg of protein from each sample was digested using Trypsin  
208 (Trypsin Gold, mass spectrometry grade: Promega, Madison, WI, USA) at a 1: 20 trypsin:  
209 protein ratio. The resulting peptides were iTRAQ labelled following the manufacturer's  
210 instructions (AB Sciex UK Limited, UK). All the labeled samples were pooled and concentrated  
211 using a speed vacuum centrifuge. Pre-fractionation of the labeled peptides was carried out using  
212 a 3100 OFFGEL fractionator (Agilent Technologies, Santa Clara, CA) with high-resolution (pH  
213 4-7, 24 cm) IPG strips.

#### 214 **LC-MS/MS analysis for protein identification and quantitation**

215 Analysis of the iTRAQ-labelled samples was performed using two mass spectrometry (MS)  
216 platforms; Agilent 6550 Quadrupole Time-of-Flight (Q-TOF) and Thermo Scientific Q-Exactive.  
217 Agilent 6550 iFunnel Q-TOF LC-MS/MS instrument (Agilent Technologies, USA) equipped  
218 with a Chip-Cube controlled by the Mass hunter Acquisition software was operated in a positive  
219 ion mode for data acquisition. Details of the liquid chromatography (LC) and MS parameters  
220 have been described previously elsewhere<sup>35</sup>. The data files obtained were processed by the  
221 Spectrum Mill Protein Identification software (Agilent Technologies, USA) using the Paragon  
222 algorithm and Mascot v2.2 (Matrix Science, London, UK) and searched against the UniProt  
223 database (Proteome ID: UP000005640; Organism ID: 9606; Protein count: 70225) using the  
224 following parameters: Data extraction was carried out between MH+ 600 and 4000, IAA for  
225 cysteine and iTRAQ (N-term, K) were specified as the fixed modifications and oxidized

226 methionine as a variable modification. The mass spectrometry proteomics data have been  
227 deposited to the ProteomeXchange Consortium via the PRIDE <sup>36</sup> partner repository with the  
228 dataset identifier PXD005267.

229         Normalization and statistical analysis of the quantitative proteomics datasets was carried  
230 out using the Perseus workstation (*version 1.5.5.3*)<sup>37</sup>. Reverse and contaminant database hits  
231 were removed before executing subsequent statistical analyses. Reporter ion intensity values  
232 were log<sub>2</sub> transformed, and were normalized by “subtract (mean)” followed by Z score  
233 normalization. Proteins groups were selected for valid values, and p-values obtained from a  
234 paired t-test were used to estimate significance of differences in the protein abundances between  
235 HC and different study cohorts (FEB, DEF and CON stages of malaria). P-values (adjusted)  
236  $\leq 0.05$  were considered to be statistically significant.

237         The iTRAQ labeled samples were also analyzed using a Q-Exactive mass spectrometer  
238 (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA, USA) for increasing the proteome coverage.  
239 Chromatographic separation and MS parameters were specified following the same method as  
240 described earlier<sup>38</sup>. Proteome discoverer 1.4 (Thermo Fisher Scientific) was applied for  
241 processing of the raw msf files; MASCOT 2.2.4 and SEQUEST were used for database  
242 searching against the Uniprot *Homo sapiens* FASTA. Database searching parameters included  
243 precursor ion mass tolerance of 5 ppm and fragment mass tolerance of 0.02 Da. N-terminal  
244 modifications selected as iTRAQ 4-plex reaction, with dynamic modifications at oxidation (M),  
245 deamination (N,Q) and iTRAQ 4-plex (K) in addition to the static modifications at Methylthio  
246 (C).

247

## 248 **Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA)**

249 Five selected targets namely, Serum amyloid A (SAA; P0DJ18), Hemopexin (HPX; P02790),  
250 Apolipoprotein E (Apo E; P02649), Haptoglobin (HP; P00738), and Apolipoprotein A1 (Apo  
251 A1; P02647) were quantified using AssayMax ELISA kits (AssayPro, USA) in serum samples  
252 from LPVM, MPVM and DF patients, and healthy controls following the manufacturer's  
253 instructions. Serum abundances of these five proteins along with three other proteins  
254 Ceruloplasmin (CP; P00450), Plasma retinol binding protein (RBP4; P02753), and Plasminogen  
255 (PLS; P00747) were measured in the FEB, DEF, and CON stages of the infection and HC  
256 following the same assay protocol as described earlier<sup>39</sup>.

## 257 **Receiver operating characteristic (ROC) analysis**

258 ROC curves [plot of true positives (sensitivity) vs. false positives (1- specificity) for each  
259 possible cutoff] were used to analyze the efficiency of the differentially abundant serum proteins  
260 (only for those above mentioned candidates for which absolute serum concentration values were  
261 measured by ELISA) in prediction of low and moderately-high parasitemic cohorts as well as the  
262 longitudinal cohorts of vivax malaria patients. ROC curves were plotted using GraphPad Prism  
263 software package (*version 6*). Sensitivity and specificity values for these serum proteins were  
264 calculated at different threshold points. Two-sided *p*-values less than 0.05 were considered  
265 statistically significant. The area under the ROC curve (AUC) was also calculated as a measure  
266 of the accuracy of the test.

## 267 **Proteins networks and bioinformatics analysis**

268 Differentially abundant serum proteins identified in the comparative quantitative proteomics  
269 analysis in the longitudinal cohort and different parasitemic vivax malaria patients were  
270 subjected to further bioinformatics analysis using Ingenuity Pathway Analysis (IPA) version 9.0

271 (Ingenuity® Systems, [www.ingenuity.com](http://www.ingenuity.com)). Pathway analysis was also performed using DAVID  
272 (Database for Annotation, Visualization and Integrated Discovery) database version 6.7  
273 (<http://david.abcc.ncifcrf.gov/home.jsp>)<sup>40</sup>, and PANTHER (Protein ANalysis THrough  
274 Evolutionary Relationships) system, version 7 ([http:// www. pantherdb.org](http://www.pantherdb.org))<sup>41</sup>.

275

## 276 **RESULTS**

### 277 **Alterations in clinicopathological parameters in different parasitemic and longitudinal** 278 **cohort of vivax malaria patients**

279 Parasitemia range for the vivax malaria patients enrolled in this study was 80-9000 (parasite  
280 count/ $\mu$ L blood) (Figure S1). 6-8% of the total number of patients screened were malaria positive  
281 (including vivax and falciparum malaria); of which over 75% were infected with *P. vivax*, while  
282 less than 1% were found to have mixed infections. Comparative analysis of HC and different  
283 parasitemic vivax malaria patients indicated that platelet levels, ESR and RBC counts were lower  
284 ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) in the malaria patients (both LPVM and MPVM), while hemoglobin (Hb) levels were  
285 found to be significantly lower ( $p < 0.0001$ ) only in MPVM and DF patients (Figure 1A; Table  
286 S1A). Interestingly, ESR, Hb and platelet levels exhibited a significant correlation with parasite  
287 counts. ESR was found to be significantly higher, while Hb and platelets were lower in MPVM  
288 when compared to LPVM (Table S1A). Similarly, the liver enzymes, ALT and AST were found  
289 to be significantly up-regulated in malaria and DF patients compared to HC ( $p < 0.05$ ), but did  
290 not exhibit any notable correlation with the parasite counts. Total bilirubin was also found to be  
291 significantly higher ( $p < 0.05$ ) in MPVM and DF as compared to HC (Figure 1A; Table S1A).  
292 Since multiple comparison (Kruskal–Wallis) test exhibited a significant difference for most of  
293 the parameters (Tables S1B and S2B), further statistical analysis for pair-wise comparison was  
294 performed using Mann Whitney U test.

295 Clinicopathological parameters were also analyzed in the longitudinal follow-up cohort  
296 of non-severe vivax malaria patients at three time points (Figure 1B; Table S2A). Among all the  
297 hematological parameters measured, WBC count was found to be significantly lower in all three  
298 time points (FEB, DEF and CON) of vivax malaria compared to the HC, while ESR was found

299 to be higher only during the early febrile stage, and slowly reduced towards normal with  
300 recovery (during the defervescence and convalescent stages). Amongst the various renal and  
301 liver function parameters; AST, ALT, total protein, uric acid, albumin and globulin were found  
302 to be significantly altered in all the three time points of malaria compared to HC, while  
303 creatinine and urea were found to be slightly decreased only in the convalescent stage of the  
304 disease (Table S2A).

### 305 **Alterations in serum proteome in low and moderately-high parasitemic vivax malaria** 306 **patients**

307 Power calculation was carried out to determine the minimum number of biological replicates  
308 required for obtaining statistical significance in our 2D-DIGE analysis. According to our power  
309 calculations a minimum of 7 samples from each group was required in DIGE experiment to  
310 obtain confidence of 1.5-fold difference at the  $p < 0.05$  significance level (Figure  
311 2A). Consequently, we performed the 2D-DIGE analysis involving 8 subjects from each  
312 experimental group (HC, LPVM and MPVM). With an intension to investigate the alterations in  
313 human serum proteome in vivax malaria patients, we performed differential proteomics analysis  
314 of low and moderately-high parasitemic vivax malaria patients and healthy control subjects  
315 (Figure 2B). Comparative proteomic analysis of LPVM patients and HC by 2D-DIGE indicated  
316 differential abundance of 18 protein spots, which were processed further for in-gel digestion  
317 (Table S3). In the subsequent MALDI-TOF/TOF mass spectrometric analysis, a total of 11  
318 proteins were identified, among which 10 were up-regulated and 1 was down-regulated (Table  
319 S4A). Figure 2C depicts a representative overlapped DIGE gel image of HC and LPVM, and 3D  
320 views and graphical representations of a few selected differentially abundant protein spots in  
321 LPVM (compared to HC). 19 differentially abundant protein spots were identified in the

322 comparative analysis of LPVM and MPVM, among which 8 were identified by mass  
323 spectrometric analysis (Table S3 and S4B). Interestingly, some of the proteins such as SAA, HP,  
324 Apo E and Apo A1 exhibited sequential alterations in their serum abundances with the increase  
325 in parasitemia (Figure 2D; Table 1).

326 In order to enhance the coverage of serum proteome and increase the possibilities for  
327 detection of the low abundant proteins in serum, which may not be identified by the gel-based  
328 methods; further differential proteomics analysis was performed using iTRAQ-based quantitative  
329 approach (Figure 2E; Table S5A). In the iTRAQ-based quantitative proteomics analysis, we  
330 identified increase in the serum levels of 24 proteins in LPVM, and 30 proteins in MPVM;  
331 whereas serum levels of 26 and 28 proteins was found to be reduced in LPVM and MPVM,  
332 respectively, compared to the HC (Table S5B). 24 differentially abundant candidates were found  
333 to be common between LPVM and MPVM. Figure 2F represents the MS/MS spectra for some  
334 selected proteins with the insets depicting the iTRAQ reporter ion intensities for representative  
335 peptides in HC, LPVM and MPVM. As identified in the 2D-DIGE; the iTRAQ analysis also  
336 revealed gradual alteration in serum abundance of multiple proteins including SAA, HP, Apo E  
337 and Apo A1. However, a few sequentially altered candidates such as Titin (Q8WZ42), C-reactive  
338 protein (CRP) (P02741), Hemoglobin subunit alpha (P69905) & beta (P68871), which were not  
339 detected in DIGE, were identified in the iTRAQ analysis (Table 1). We also identified some  
340 proteins such as Glutathione peroxidase 3 (P22352), Hemoglobin subunit beta, Myelin basic  
341 protein (P02686) and HPX, which exhibited detectable differential abundances only in the  
342 MPVM, while in the LPVM patients their serum levels were found to be nearly comparable with  
343 the HC.



344 **Changes in human serum proteome profile during the acute and convalescent phases of**  
345 **vivax malaria**

346 Quantitative proteomics analysis was performed on a longitudinal cohort of non-severe vivax  
347 malaria patients using the same gel-based and gel-free proteomics approaches to capture the  
348 snapshots of dynamic serum proteome profiles during the acute and remission phases of the  
349 disease (Figure 3A). In the 2D-DIGE and MALDI-TOF/TOF analysis, 12 proteins were found to  
350 be significantly differentially regulated in the FEB stage of the infection (Student's t-test and 1-  
351 way ANOVA;  $p \leq 0.05$ ). Among the differentially abundant proteins, 5 were up-regulated, and  
352 the remaining 7 were down-regulated (Table S6A). In case of the HC vs. DEF analysis 9 proteins  
353 were found to be differentially abundant (7 up-regulated and 2 down-regulated) (Table S6B).  
354 Details of the differentially abundant protein spots and results obtained from their subsequent  
355 MS analysis have been summarized in the supplementary information (Table S6). Interestingly,  
356 some of the identified differentially abundant proteins such as HP, CP, SAA, and Apo E  
357 exhibited reversible fluctuations in their serum levels with the remission of the disease (Figure  
358 3B). Many of the protein spots detected in the DIGE gels remained unidentified in the MALDI  
359 TOF/TOF analysis and generated almost empty spectra, possibly due to their extremely low  
360 abundance in serum.

361 In the gel-free quantitative proteomics analysis, the iTRAQ labelled samples were  
362 analyzed using Q-TOF and Q-Exactive mass spectrometers. The iTRAQ ratios for all the  
363 proteins identified in Q-TOF and Q-Exactive mass spectrometric analysis along with their  
364 sequence coverage, protein score and unique peptide information are provided in supplementary  
365 information (Table S7). Combining four replicates, total 804 proteins were identified in the Q-  
366 TOF analysis at 1% false discovery rate (FDR) (Table S7A). **Volcano plots showing  $p$  values**

367 versus protein ratios of FEB/HC, DEF/HC and CON/HC obtained in Q-TOF analysis are  
368 represented in Figure 3C. MS/MS spectra of a few selected proteins with the insets depicting the  
369 iTRAQ reporter ion intensities for representative peptides in healthy controls and in vivax  
370 malaria during the three different phases of the infection (FEB, DEF and CON) are shown in the  
371 Figure 3D. In the Q-Exactive analysis, a total of 342 proteins were identified at 1% FDR, out of  
372 which 153 were with  $\geq 2$  peptides (Table S7B). Proteins with  $\geq 2$  unique peptide matches as well  
373 as those with 1 peptide match, but detected in multiple replicates were selected for differential  
374 proteomics analysis. Comparative analysis of the proteins identified by Q-TOF and Q-Exactive  
375 mass spectrometers indicated an overlap of 62 proteins, among which 51 were found to be with  $\geq$   
376 2 peptides. Of note, similar trend of differential abundance was observed for majority of the  
377 quantified proteins in both the mass spectrometric analyses independently. Normal distribution  
378 of total proteome, S-curve distributions of the differentially abundant proteins, and correlations  
379 among the different iTRAQ data sets for the longitudinal cohort of vivax malaria patients are  
380 represented in the Figure S2. In the Q-TOF analysis, different pooled samples were analysed as  
381 multiple biological replicates, and 97 proteins were found to be common in all the four replicates  
382 (Figure 3E). Quantitative proteomic analysis based on the iTRAQ ratios indicated differential  
383 abundance (fold-change  $\geq 1.2$ ; adjusted  $p$ -value  $\leq 0.05$ ) of 25 proteins in FEB (12 up-regulated  
384 and 13 down-regulated), 28 proteins in DEF (8 up-regulated and 20 down-regulated), and 4  
385 proteins in CON (1 up-regulated and 3 down-regulated) stages of the disease (Figure 3F; Table  
386 S8). Principal component analysis (PCA) revealed distinct clustering among the different  
387 experimental groups (HC, FEB, DEF and CON) (Figure 3G).

388           Eight proteins were found to be exhibiting differential abundance ( $p$ -value  $\leq 0.05$ ) only  
389 in the FEB stage, while serum abundances for two proteins were found to be dysregulated across

390 all the three stages (Figure 3F; Table S8A). Quite a few serum proteins, including Apo E, SAA,  
391 Leucine-rich alpha-2-glycoprotein (P02750) and Hemoglobin subunit zeta (P02008) were found  
392 to be up-regulated during the early febrile and defervescence stages, but seemed to return almost  
393 to normal levels during the convalescent stage (Table 2; Table S8A). On the contrary, serum  
394 abundances for a few proteins such as HP and Apo A1 were found to be reduced in the FEB  
395 stage and/or DEF stages, but arrived nearly to the normal levels in the CON stage (Table 2;  
396 Table S8A). However, a number of proteins also showed similar trends of differential  
397 abundances across the three stages (either up-regulated or down-regulated), and a few serum  
398 proteins showed no significant alterations in their serum levels in any of the three stages as  
399 compared to the healthy controls. Interestingly, serum level of Immunoglobulin kappa variable  
400 1-17 (P01610) was found to be altered only during the DEF and CON stages ( $p < 0.05$ ), but not  
401 in the FEB stage of the infection (Table S8).

#### 402 **Modulation of diverse physiological pathways in *P. vivax* infection**

403 After identifying the differentially abundant serum proteins in the low and moderate parasitemic  
404 malaria patients, we were interested to find out their molecular and biological functions and  
405 association with different biological processes and physiological pathways (Table S9; Figure  
406 S3). Our bioinformatics analysis indicates that blood coagulation and plasminogen activating  
407 cascade are the main physiological pathways associated with the differentially abundant serum  
408 proteins identified in the vivax malaria patients (Figure 4A). Many of the altered proteins were  
409 found to be associated with metabolic and cellular processes, localization, response to stimulus,  
410 and biological regulations (Figure 4B). Molecular function analysis specified that the  
411 differentially abundant proteins were related with diverse types of molecular functions; including  
412 catalytic activity, binding, enzyme regulator activity, and receptor and transporter activities

413 (Figure 4C). Most of the proteins were found to be resided at the extracellular regions and within  
414 the cell parts, while some were organelle specific or components of macromolecular complexes  
415 (Figure 4D).

416 Differentially abundant serum proteins identified during the FEB, DEF, and CON stages  
417 of the disease were also subjected to bioinformatics analysis for functional clustering. Results are  
418 summarized in details under the supplementary information (Table S10; Figure S4). According  
419 to IPA analysis, the differentially abundant proteins identified in the longitudinal cohort of vivax  
420 malaria patients provide evidences of alterations in multiple physiological pathways, mostly  
421 during the acute phase of the infection. The most prominent canonical pathways included acute  
422 phase response signaling, Liver X receptor/Retinoid X receptor (LXR/RXR) activation,  
423 complement and coagulation systems (Table S10). Lipid metabolism and molecular transport  
424 was identified as one of the top-scoring network (Figure 4E). In the FEB and DEF stages of the  
425 infection maximum numbers of differentially abundant serum proteins involved in various  
426 physiological pathways/networks were indentified, while both the number of candidates and their  
427 respective levels of alterations (fold-change) were found to be reduced during abatement of the  
428 fever (CON stage). Many of the differentially altered proteins identified in the FEB stage,  
429 exhibited nearly normal level during the CON stage, when the patients gradually return to health  
430 after illness.

#### 431 **Measurement of serum concentrations of differentially abundant proteins by ELISA**

432 In order to validate the findings obtained in our quantitative proteomics analysis, serum  
433 abundances of 5 selected proteins were measured in the sera of LPVM and MPVM patients and  
434 HC study cohorts by ELISA (Table S11A). In the validation study, candidates were selected on  
435 the basis of their level of differential abundances observed in the proteomics analysis, possible

436 connection of the proteins with vivax malaria pathogenesis, and availability of the required  
437 ELISA kits and reagents. Seeing that multiple comparison (Kruskal–Wallis) test exhibited a  
438 significant difference for most of the proteins (Tables S11B), additional statistical analysis for  
439 pair-wise comparison was performed using Mann Whitney U test (Tables S11C). SAA exhibited  
440 a gradual increase in its serum abundance, while the serum levels of HP and ApoA1 were found  
441 to be sequentially decreased with respect to the increase in parasite load. Serum abundance of  
442 HPX and ApoE were found to be higher in both LPVM and MPVM patients compared to the  
443 HC. However, differential abundance of Apo E, Apo A1, and HP between the LPVM and  
444 MPVM patient cohorts was found to be statistically insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ) (Figure 5A). ROC  
445 curves indicate SAA, Apo A1 and HP are efficient predictor proteins ( $AUC > 0.80$ ) for vivax  
446 malaria even at a low-parasitemic level (Figure 5B; Table S12). Serum levels of SAA and HP  
447 exhibited correlation (negative or positive) with the parasitic burden in malaria patients showing  
448 a Pearson's correlation coefficient ( $r > 0.6$  at  $p < 0.0001$ ) (Figure 5C). Serum levels of these  
449 proteins were also measured in DF patients to evaluate their specificity towards malaria.  
450 Interestingly, serum abundance of HP was found to be higher in DF patients compared to HC,  
451 while its serum level was substantially low in malaria patients. SAA, Apo E, Apo A1 and HPX  
452 exhibited similar trends of differential abundance in malaria and DF patients (compared to HC);  
453 however, the levels of their dysregulation were found to be much higher in the malaria patients  
454 (Figure S5). Additionally, we have compared these dysregulated proteins identified in the LPVM  
455 and MPVM cohorts of our study with their serum abundance in severe vivax malaria patients  
456 (measurements of these proteins in severe malaria have been re-analyzed from a recently  
457 published article from our research group)<sup>39</sup>. Importantly, some of these differentially abundant  
458 proteins such as HP, HPX, Apo A1 and Apo E, which exhibited gradual alterations in serum with

459 increase in parasitemia, also exhibited significant perturbations in the severe malaria patients  
460 (significant increase/decrease as compared to non-severe malaria) (Figure S6).

461 Analysis of the longitudinal cohort of vivax malaria patients by ELISA indicated  
462 reversible alterations (compared to the normal serum levels) in the serum abundances of HP,  
463 ApoE and Apo A1 during the acute and remission phases of the infection (Table S13A). Serum  
464 levels of these proteins were highly altered during the FEB stage of the disease. Interestingly, the  
465 scale of alteration for these proteins was gradually decreased during remission of the disease;  
466 their serum levels still remained high/low (compared to the normal range) in the DEF stage, but  
467 reached almost the basal level during the CON stage (Figure 6). For HPX, CP and RBP4  
468 differential abundance was observed only in the FEB stage of the infection, while alterations in  
469 their serum abundances during the DEF and CON stages were found to be statistically  
470 insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ) (Tables S13B and S13C). Consequently, discrimination accuracy of most  
471 of the differentially abundant proteins for healthy control and malaria patients were highest at the  
472 FEB stage and reduced during the DEF and CON stages of the disease (Table S14; Figure S7).  
473 Taken together, the findings obtained from the ELISA-based measurements validated the  
474 observations obtained in our discovery-phase quantitative proteomics analyses.

475

476

477

## 478 **DISCUSSION**

479 Identification of serum/plasma proteins, which exhibit altered abundance at the onset and during  
480 the acute phase of any infection, could be informative to understand the pathobiology of  
481 different infectious diseases and host responses against the invading pathogens<sup>42-44</sup>. To this end,  
482 in recent years, several research groups including ours have investigated alterations in  
483 serum/plasma proteome in severe and non-severe falciparum<sup>23,24,27,32</sup> and vivax malaria<sup>28,39,45</sup> to  
484 study malaria pathogenesis. In all these studies, serum/plasma proteome of the malaria patients  
485 have been analyzed during the febrile stages of the infection, either at the onset of the disease or  
486 at the fastigium stage. However, temporal profiling of serum/plasma proteome during acute and  
487 remission stages in malaria, which can provide snapshots of the transient and enduring  
488 alterations in serum proteome during the FEB, DEF and CON stages, has not been reported  
489 hitherto. Here, we report, for the first time, serum proteomic alterations in a longitudinal cohort  
490 of *P. vivax* infected patients to elucidate host responses when fever is established (temperature  
491 of the body reaches above higher normal level), during the stage when the temperature comes  
492 down to normal, and also during the gradual recovery of health after the illness. The three  
493 stages discussed in our study have been categorically chosen depending upon the clinical course  
494 of uncomplicated vivax malaria. Analysis of the early febrile stage represents host proteome  
495 profile immediately after onset of the infection, before administering any anti-malarial drugs.  
496 The second, defervescence stage, reflects any immediate change in blood proteome at early  
497 recovery phase, while the convalescent stage indicates a phase after administration of 14 days  
498 radical cure treatment with primaquine and a complete recovery, when none of the patients  
499 displayed any apparent symptoms of malaria.

500 In this study, we have analyzed correlations of dysregulated serum proteins with  
501 different clinicopathological parameters and investigated their involvements in diverse  
502 physiological pathways and biological processes. Reduction in the hemoglobin level during the  
503 early stage of plasmodial infection and its gradual recovery to the normal level with the disease  
504 remission, as well as its reduction with the increase in parasitemia are suggestive of increased  
505 hemolysis and decreased rate of erythrocyte production in malaria patients. This observation is  
506 consistent with earlier reports<sup>46,47</sup>. Likewise, platelet counts, which were reported earlier to be  
507 consistently low in vivax malaria<sup>48-50</sup>, were also found to be reduced in malaria patients in our  
508 study, reflecting the possibilities of sequestration of platelets by macrophages in the spleen due  
509 to immune mediated injury as well as platelet clump formation with the infected erythrocytes  
510<sup>51,52</sup>. Increased levels of liver enzymes were observed with an increase in parasitemia and degree  
511 of hemolysis, as reflected by the higher AST level in MPVM compared to the HC and LPVM  
512 cohorts. Liver function derangements have been studied earlier in malaria<sup>53</sup>. Other biochemical  
513 parameters such as bilirubin and ALP were also found to be elevated in vivax malaria, but  
514 returned to the normal levels during the convalescent stage indicating possibilities of liver  
515 involvement in malaria that could be attributed to mononuclear infiltration of the liver leading  
516 to an intrahepatic cholestasis.

517 Comparative analysis of the serum proteome profiles of non-severe vivax malaria  
518 patients with varying levels of parasitemia indicated some prominent differences in the serum  
519 proteome patterns of low and moderately-high parasitemic patients. Some of the differentially  
520 abundant proteins such as SAA, CRP, Titin, Apo E exhibited gradual alterations in their serum  
521 abundances with an increase in parasitemia. However, some of the identified proteins such as  
522 HPX, Vitronectin, Clusterin and Apo E exhibited nearly equal levels of differential serum



523 abundance in both patient groups as compared to healthy controls, indicating some possibilities  
524 of differential host responses due to the varying levels of parasitemia.

525 Many of the dysregulated proteins were found to be acute phase reactants or acute phase  
526 proteins (APPs), followed by the proteins involved in complement and coagulation cascades.  
527 Previously, a time course analysis of falciparum malaria patients during antiparasitic therapy  
528 demonstrated complex interactions of inflammatory and coagulatory factors during the acute  
529 phase of the disease<sup>54</sup>. In this direction, an earlier study describing proteomics analysis of  
530 longitudinal cohorts of dengue fever and dengue hemorrhagic fever patients also reported  
531 altered serum levels of a large number of acute phase reactants and cytokines<sup>55</sup>. Non-specific  
532 resistance against the pre-erythrocytic stages of *Plasmodium* can be generated by APPs<sup>56</sup>. In  
533 malaria patients, the parasite selectively invades the red blood cells, multiplies within them and  
534 ultimately ruptures to release merozoites into circulation<sup>57,58</sup>. In this process, several proteins  
535 such as hemoglobin subunits, which remain confined in the interior of RBCs, are also released  
536 in the bloodstream. Consequently, inflammatory responses are triggered by the body against the  
537 parasites<sup>59</sup>, which can lead to the activation of various complement proteins<sup>60,61</sup>. Extreme  
538 dysregulation in the serum levels of several APPs including SAA, CRP, Leucine-rich alpha-2-  
539 glycoprotein (P02750), Alpha-1-antichymotrypsin, and Alpha-1-antitrypsin (P01009) observed  
540 during the FEB stage of the infection clearly indicates generation of strong inflammatory  
541 responses against the malaria parasites almost immediately after onset of the infection.

542 Bioinformatics analysis on the basis of our identified differentially abundant serum  
543 proteins indicates modulations in lipid metabolism and transport in the vivax malaria patients  
544 (Figure 4E). Lipids are synthesized within liver, and exo-erythrocytic stage of the malaria  
545 parasites also happens in hepatocytes. Initiation of erythrocytic stage with multiplication of a

546 single merozoite to multiple copies (8 to 32) requires a considerable amount of cholesterol for  
547 membrane formation. Malarial parasites lack *de novo* cholesterol synthetic pathway, and  
548 therefore need uptake of cholesterol and other nutrients through parasitophorous vacuolar  
549 membrane (PVM) to ensure their survival and propagation<sup>62</sup>. Our study indicates that  
550 apolipoproteins of high-density lipoproteins-cholesterol (HDL-C) such as Apolipoprotein CI  
551 (APOC1; P02654), Apolipoprotein C2 (APOC2; P02655), Apolipoprotein A4 (APOA4;  
552 P06727) and Paraoxonase 1(PON1; P27169) were down-regulated along with the alterations in  
553 HDL-C transport (LCAT) in vivax malaria. To this end, lower HDL level in malaria patients  
554 has been reported earlier<sup>63,64</sup>. An earlier report on the meta-analysis of serum lipid and  
555 lipoprotein changes indicates that the normalization of lipid profiles happens quite slowly in  
556 malaria patients, and takes over one to six months to reach the basal levels following the  
557 infection<sup>65</sup>. Intriguingly, we observed that serum levels of the proteins involved in HDL  
558 metabolism and transport remained lower not only in the FEB stage, but modulations in their  
559 serum levels were also observed during the DEF and CON stages of malaria.

560 This study provided a comprehensive representation of the diverse alterations in serum  
561 proteome profiles of vivax malaria patients with low and moderately-high parasitemia, as well  
562 as regarding the phase-specific temporal protein profiles during the acute and convalescent  
563 phases of the infection. More importantly, our bioinformatics analyses provided evidences of  
564 intricate associations of many of the identified dysregulated proteins with crucial biological  
565 processes and physiological pathways such as blood coagulation and plasminogen activating  
566 cascade, complement systems, lipid metabolism and molecular transport, and acute phase  
567 response signalling. However, it is certainly difficult to speculate the exact mechanisms behind  
568 such diverse alterations in blood proteome as the factors introducing these alterations could be

569 partly host related, or might be parasite-related (secondary to parasite metabolism), and there  
570 could also be some cumulative effect of interactions between the host and parasite. Therefore, it  
571 remains challenging to unravel the precise mechanisms behind such observations through  
572 analysis of clinical specimens due to the presence of an entangled web of physiological  
573 networks that are controlled by both host and parasite under the complicated diseased  
574 conditions. Specific functional assays with the *ex vivo* grown malaria parasites may provide  
575 some further insights, and could be an interesting continuation of this present study. Taken  
576 together, we are able to get a glimpse of the composite depictions of vivax malaria pathogenesis  
577 through a proteome level analysis. This study may pave the way for future proteome level and  
578 integrated multi-omics investigations on both the host and the parasite for obtaining a better  
579 perceptive of vivax malaria pathogenesis.

580

581 **Authors' contributions**

582 SR, SKP, and SS conceived and designed the experiments. SR, SKP, GC, NNA, AV and PG  
583 performed the experiments. SR, AV, SKP and GC analyzed the data. SR, AV, GC, SKP, NJG,  
584 UMT, SGV, SP and SS wrote the manuscript.

585

586 **Acknowledgements**

587 We would like to thank Mayuri N. Gandhi and Manali Jadhav from the Centre for Research in  
588 Nanotechnology & Science (CRNTS), Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, Mumbai for  
589 the help in performing Q-TOF LC/MS-MS experiments, Rapole Srikanth from the National  
590 Centre for Cell Science (NCCS), Pune for the help in carrying out MALDI TOF/TOF MS  
591 analysis, and Krishnatej Nishtala and Bini Ramachandran from the Thermo Fisher Scientific  
592 India Pvt Ltd, Mumbai for the support in performing Q-Exactive mass spectrometric analysis.  
593 Assistance rendered by Saurabh Yadav, Vipin Kumar and Amruta Bhave from IIT Bombay in  
594 data analysis is also gratefully acknowledged. This research was supported by Department of  
595 Biotechnology (BT/PR8698/MED/29/750/2013) to SS. SR and SKP were supported by the IIT  
596 Bombay fellowships.

597

598 **Competing interests**

599 The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

600

601 **Figure Legends**

602 **Figure 1. Measurement of clinical laboratory parameters.** (A) Clinical details of healthy  
603 control subjects and low and moderately high parasitemic vivax malaria and dengue fever  
604 patients. HC (n = 40), LPVM (n = 23), MPVM (n = 40) and DF (n = 7). (B) Clinical laboratory  
605 parameters in a longitudinal cohort of vivax malaria patients. HC (n = 15) and a longitudinal  
606 cohort (FEB, DEF and CON stages) of vivax malaria patients (n = 15). \*\* Indicates  $p < 0.001$ ,  
607 \* indicates  $0.001 < p < 0.05$  and NS indicates  $p > 0.05$  based on a Mann-Whitney test. Complete  
608 lists of demographic and clinical details are provided under supplementary information (Table S1  
609 and S2).

610 **Figure 2. Quantitative proteomic analysis of low and moderately-high parasitemic vivax**  
611 **malaria patients.** (A) Power calculation for determination of minimum number of required  
612 biological variants for 2D-DIGE analysis. Power curve exhibiting the minimum % effect size  
613 (fold-change) measurable as a function of sample size with 80% power at  $p < 0.05$  level of  
614 statistical significance. (B) Dot plots representing the parasitemia range for both low and  
615 moderately-high parasitemic cohorts of vivax malaria patients (LPVM and MPVM) in terms of  
616 parasite counts/ $\mu$ L. (C) Representative 2D-DIGE image to compare serum proteome of HC and  
617 LP/MPVM patients. Graphical and 3D fluorescence intensity representations of a few selected  
618 statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ; paired t-test) differentially abundant proteins such as HP, Apo  
619 A1, CP, Alpha-1B glycoprotein, Apo E and SAA in LPVM patients. (D) Trend of differential  
620 abundance for some serum proteins in LPVM and MPVM patients compared to HC identified in  
621 2D-DIGE analysis. Data are represented as standardized log abundance of spot intensity  
622 measured in the biological variation analysis (BVA) analysis. Serum levels of HP and Apo A1  
623 were found to be consistently lower in vivax malaria patients, while increased abundance for

624 Apo E and SAA was observed in LPVM and MPVM patients compared to HC. (E) Graphical  
625 representation of the (normalized) protein abundance ratios between the samples (LPVM vs. HC  
626 and MPVM vs. HC), plotted against the total iTRAQ reporter ion intensities for a particular  
627 protein. A few selected differentially abundant proteins are labeled. (F) Representative MS/MS  
628 spectrum for two selected differentially abundant serum proteins identified in different  
629 parasitemic vivax malaria patients. Inset presenting the iTRAQ reporter ion intensities for  
630 representative peptides in healthy community controls (HC), and LPVM and MPVM patients.

631 **Figure 3. Quantitative proteomic analysis of a longitudinal cohort of vivax malaria**  
632 **patients.** (A) Schematic representation of a longitudinal cohort of vivax malaria patients  
633 analyzed in this study. Blood samples were collected during the early febrile (FEB; D0),  
634 defervescence (DEF; D2) and convalescent (CON; D15 ± 3) stages (Drawn by S.R.). (B) Trend  
635 of a few selected differentially abundant serum proteins such as HP, CP, SAA and Apo E in  
636 FEB, DEF and CON stages of vivax malaria identified in 2D-DIGE analysis. Data are  
637 represented as standardized log abundance of spot intensity. (C) Volcano plots showing *p*-values  
638 (-log<sub>10</sub>) versus protein ratio of FEB/HC, DEF/HC and CON/HC (log<sub>2</sub>). Red, up-regulated;  
639 Green, down-regulated; and Blue, remained unaltered (adjusted *p*-value > 0.05) proteins. A few  
640 selected differentially abundant proteins are labeled. (D) Representative MS/MS spectrum for  
641 two selected differentially abundant serum proteins (HP; down-regulated and SAA; up-  
642 regulated) identified in the longitudinal cohort of vivax malaria patients. Inset presenting the  
643 iTRAQ reporter ion intensities for representative peptides in HC and vivax malaria patients at  
644 different phases of disease progression. (E) Venn diagram depicting the overlap of proteins  
645 identified by iTRAQ measurements among four biological replicates. (F) Distinctive and  
646 overlapping differentially abundant proteins in FEB, DEF and CON stages of vivax malaria

647 identified in iTRAQ-based quantitative proteomics analysis. (G) 2D-PCA plot showing  
648 discrimination between HC and FEB, DEF and CON stages of vivax malaria on the basis of  
649 proteome profiles.

650 **Figure 4. Functional clustering and physiological pathways associated with the**  
651 **differentially abundant proteins identified in vivax malaria.** Pie charts showing the  
652 physiological pathways (A), biological process (B), molecular functions (C) and cellular  
653 components (D) related to the differentially abundant proteins identified in both LPVM and  
654 MPVM patients (combined list). Separate analyses of the two classes of vivax malaria patients  
655 (i.e. LPVM and MPVM) are provided in supplementary information (Figure S3A and B). (E)  
656 Differential abundance of the serum proteins (light yellow) involved in lipid metabolism and  
657 molecular transport are depicted in a longitudinal cohort of vivax malaria patients (FEB, DEF  
658 and CON stages). The node color represents up (red) and down-regulated (green) proteins within  
659 the categories, and the color intensity demonstrates the magnitude of differential abundances.  
660 Light blue symbols represent the associated proteins identified in the functional analysis for  
661 which the differences in serum levels have not achieved statistical significance ( $p > 0.05$ ) in our  
662 study.

663 **Figure 5. ELISA-based measurement of serum proteins in different parasitemic vivax**  
664 **malaria patients.** (A) Measurement of serum levels of different proteins in healthy controls (n =  
665 40) and low and moderately-high parasitemic vivax malaria patients (LPVM (n = 23) and  
666 MPVM (n = 40)) by ELISA. SAA exhibited a steady increase ( $p < 0.05$ ) in its serum abundance,  
667 whereas the serum levels of HP and ApoA1 were found to be sequentially decreased ( $p < 0.05$ )  
668 with respect to the increase in parasite count. \*\* Indicates  $p < 0.001$ , \* indicates  $0.001 < p <$   
669  $0.05$ , and NS indicates  $p > 0.05$  based on a Mann-Whitney test. (B) Receiver operating

670 characteristics (ROC) curves for evaluation of the sensitivity and specificity of different serum  
671 proteins for LPVM (red lines) and MPVM (blue lines). ROC curves demonstrating that SAA,  
672 Apo A1 and HP can predict vivax malaria efficiently ( $AUC > 0.80$ ) even at a low-parasitemic  
673 level. (C) Correlation analysis between parasitemia and concentration of different serum proteins  
674 in combined groups consists of both LPVM and MPVM patients. Serum levels of SAA, Apo E  
675 and HP exhibited substantial correlation with parasitic count in malaria patients ( $r > 0.6$ ).

676 **Figure 6. ELISA-based measurement of serum proteins in a longitudinal cohort of vivax**  
677 **malaria patients.** Measurement of serum levels of eight differentially abundant proteins in HC  
678 ( $n = 10$ ) and a longitudinal cohort (FEB, DEF and CON stages) of vivax malaria patients ( $n =$   
679  $10$ ) performed by ELISA. Maximum levels of dysregulation in the serum abundance of these  
680 proteins were observed during the acute phase of the infection (FEB), while the amplitude of  
681 alteration for these proteins was gradually decreased with the remission of the disease. \*\*  
682 Indicates  $p < 0.001$ , \* indicates  $0.001 < p < 0.05$ , and NS indicates  $p > 0.05$  based on a Mann-  
683 Whitney test.

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686



687 **Table Legends**

688 **Table 1.** Differentially abundant serum proteins identified in the low and moderately-high  
689 parasitemic vivax malaria patients

690 **Table 2.** Differentially abundant serum proteins identified in longitudinal cohorts of vivax  
691 malaria patients

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**Table 1.** Differentially abundant serum proteins identified in the low and moderately-high parasitemic vivax malaria patients #

Sl No.	Protein	Uniprot Accession ID	Unique Peptides (iTRAQ/DIGE)	Fold change HC vs. LPVM (iTRAQ/DIGE)	Fold change HC vs. MPVM (iTRAQ)	Fold change MPVM vs. LPVM (iTRAQ/DIGE)	Associated Pathways <sup>^</sup>
1	Apolipoprotein E*	P02649	12/21	1.01/3.18	1.13	1.12	Chylomicron-mediated lipid transport, HDL-mediated lipid transport, Scavenging by Class A Receptors, Retinoid metabolism and transport
2	Alpha-2-macroglobulin <sup>s</sup>	P01023	63/39	0.79	0.78	0.98/0.38	HDL-mediated lipid transport. Platelet degranulation. Intrinsic pathway of Fibrin Clot Formation. Degradation of the extracellular matrix. Rho GTPase cycle
3	Apolipoprotein A-II	P02652	7	0.72	0.48	0.66	HDL-mediated lipid transport, Chylomicron-mediated lipid transport, Scavenging by Class A Receptors, Retinoid metabolism and transport
4	Apolipoprotein A1* <sup>s</sup>	P02647	37/24	0.63	0.46	0.73/0.28-0.42	ABC transporters in lipid homeostasis, Platelet degranulation, Chylomicron-mediated lipid transport, HDL-mediated lipid transport, PPARA activates gene expression, Scavenging of heme from plasma, Scavenging by Class B Receptors, Scavenging by Class A Receptors, Retinoid metabolism and transport, Amyloids
5	Serum albumin <sup>†s</sup>	P02768	26/30	0.47	0.35	0.73/0.33-0.40	HDL-mediated lipid transport, Platelet degranulation, Recycling of bile acids and salts, Scavenging of heme from plasma and Transport of organic anions
6	Titin	Q8WZ42	2	1.69	3.77	2.23	Striated muscle contraction, Platelet degranulation
7	Gelsolin	P06396	18	0.76	0.78	1.02	Caspase-mediated cleavage of cytoskeletal proteins. Amyloid fiber formation
8	C-reactive protein	P02741	5	1.61	8.57	5.31	Classical antibody-mediated complement activation
9	Complement component C9 <sup>s</sup>	P02748	5/11	1.11/3.5	1.43	1.29	Terminal pathway of complement. Regulation of

							Complement cascade
10	Vitronectin	P04004	6	1.05	1.12	1.07	Molecules associated with elastic fibres, Integrin cell surface interactions, Syndecan interactions, ECM proteoglycans, Regulation of Complement cascade
11	Hemoglobin subunit beta	P68871	10	1.17	1.76	1.5	Erythrocytes take up carbon dioxide and release oxygen; Erythrocytes take up oxygen and release carbon dioxide, Scavenging of heme from plasma, Factors involved in megakaryocyte development and platelet production
12	Hemopexin*	P02790	18/17	1.05	1.14	1.09/1.56	Scavenging of heme from plasma
13	Hemoglobin subunit alpha	P69905	7	1.05	1.52	1.45	Erythrocytes take up carbon dioxide and release oxygen. Erythrocytes take up oxygen and release carbon dioxide. Scavenging of heme from plasma
14	Glutathione peroxidase 3	P22352	2	1.03	0.69	0.67	Detoxification of reactive oxygen species
15	Haptoglobin* <sup>s</sup>	P00738	22/11	1.01/0.54	0.53	0.53/0.25-0.35	Scavenging of heme from plasma
16	Alpha-1-antitrypsin <sup>s</sup>	P01009	37/20	1.14/2.29	1.5	1.31	Platelet degranulation
17	Clusterin <sup>s</sup>	P10909	11/8	0.85	0.98	1.16/0.56-0.62	Platelet degranulation
18	Serum amyloid A-1 protein*	P0DJ18	7	1.47	1.38	0.94	RIP-mediated NFkB activation via ZBP1, Scavenging by Class B Receptors, DEx/H-box helicases activate type I IFN and inflammatory cytokines production, G alpha (q) signalling events, G alpha (i) signalling events, Formyl peptide receptors bind formyl peptides and many other ligands, TAK1 activates NFkB by phosphorylation and activation of IKKs complex, Advanced glycosylation endproduct receptor signaling, TRAF6 mediated NF-kB activation, Amyloids
19	Ig mu chain C region <sup>s</sup>	P01871	15/8	1.33/2.48	1.34	1.01	CD22 mediated BCR regulation. Antigen activates B Cell Receptor (BCR) leading to generation of second messengers
20	Ceruloplasmin <sup>s</sup>	P00450	28/18	1.17/2.33	1.37	1.17	Metal ion SLC transporters, Iron uptake and transport
21	Leucine-rich alpha-2-	P02750	10	1.46	1.7	1.16	-



	glycoprotein						
22	Alpha-1-antichymotrypsin <sup>§</sup>	P01011	24/18	1.39/3.48	1.79	1.29	-
23	Inter-alpha-trypsin inhibitor heavy chain H4 <sup>§</sup>	Q14624	24/21	1.11/2.95	1.21	1.08	-
24	Alpha-1B-glycoprotein <sup>§</sup>	P04217	10/16	1.00/1.89-5.1	1.15	1.15	-
25	Vacuolar protein sorting-associated protein 33B	Q9H267	2	0.92	1.93	2.11	-
26	Myelin basic protein	P02686	2	0.8	2.06	2.58	-

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838 # This is a partial list for a few selected candidates identified in iTRAQ and 2D-DIGE -based quantitative proteomics analysis; complete lists of  
839 the identified differentially abundant proteins are provided under supplementary information (Table S4 and S5)

840 ^ Associated pathways obtained from Uniprot database

841 \$ Differential abundance for these candidates is also identified in 2D-DIGE (details are provided in Table S4)

842 \* Differential serum abundance of these proteins are validated by ELISA (details are provided in Table S11A)

843 † Differential abundance of serum albumin indicates the measurement of the residual HSA remained after immunodepletion

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**Table 2.** Differentially abundant serum proteins identified in longitudinal cohorts of vivax malaria patients #

SI NO.	Protein name	Uniprot Accession ID	Gene Name	Unique peptides <sup>†</sup>	(FEB/HC)		(DEF/HC)		(CON/HC)	
					Fold-change	Adjusted p-value	Fold-change	Adjusted p-value	Fold-change	Adjusted p-value
1	Apolipoprotein A-II	P02652	APOA2	8	0.41	0.047	0.47	0.073	0.64	0.244
2	Apolipoprotein A-I <sup>S*</sup>	P02647	APOA1	36	0.42	0.001	0.48	0.008	0.64	0.054
3	Heparin cofactor 2	P05546	SERPIND1	7	0.44	0.005	0.39	0.001	0.50	0.019
4	Apolipoprotein C-I	P02654	APOC1	3	0.45	0.003	0.40	0.00003	0.46	0.0002
5	Haptoglobin <sup>S*</sup>	P00738	HP	17	0.47	0.024	0.68	0.049	1.09	0.704
6	Inter-alpha-trypsin inhibitor heavy chain H2 <sup>S</sup>	P19823	ITIH2	18	0.49	0.008	0.41	0.003	0.51	0.025
7	Serum paraoxonase/arylesterase 1	P27169	PON1	5	0.64	0.074	0.54	0.007	0.69	0.122
8	Inter-alpha-trypsin inhibitor heavy chain H1	P19827	ITIH1	15	0.65	0.021	0.45	0.000	0.66	0.013
9	Conserved oligomeric Golgi complex subunit 4	Q9H9E3	COG4	8	0.66	0.148	0.55	0.018	0.85	0.360
10	Afamin	P43652	AFM	13	0.67	0.033	0.73	0.131	0.64	0.021
11	Apolipoprotein C-III	P02656	APOC3	5	0.68	0.031	0.68	0.041	0.73	0.209
12	Kininogen-1	P01042	KNG1	6	0.69	0.081	0.63	0.006	0.68	0.113
13	Fibronectin	P02751	FN1	22	0.72	0.030	0.58	0.005	0.63	0.009
14	Inter-alpha-trypsin inhibitor heavy chain H4	Q14624	ITIH4	24	0.72	0.043	0.63	0.056	0.71	0.035
15	Complement C5	P01031	C5	8	0.73	0.067	0.67	0.038	0.68	0.023
16	Complement C3	P01024	C3	89	0.74	0.159	0.66	0.032	0.79	0.171
17	Clusterin	P10909	CLU	12	0.75	0.106	0.68	0.003	0.71	0.092
18	Apolipoprotein B-100	P04114	APOB	145	0.77	0.030	0.63	0.002	0.76	0.029
19	Serum amyloid P-component	P02743	APCS	3	0.78	0.216	0.62	0.025	0.70	0.086
20	Complement C4-A	P0C0L4	C4A	7	0.85	0.104	0.73	0.014	1.10	0.703
21	Hemopexin <sup>S*</sup>	P02790	HPX	12	1.22	0.05	1.12	0.163	1.00	0.295
22	Apolipoprotein E <sup>*</sup>	P02649	APOE	11	1.24	0.05	1.16	0.045	0.87	0.715

23	Alpha-1-acid glycoprotein 1	P02763	ORM1	8	1.25	0.139	1.49	0.041	1.46	0.088
24	Biotinidase	P43251	BTD	2	1.30	0.045	1.12	0.555	1.10	0.685
25	Alpha-1-antichymotrypsin <sup>§</sup>	P01011	SERPINA3	26	1.42	0.036	1.28	0.379	1.22	0.096
26	Alpha-1-antitrypsin <sup>§</sup>	P01009	SERPINA1	40	1.47	0.115	1.51	0.004	1.50	0.164
27	Leucine-rich alpha-2-glycoprotein <sup>§</sup>	P02750	LRG1	7	1.83	0.005	1.63	0.037	1.49	0.047
28	Cell growth-regulating nucleolar protein	Q9NX58	LYAR	13	1.85	0.056	2.10	0.044	2.26	0.157
29	Serum amyloid A-1 <sup>§*</sup>	P0DJ18	SAA1	6	2.49	0.008	1.60	0.023	2.15	0.018
30	Carbonic anhydrase 1	P00915	CA1	4	2.61	0.014	1.37	0.207	1.43	0.048
31	Hemoglobin subunit alpha	P69905	HBA1	7	2.63	0.006	1.49	0.025	1.33	0.032
32	Hemoglobin subunit beta	P68871	HBB	8	2.70	0.003	1.66	0.057	1.47	0.047
33	Hemoglobin subunit delta	P02042	HBD	7	3.77	0.005	1.89	0.101	1.83	0.036
34	C-reactive protein	P02741	CRP	4	3.91	0.003	6.69	0.006	2.45	0.001
35	Hemoglobin subunit zeta	P02008	HBZ	5	4.83	0.011	1.88	0.023	2.21	0.041

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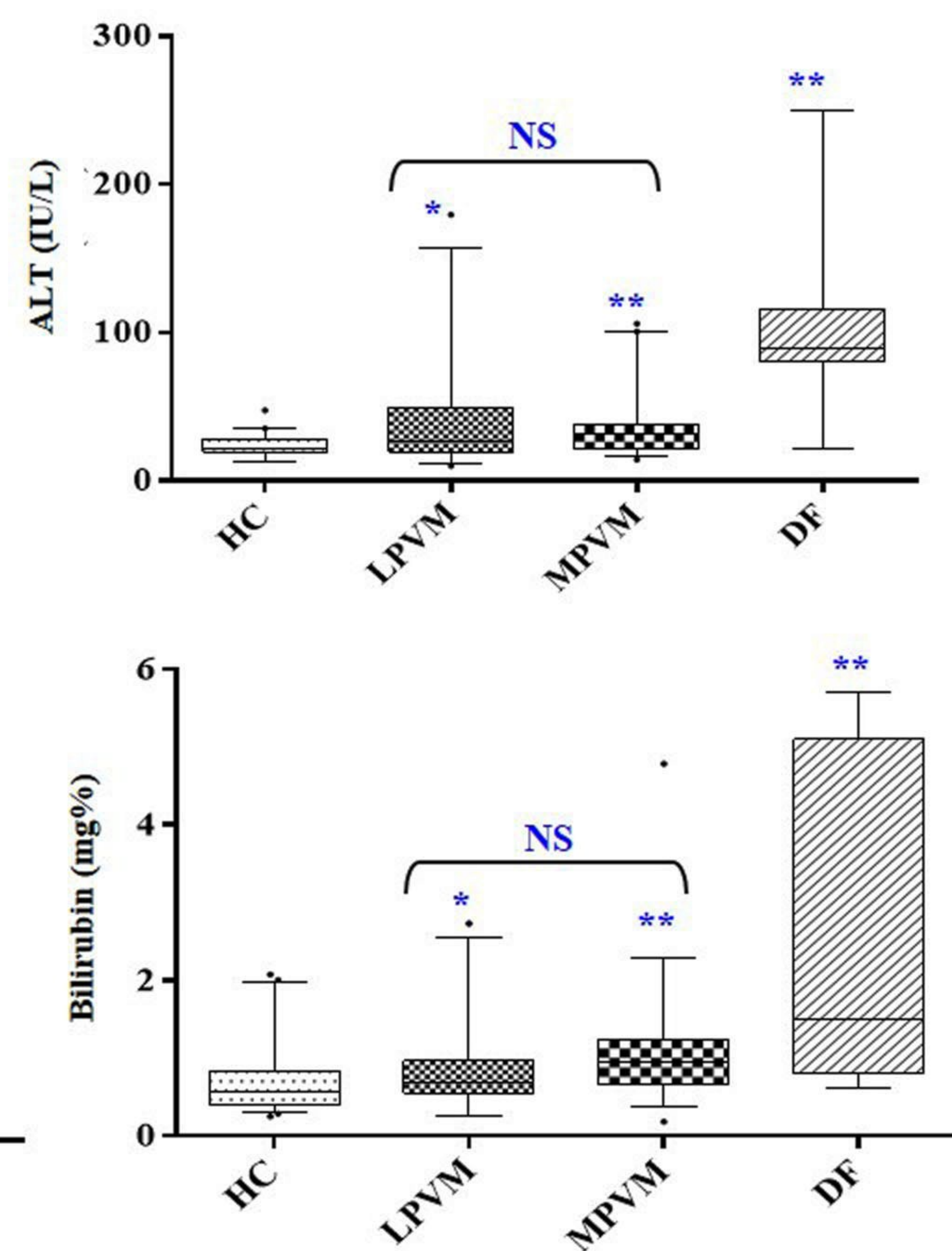
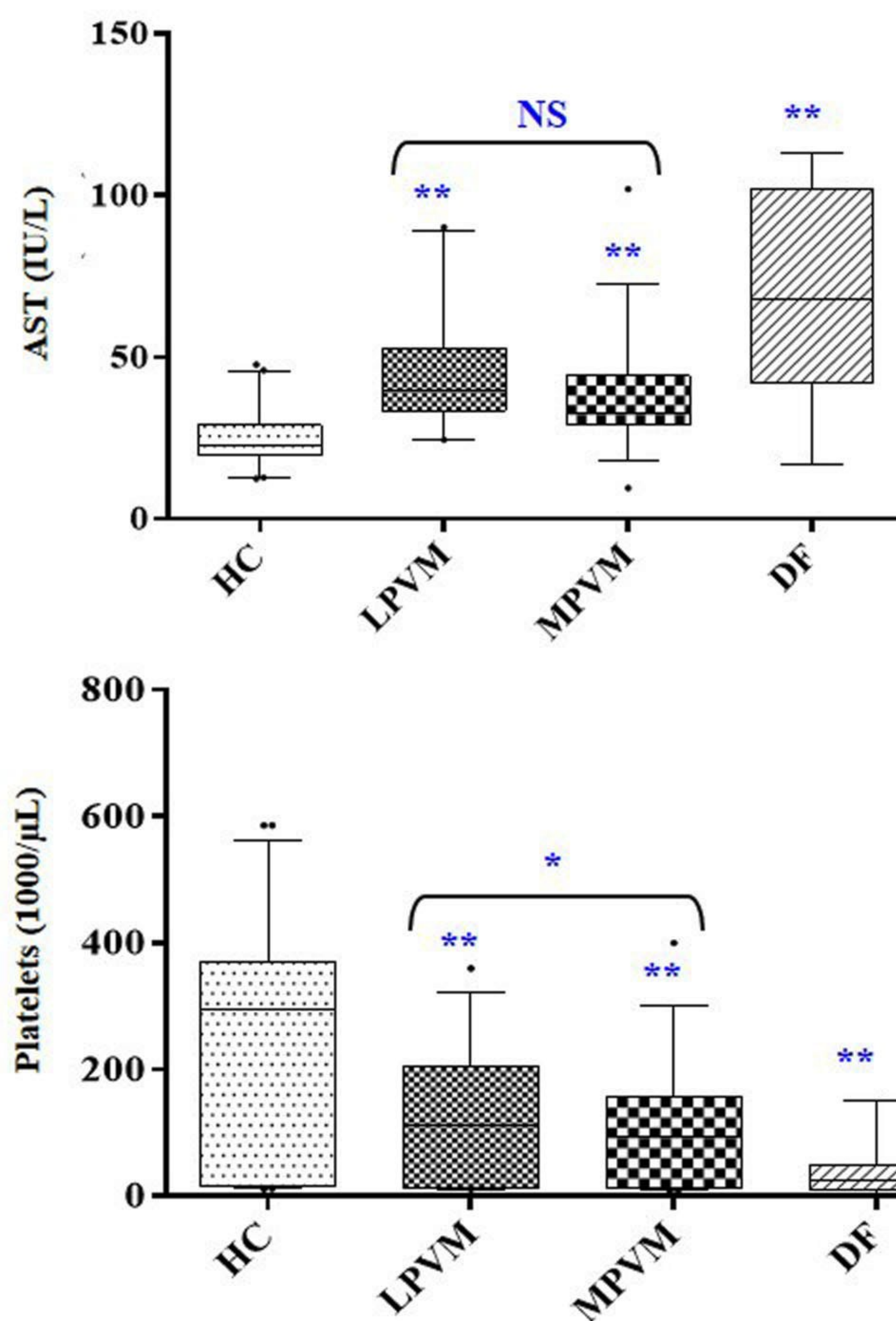
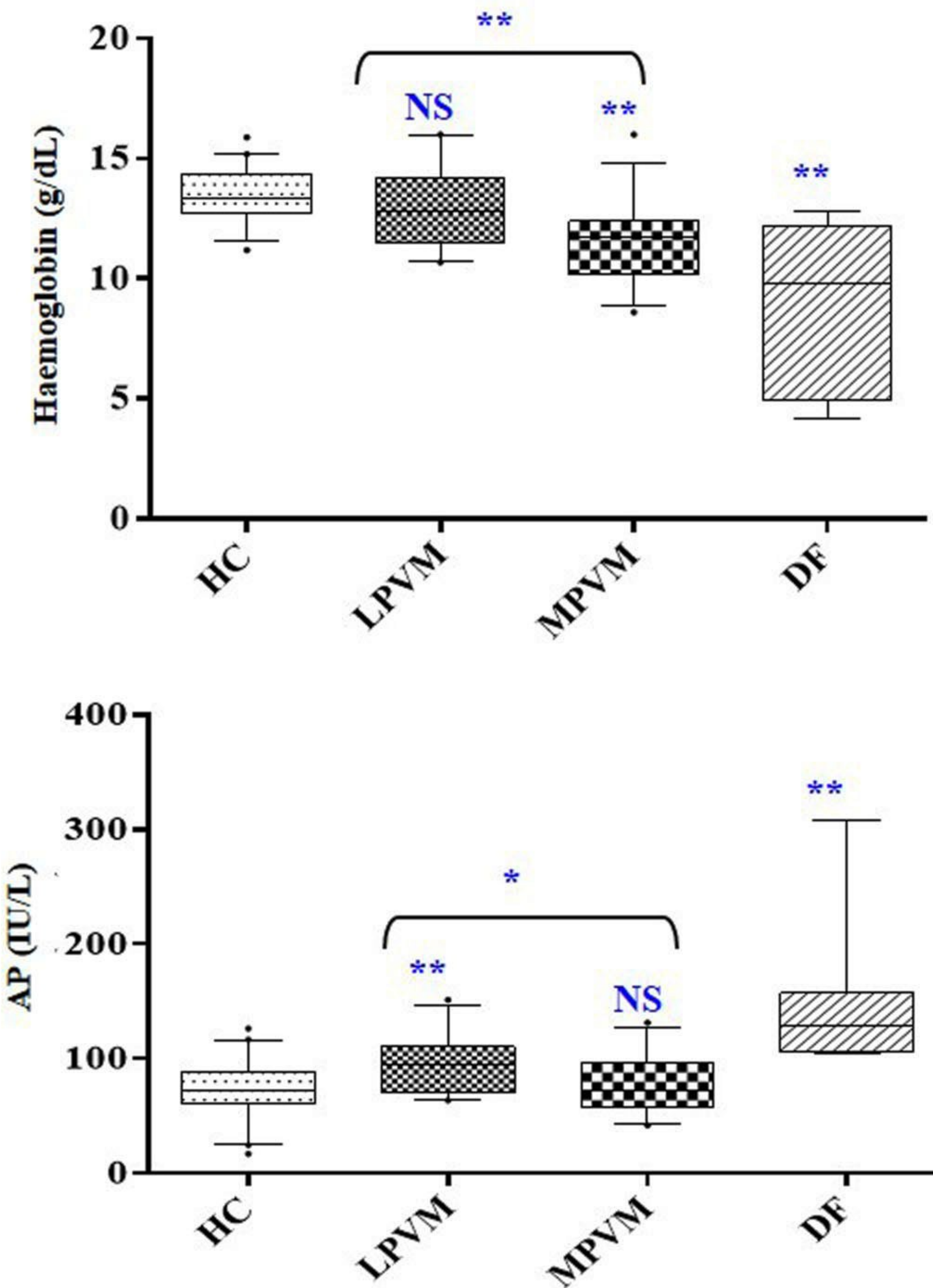
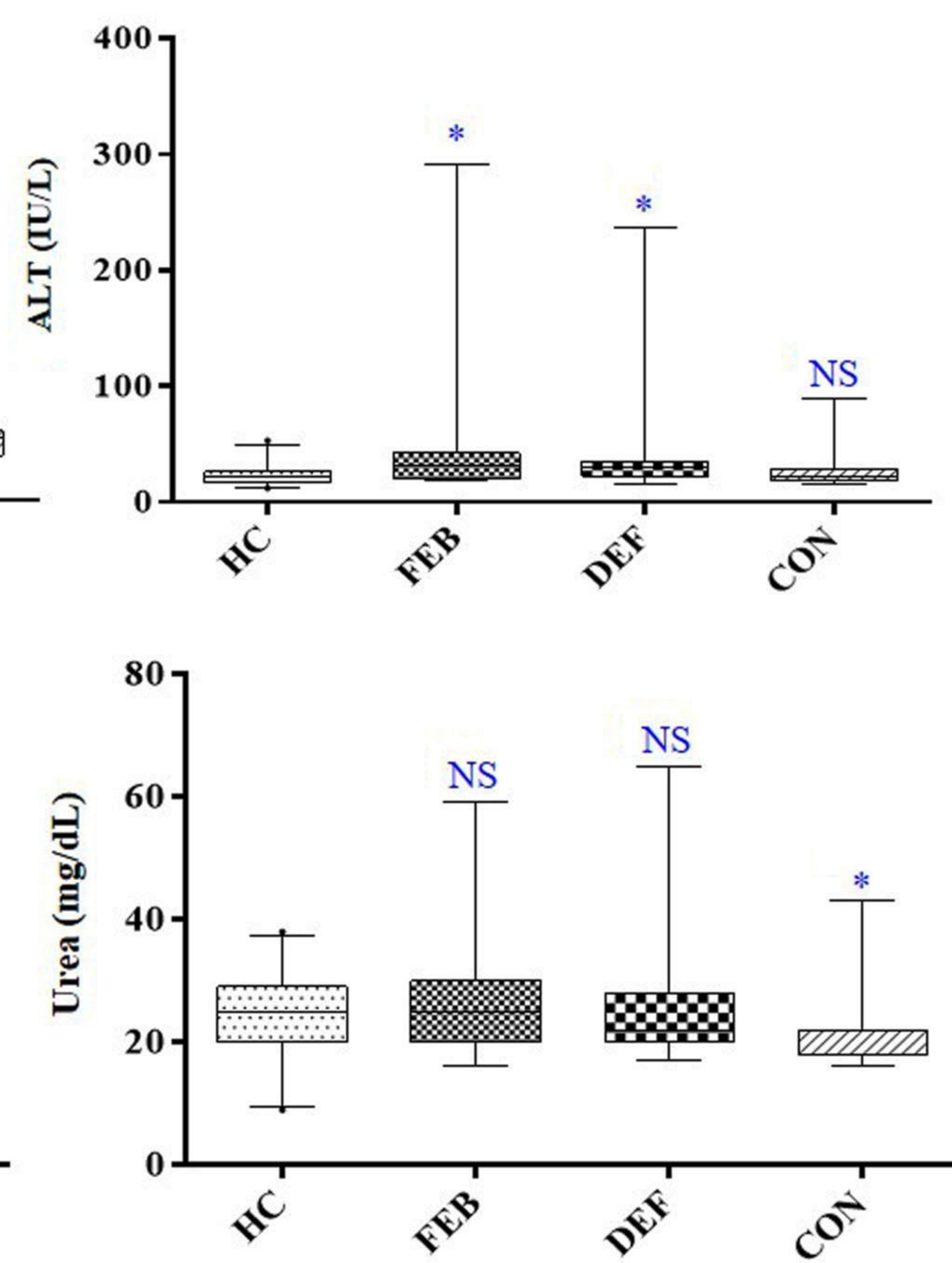
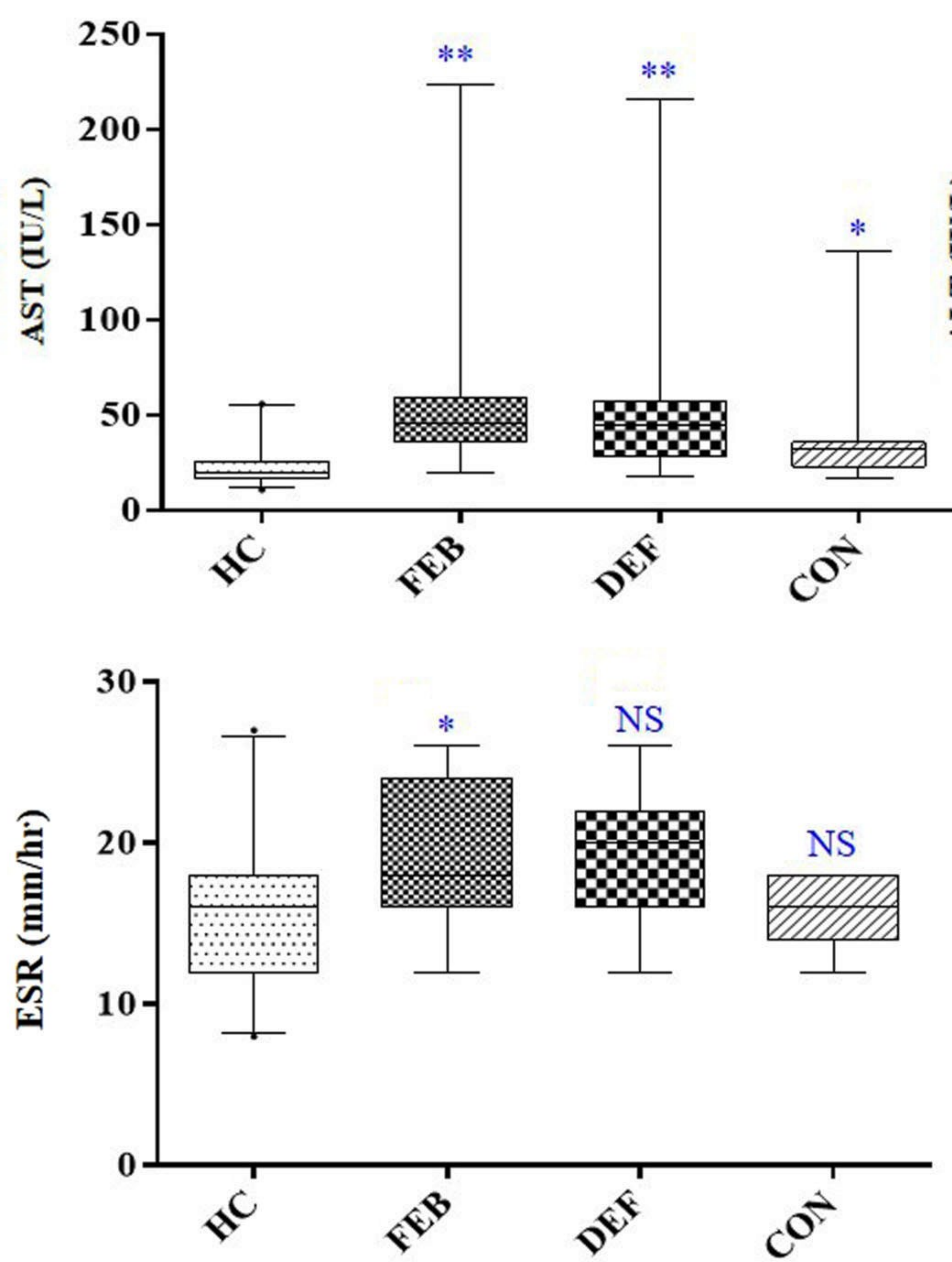
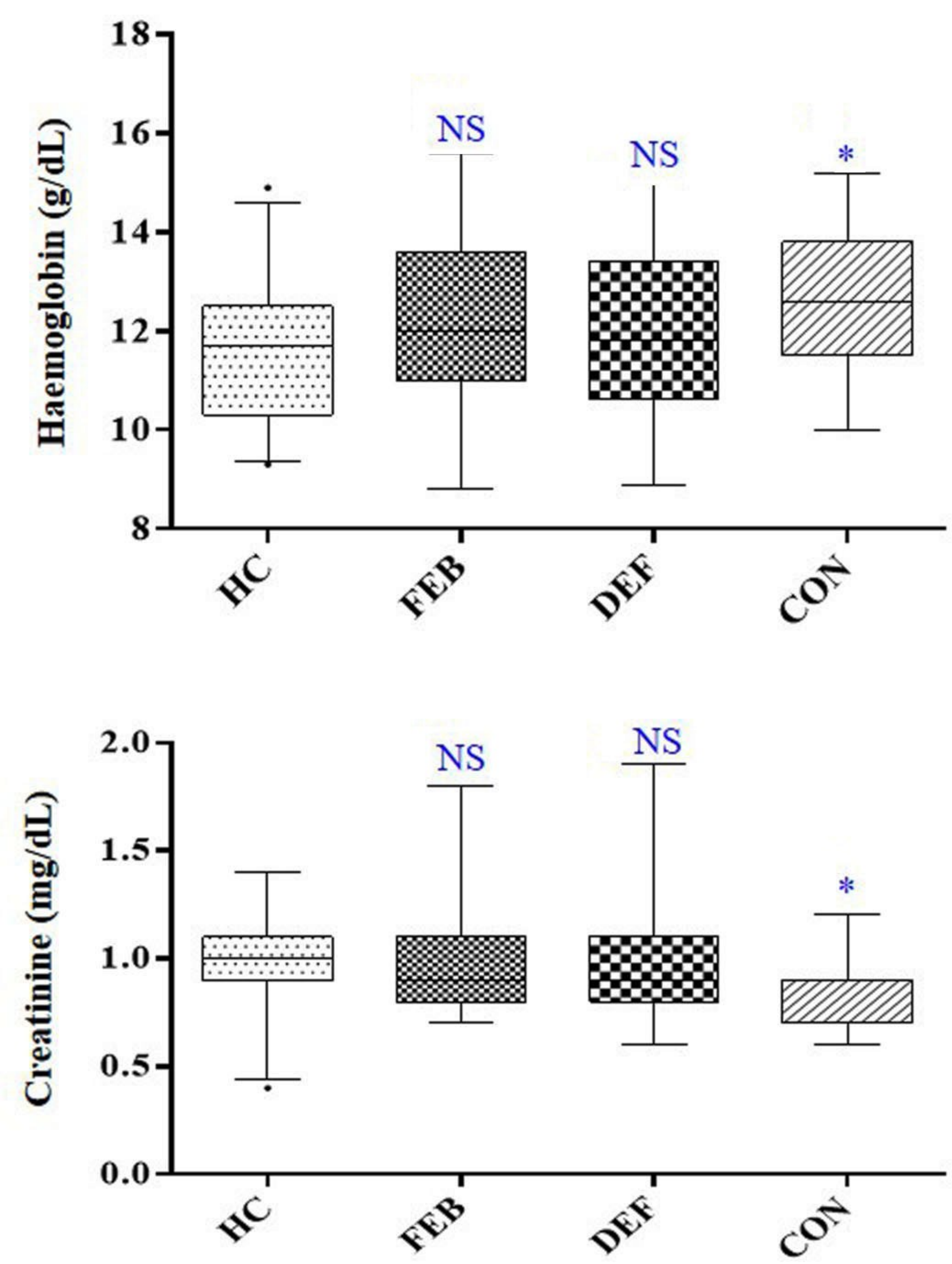
854 # This is a partial list for some selected candidates ( $p < 0.05$  in at least one comparison) identified in iTRAQ and 2D-DIGE-based quantitative  
855 proteomics analysis; complete lists of the identified differentially abundant proteins are provided under supplementary information (Table S6, S7  
856 and S8)

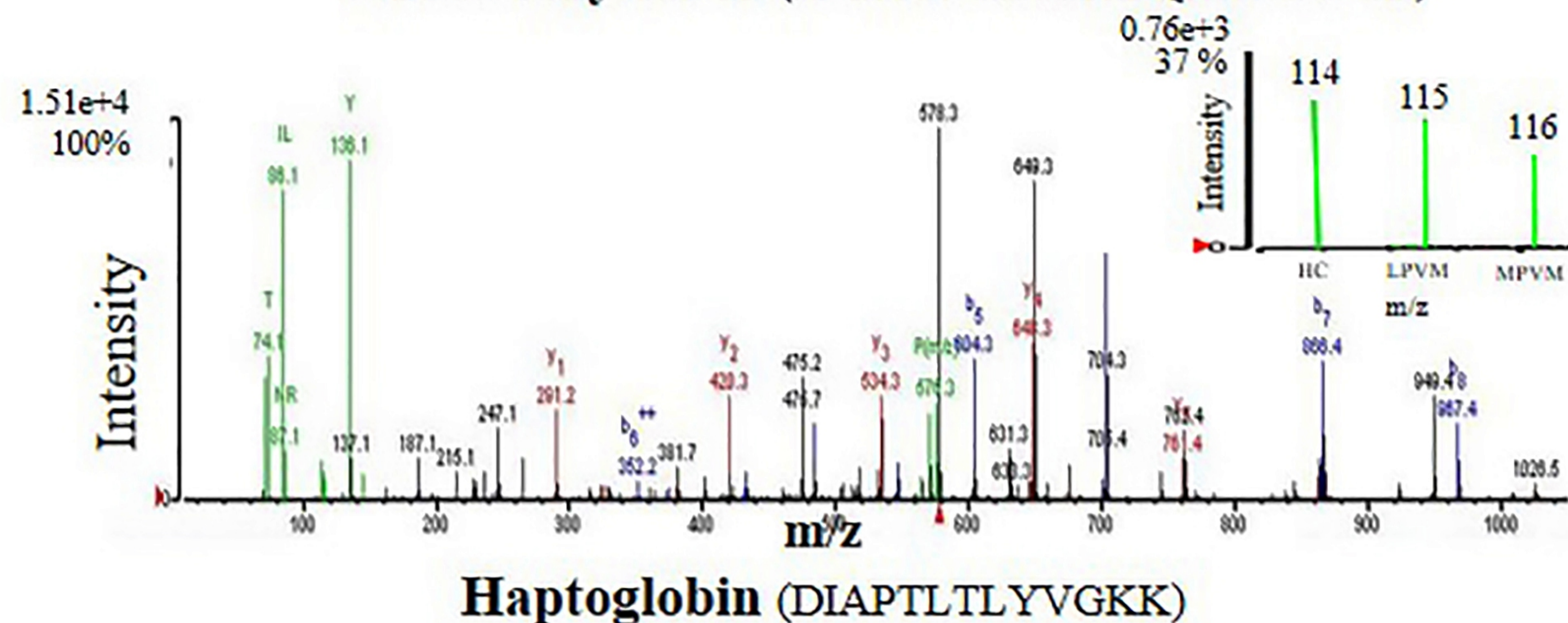
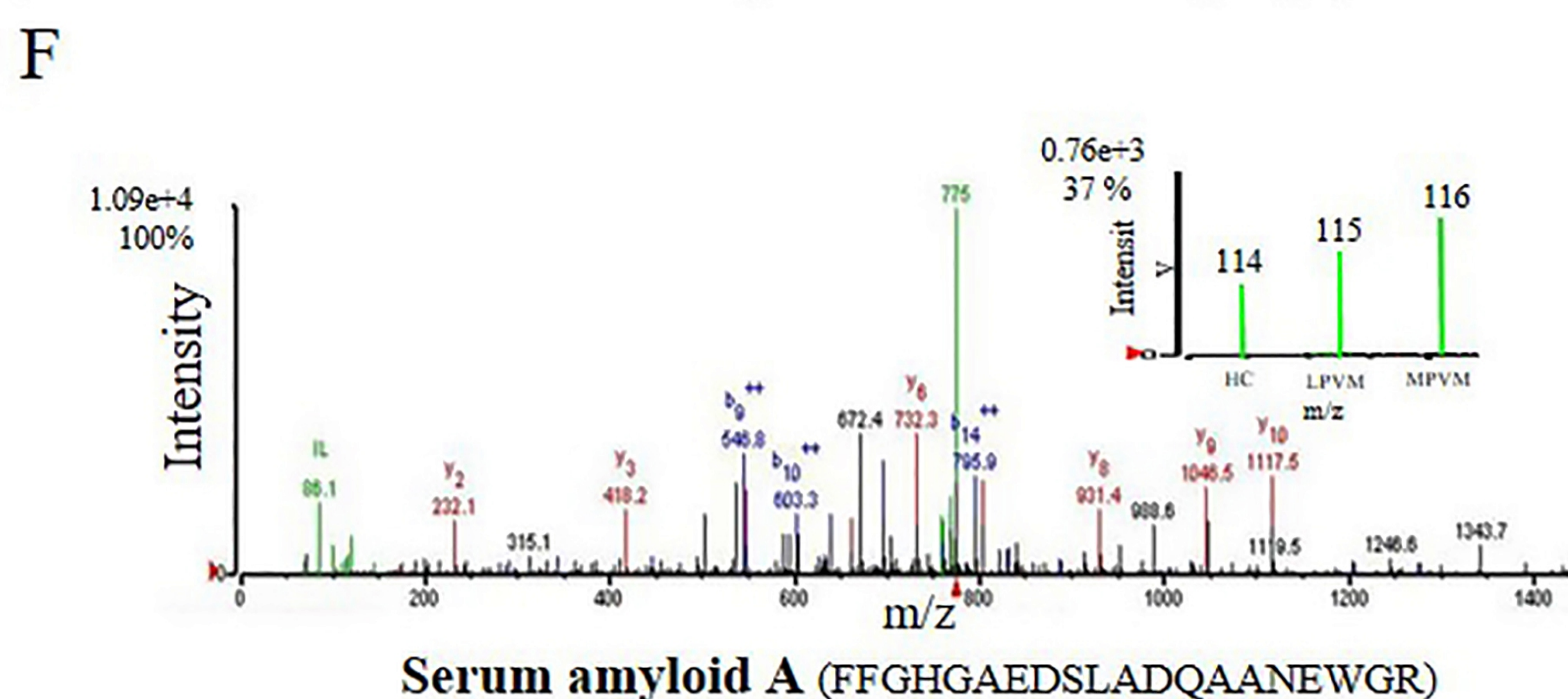
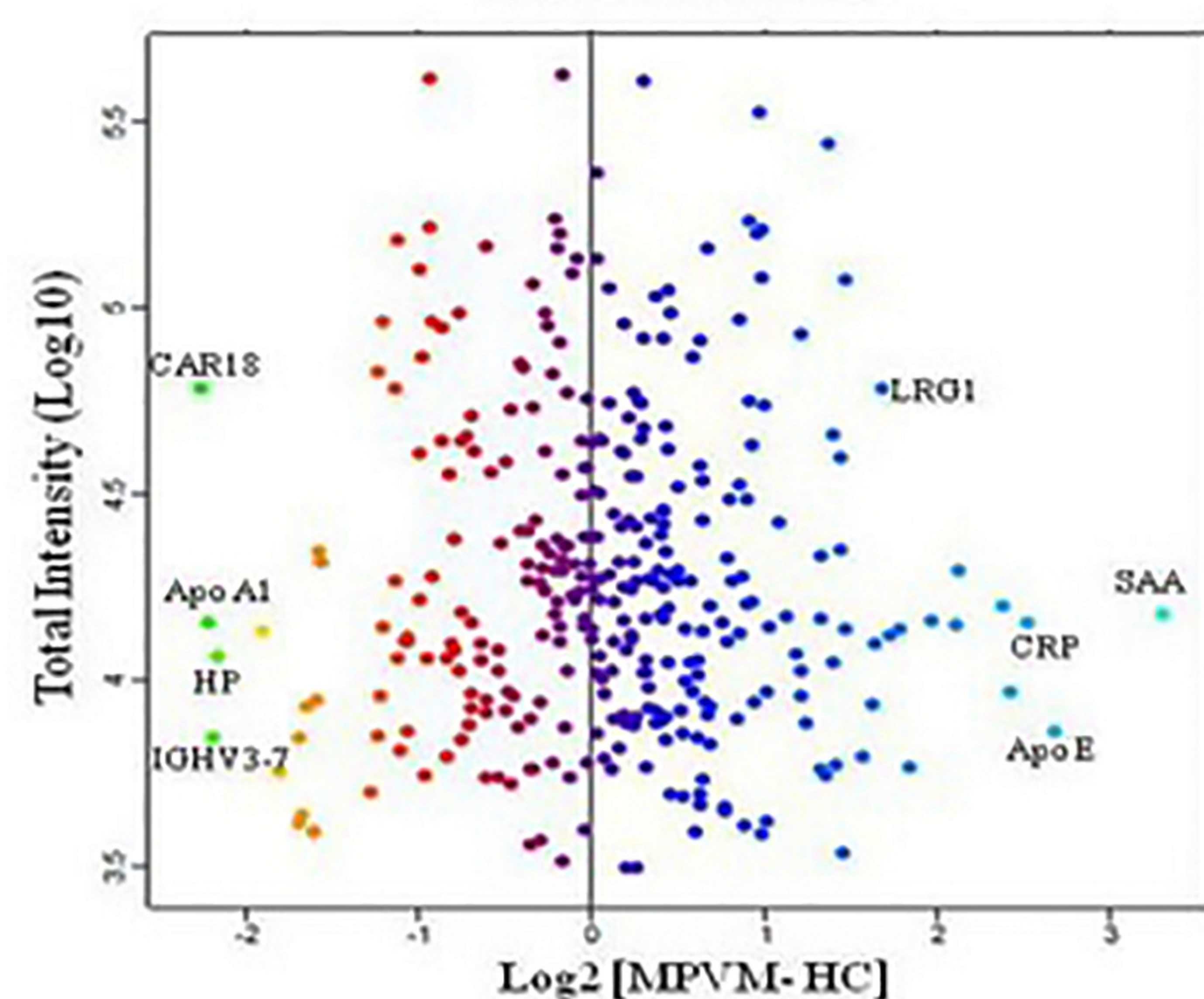
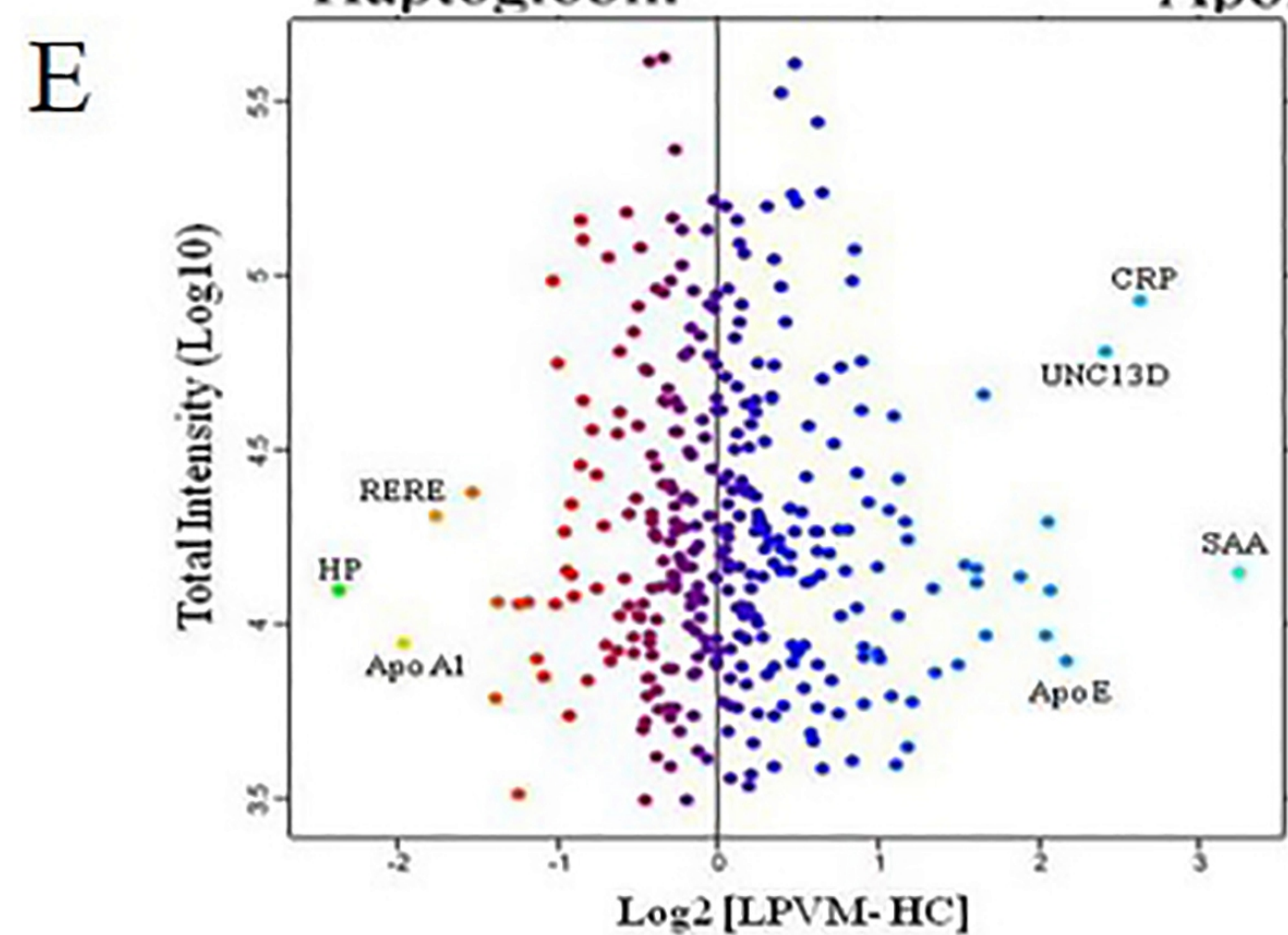
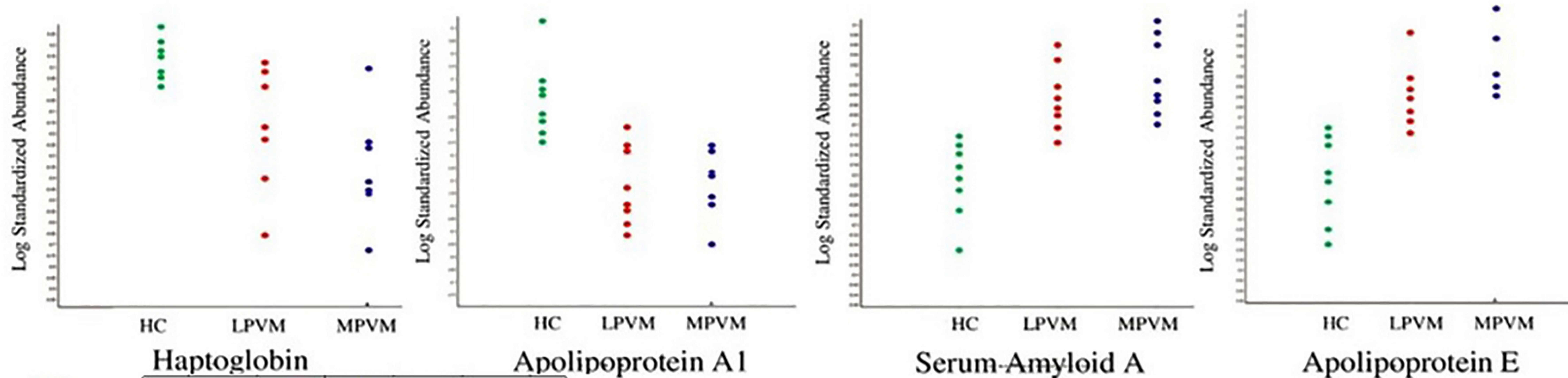
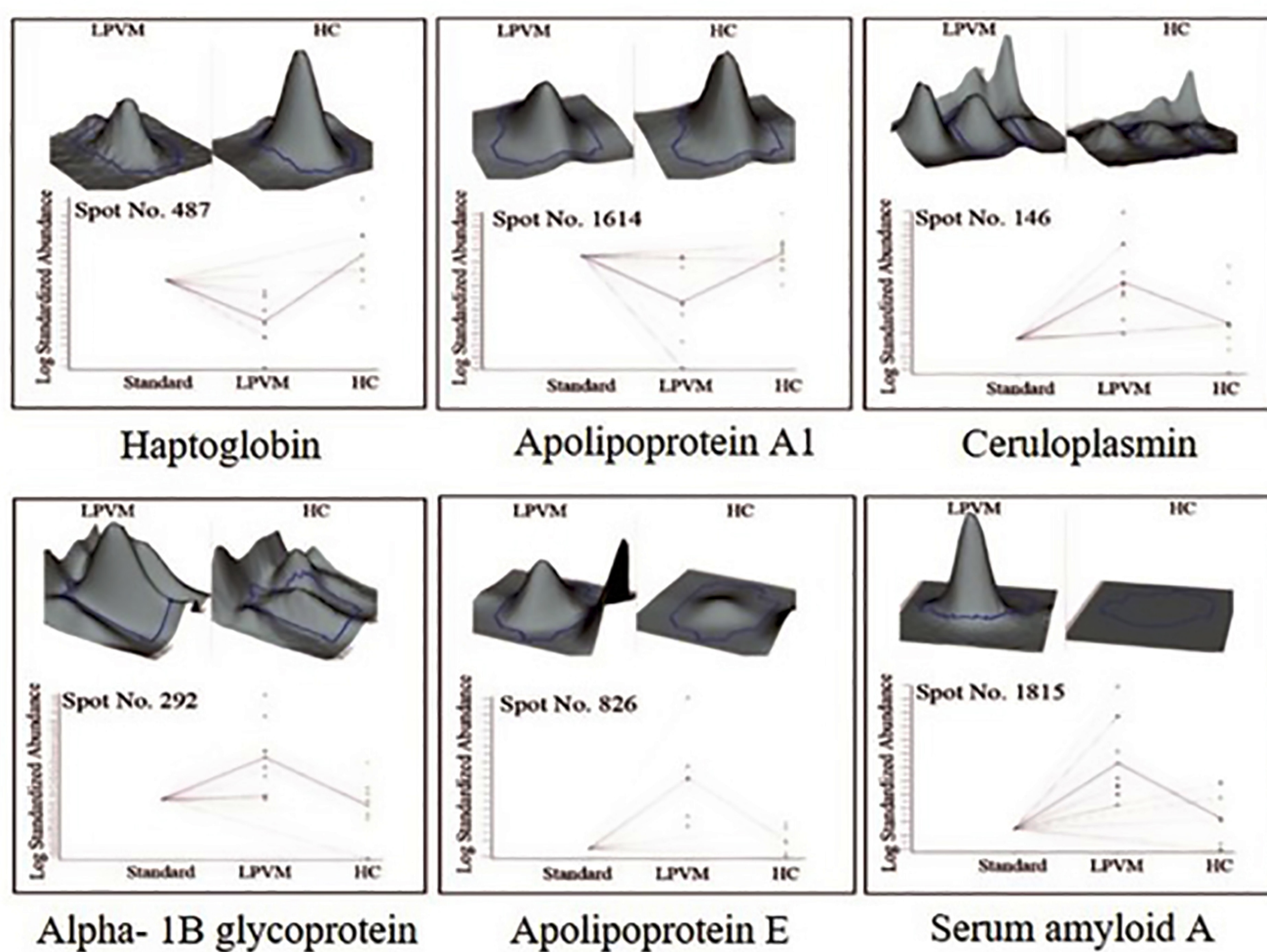
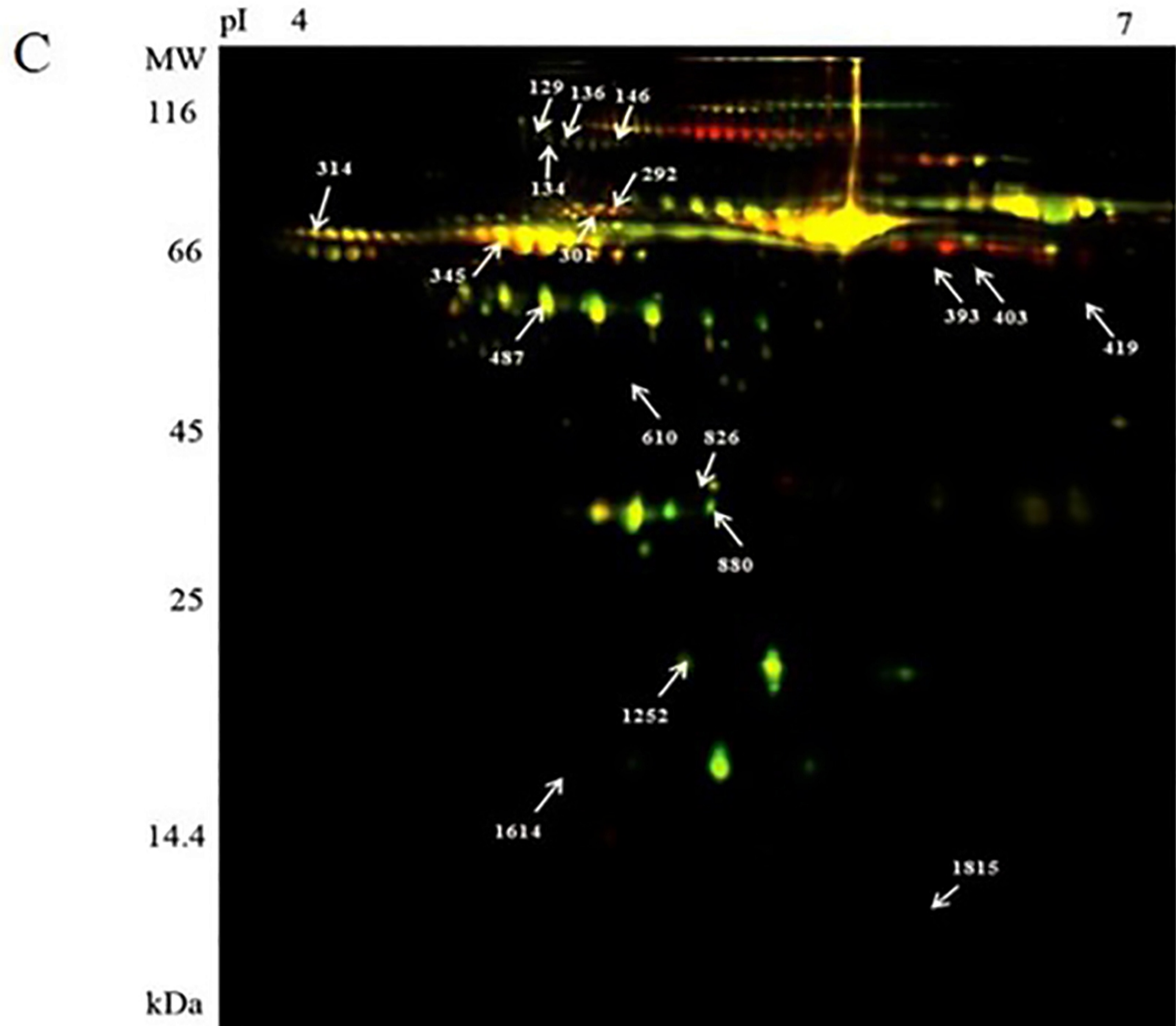
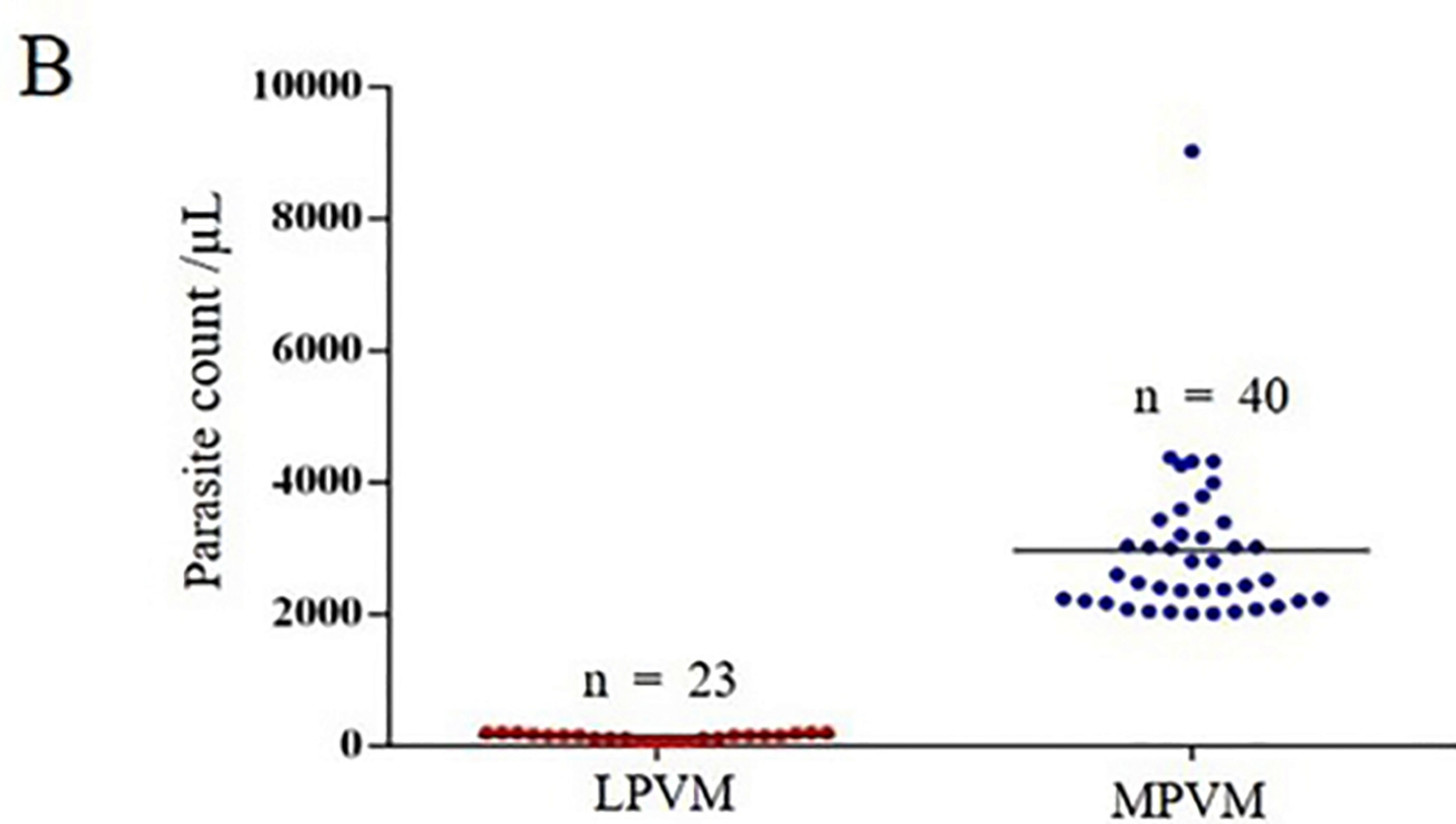
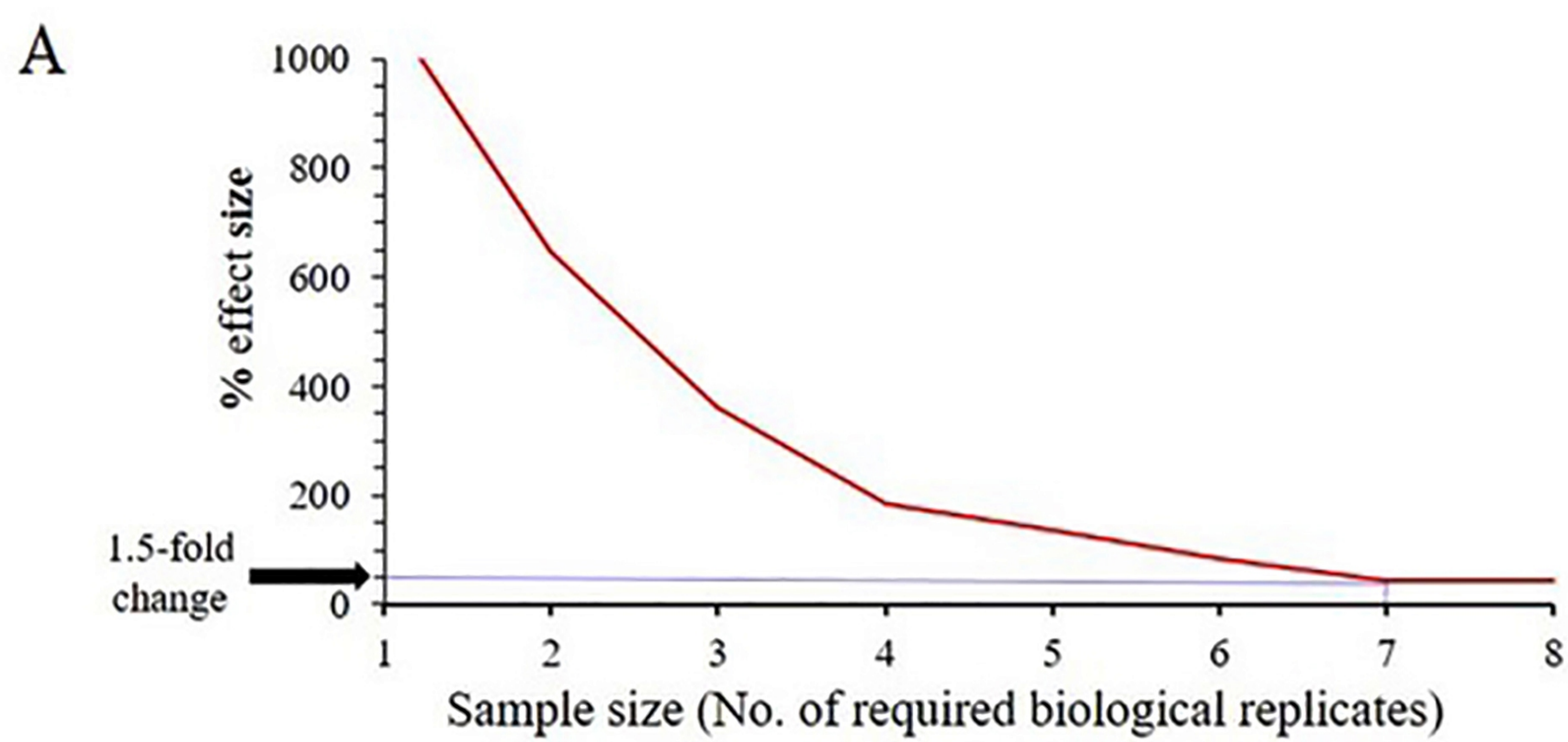
857 † Median value for the identified unique peptides in different biological replicates is represented

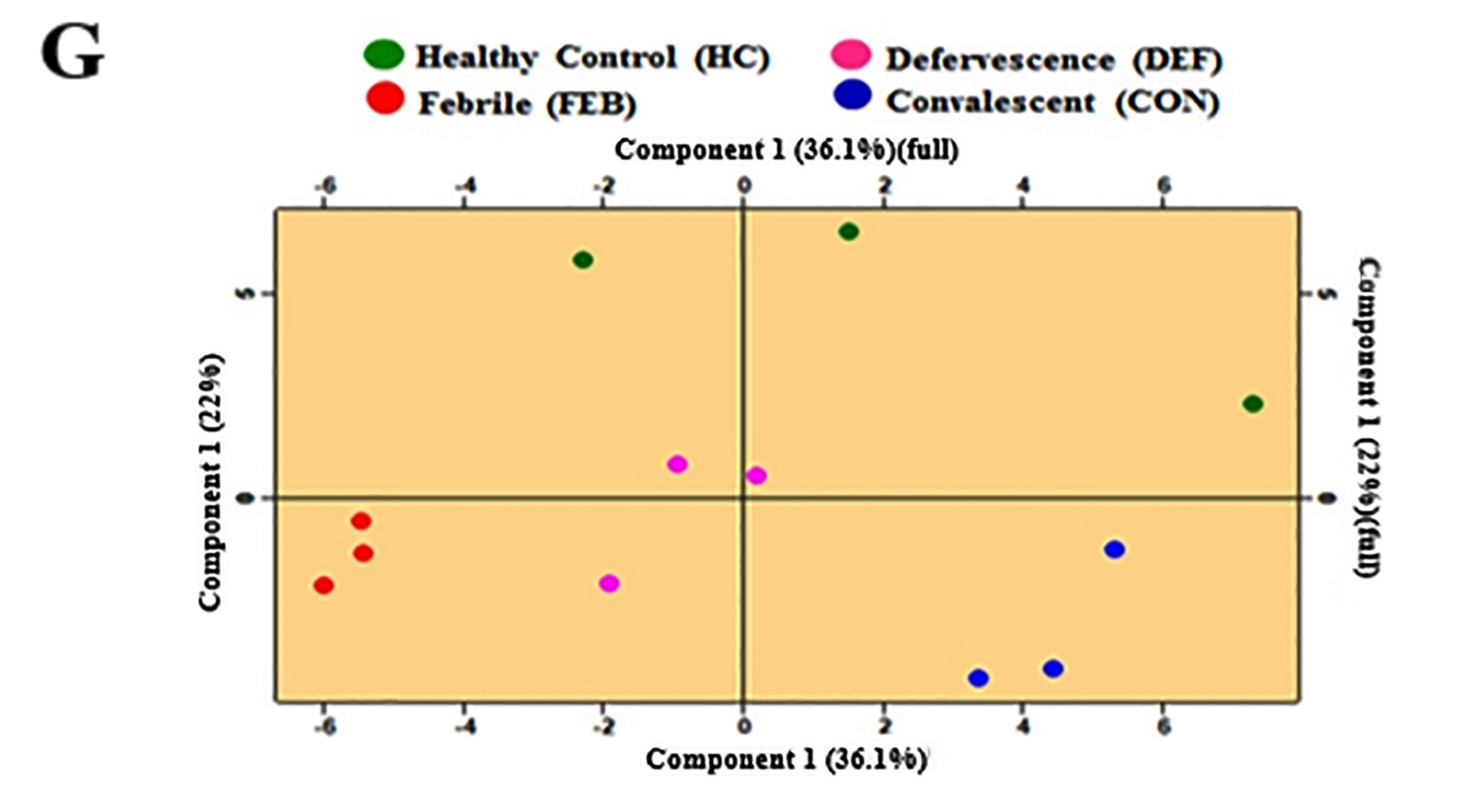
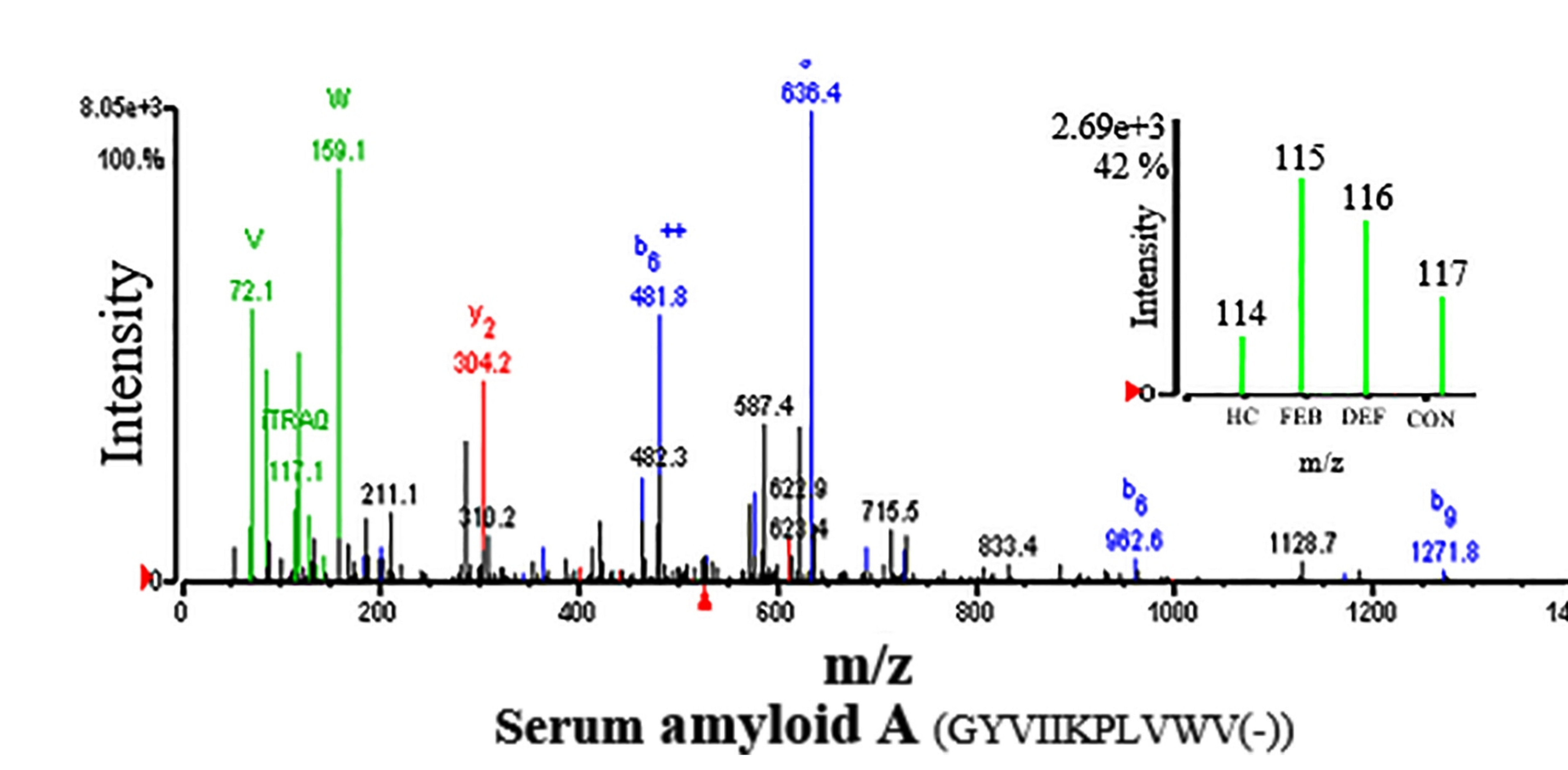
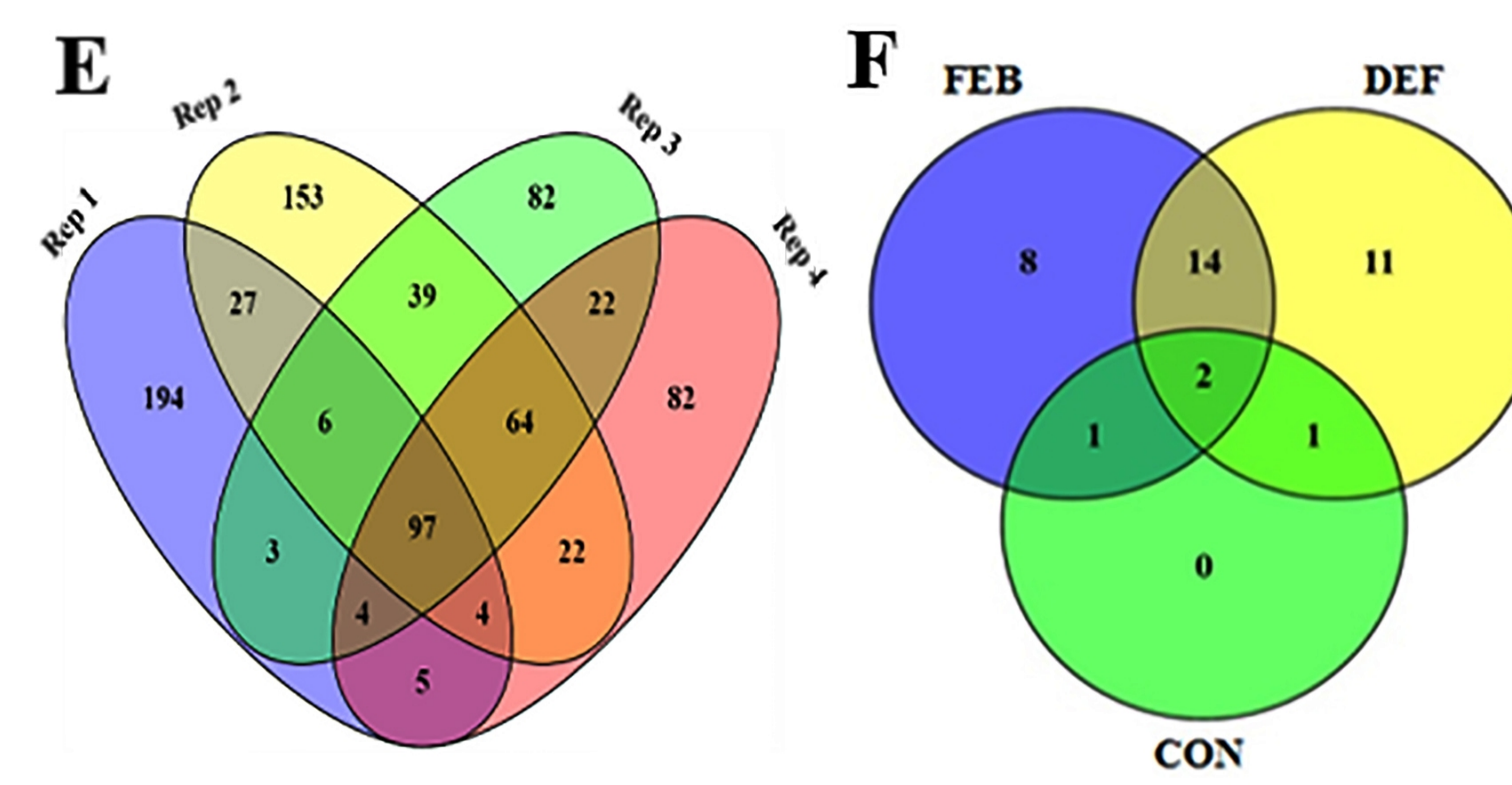
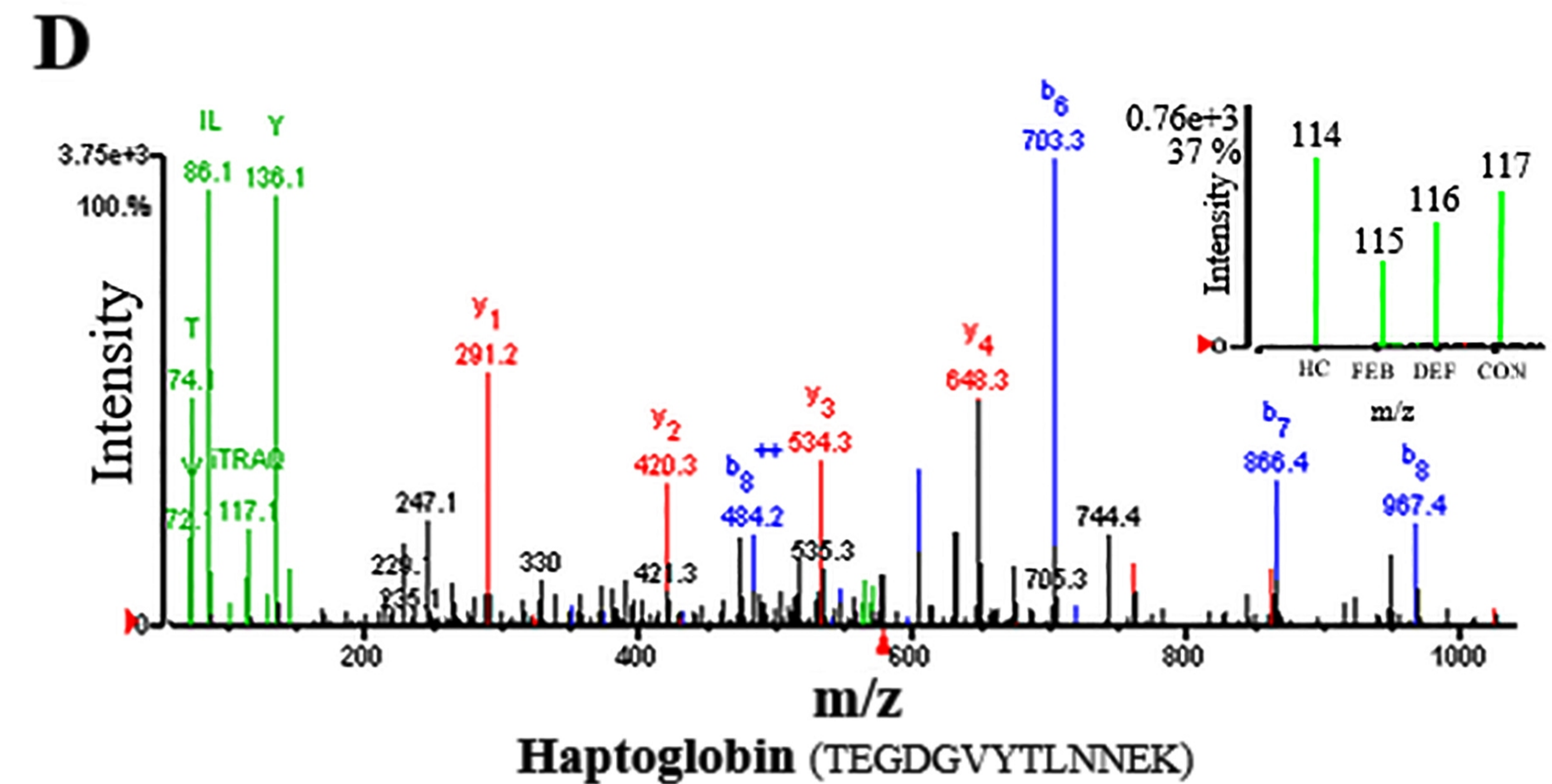
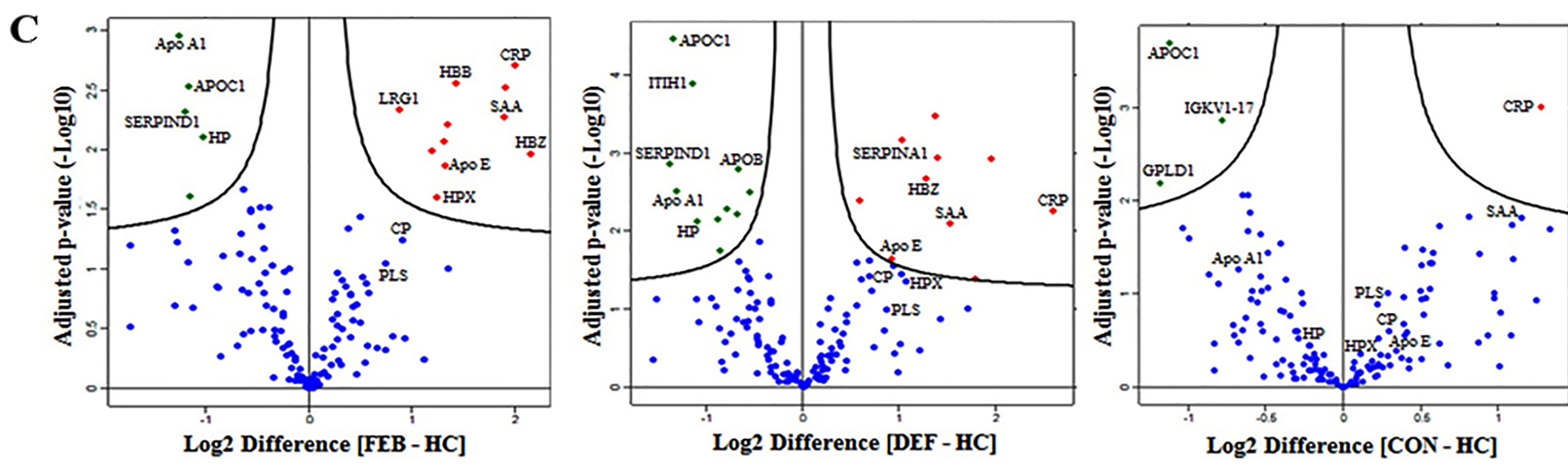
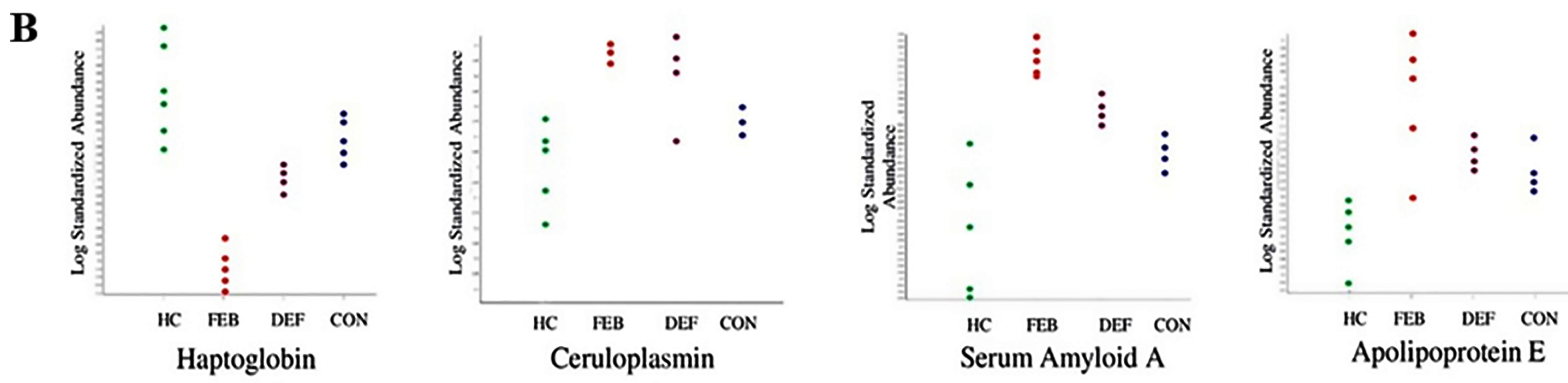
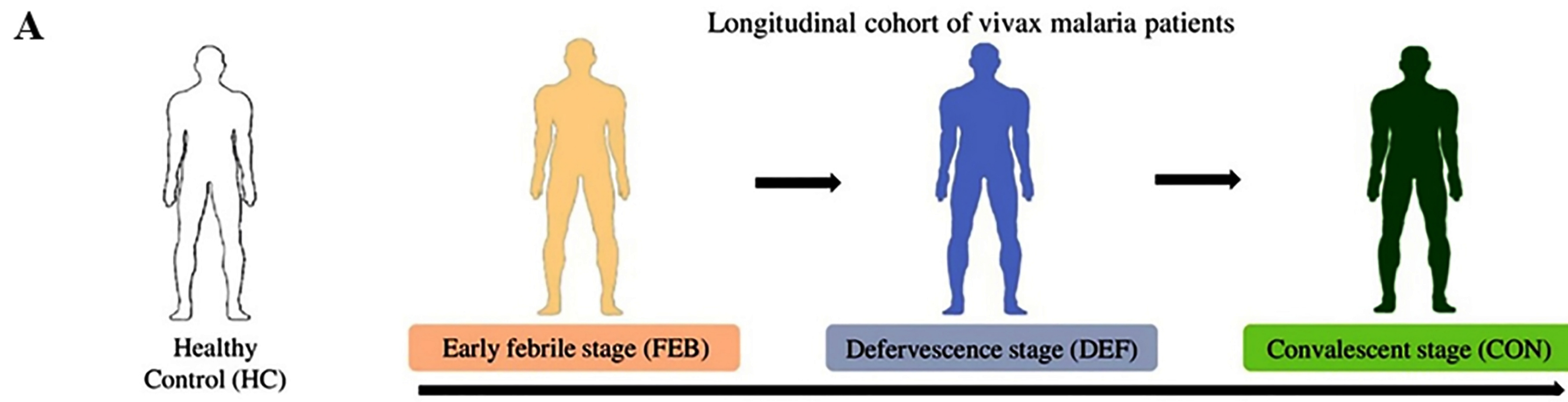
858 § Differential abundance for these candidates is also identified in 2D-DIGE (details are provided in Table S6)

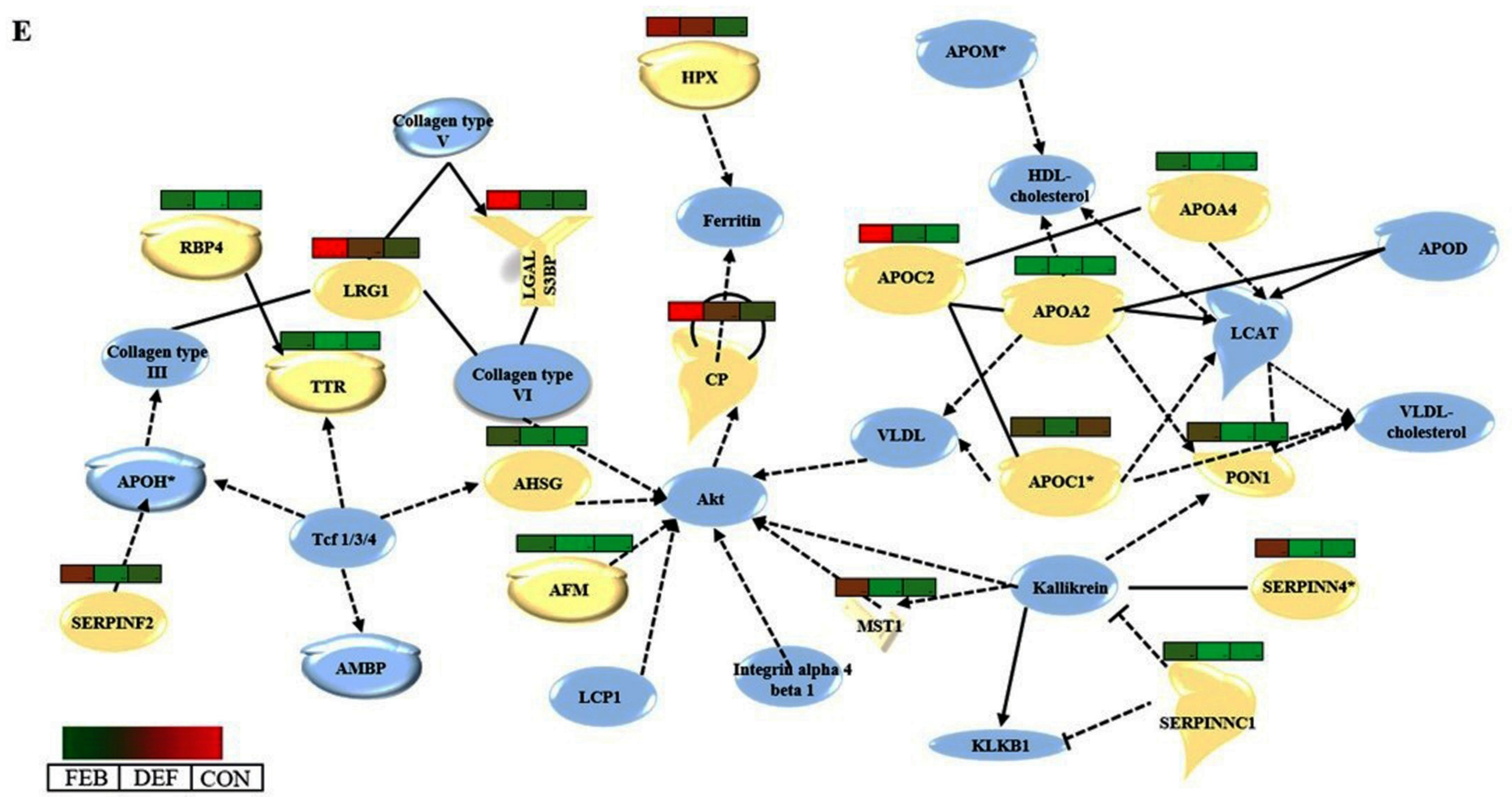
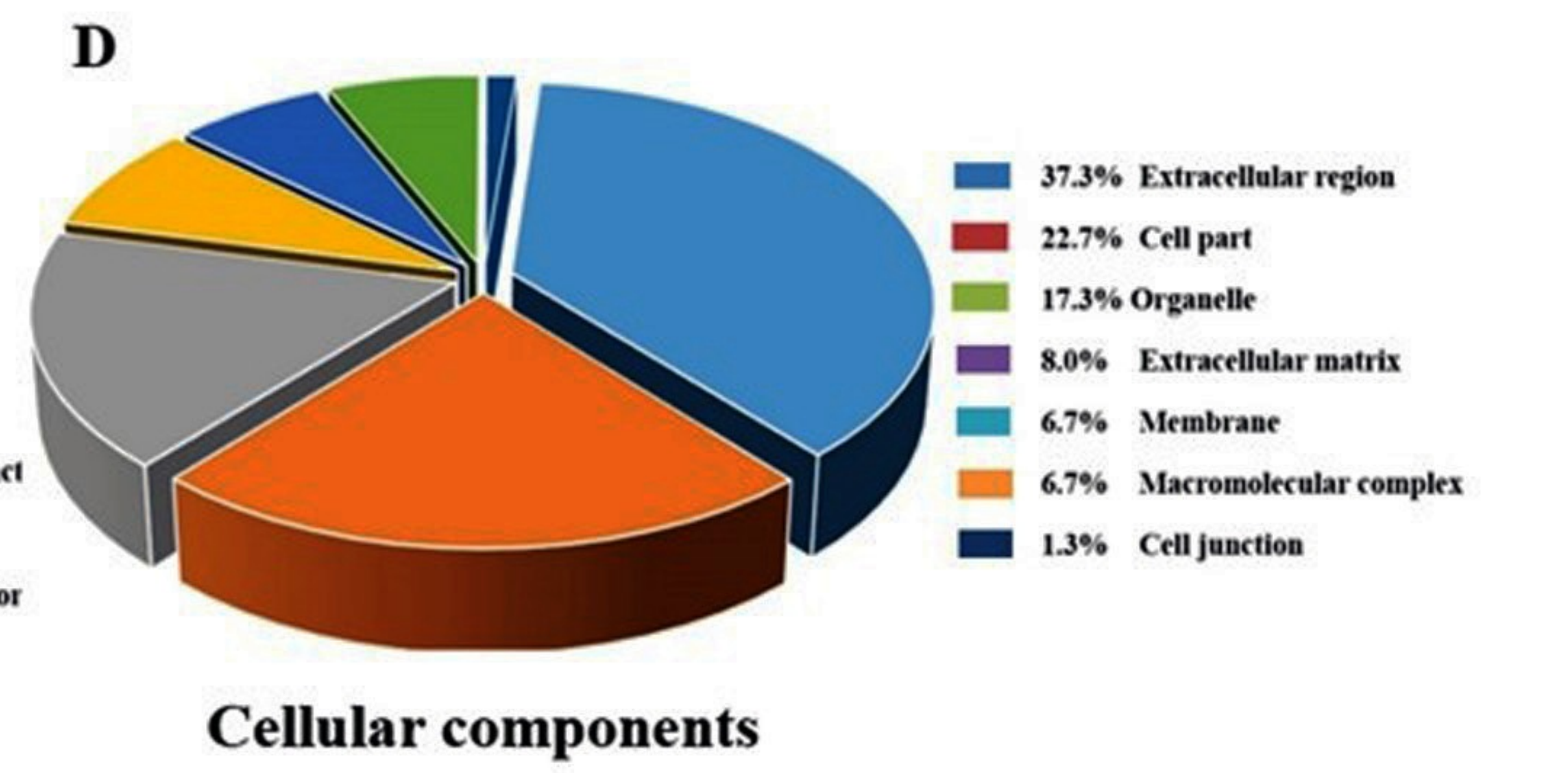
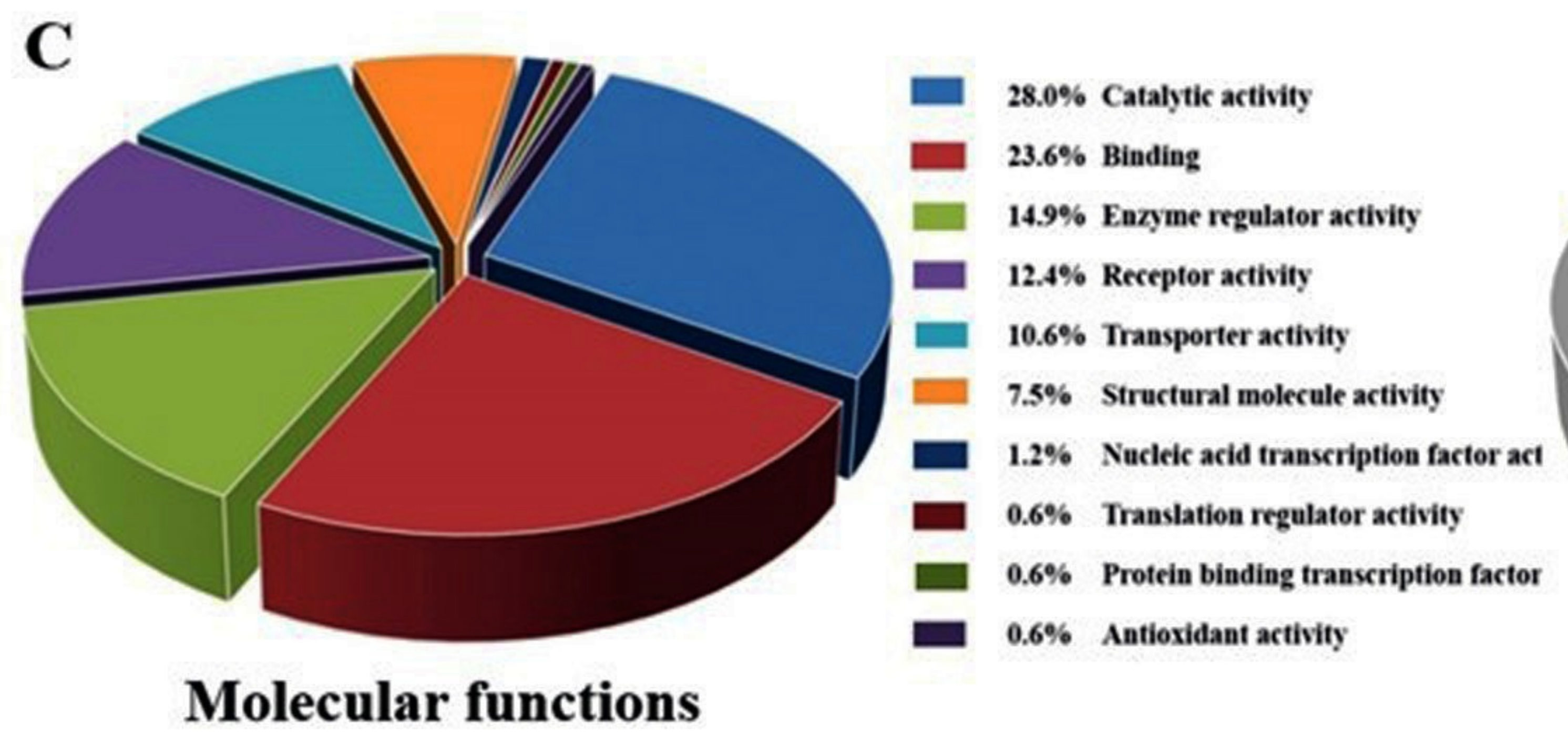
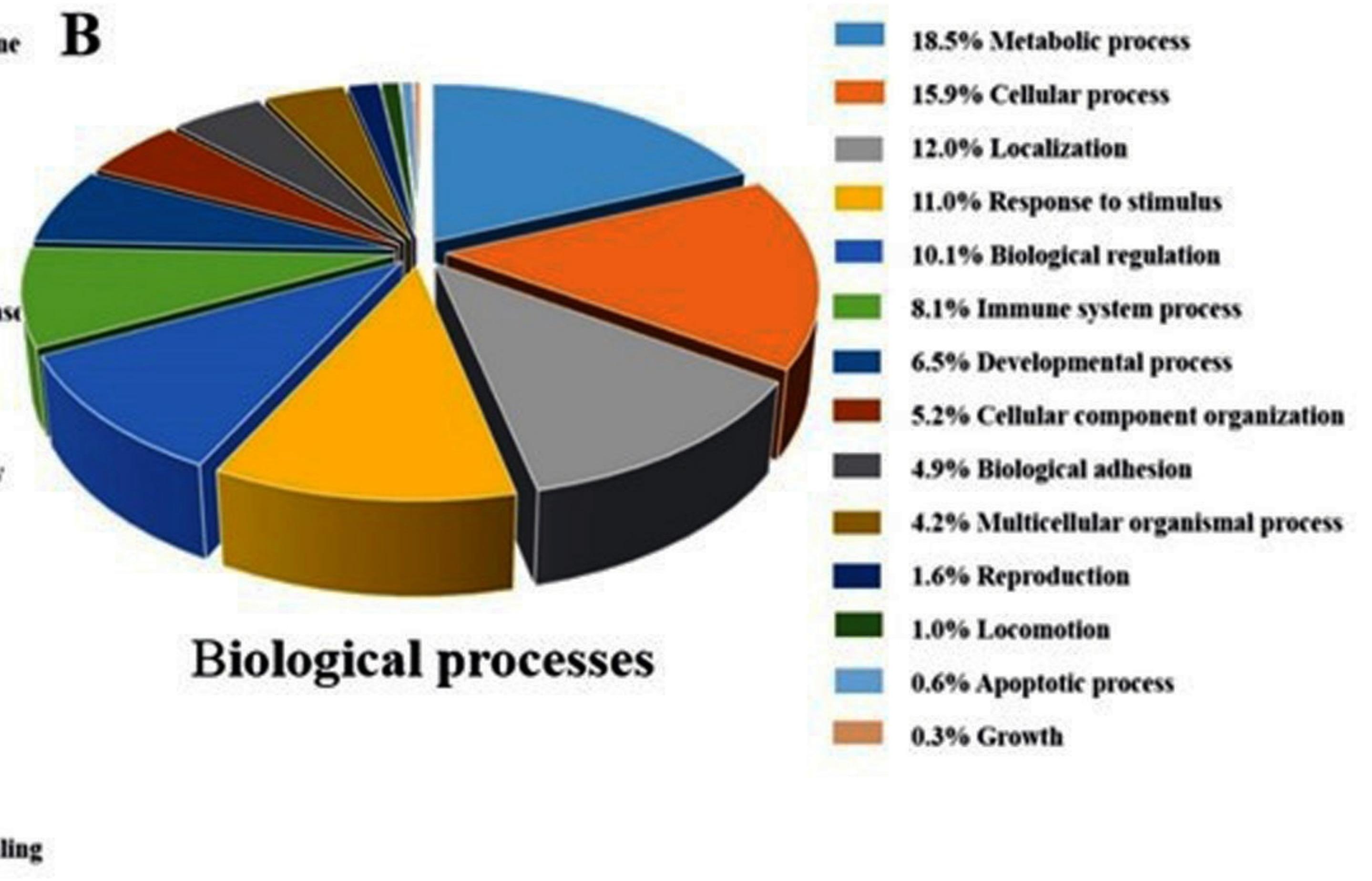
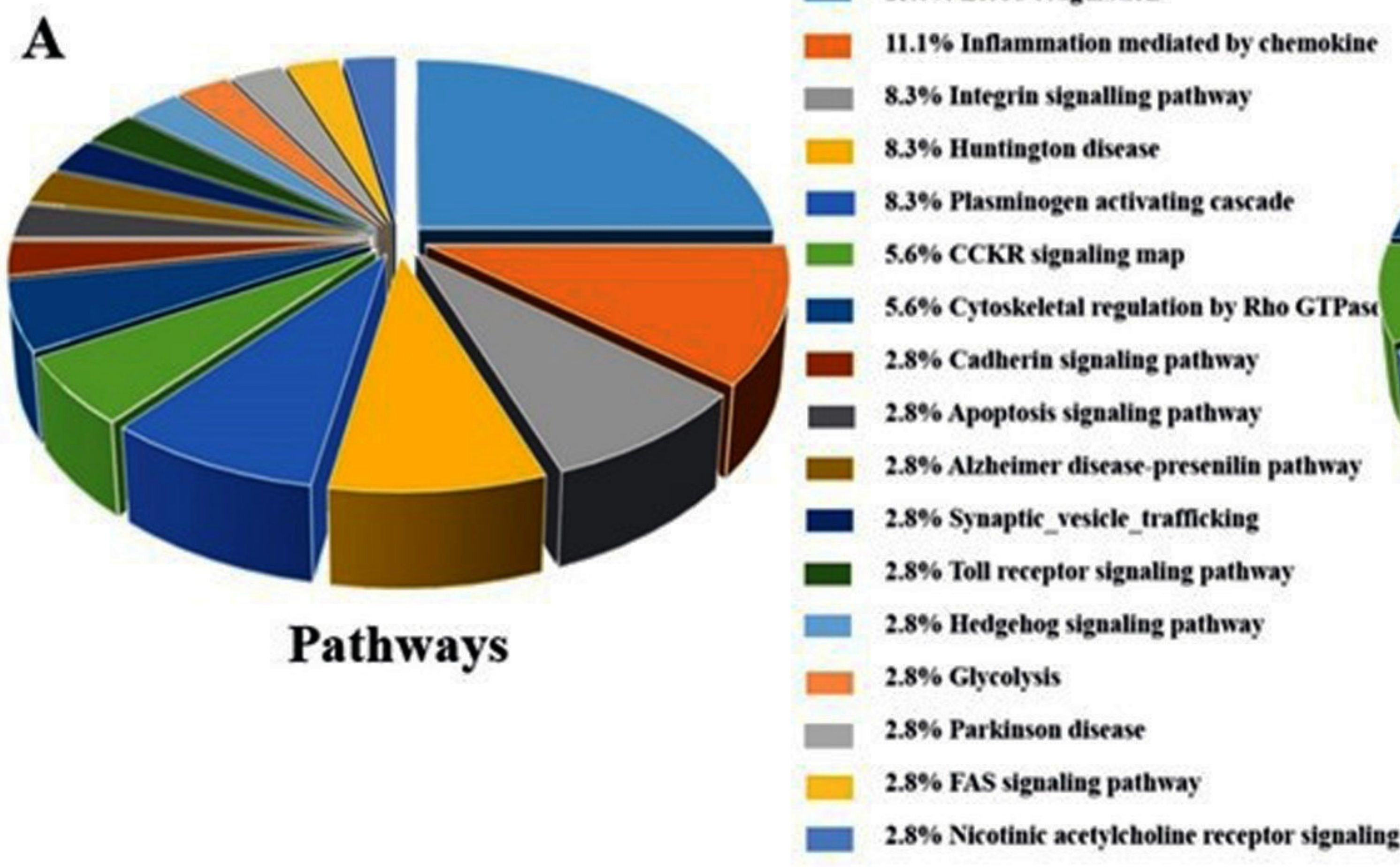
859 \* Differential serum abundance of these proteins are validated by ELISA (details are provided in Table S13A)



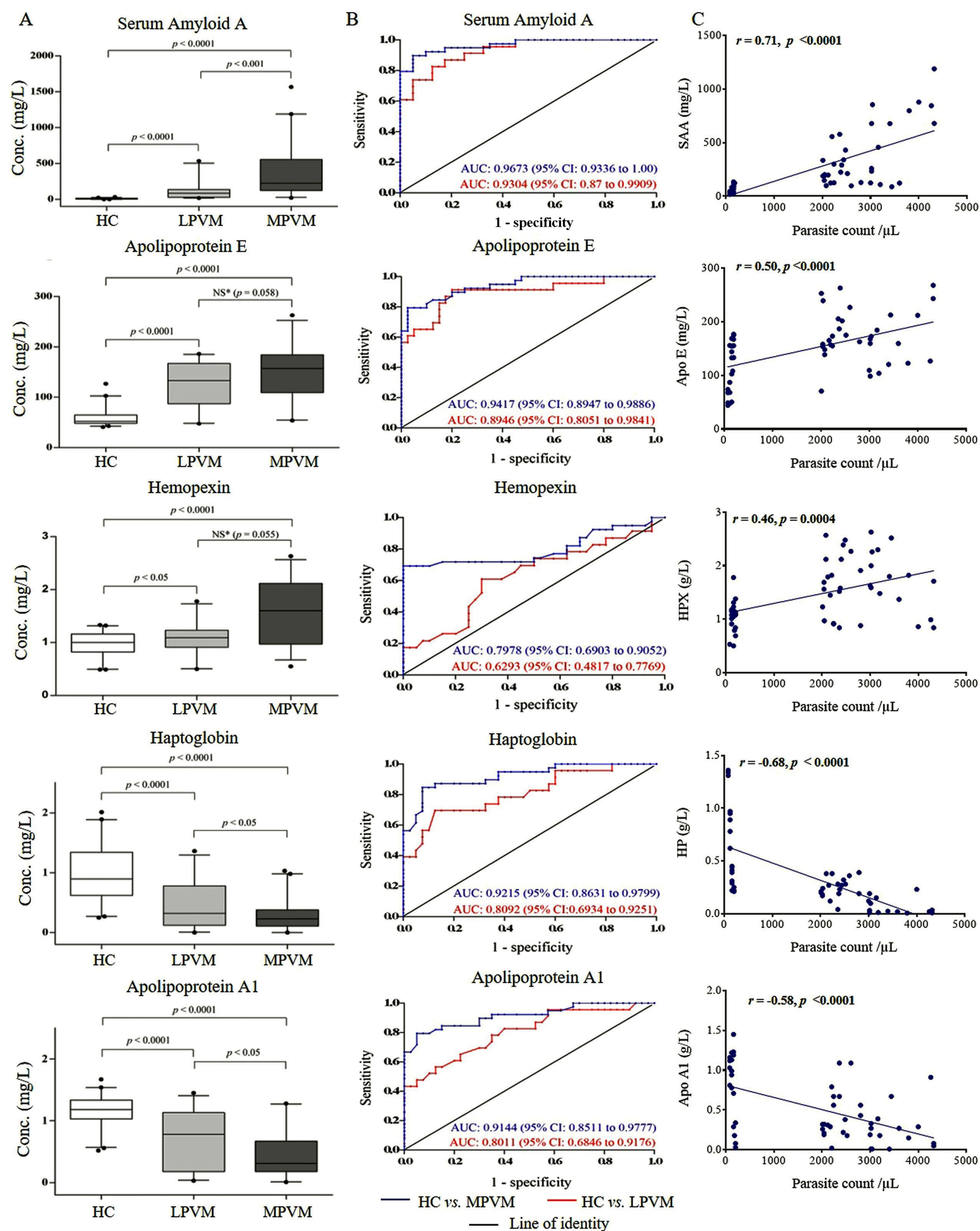
**A****B**



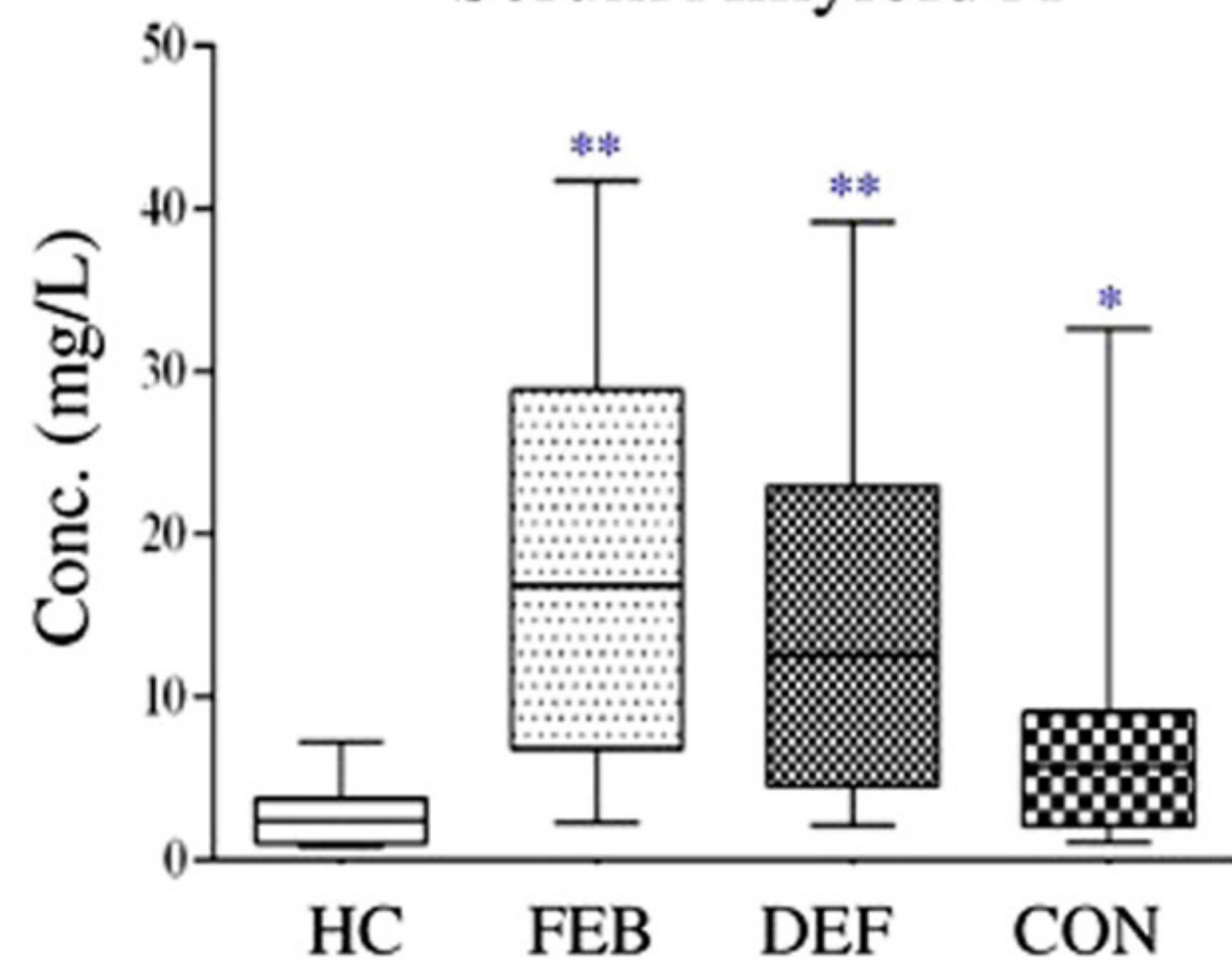




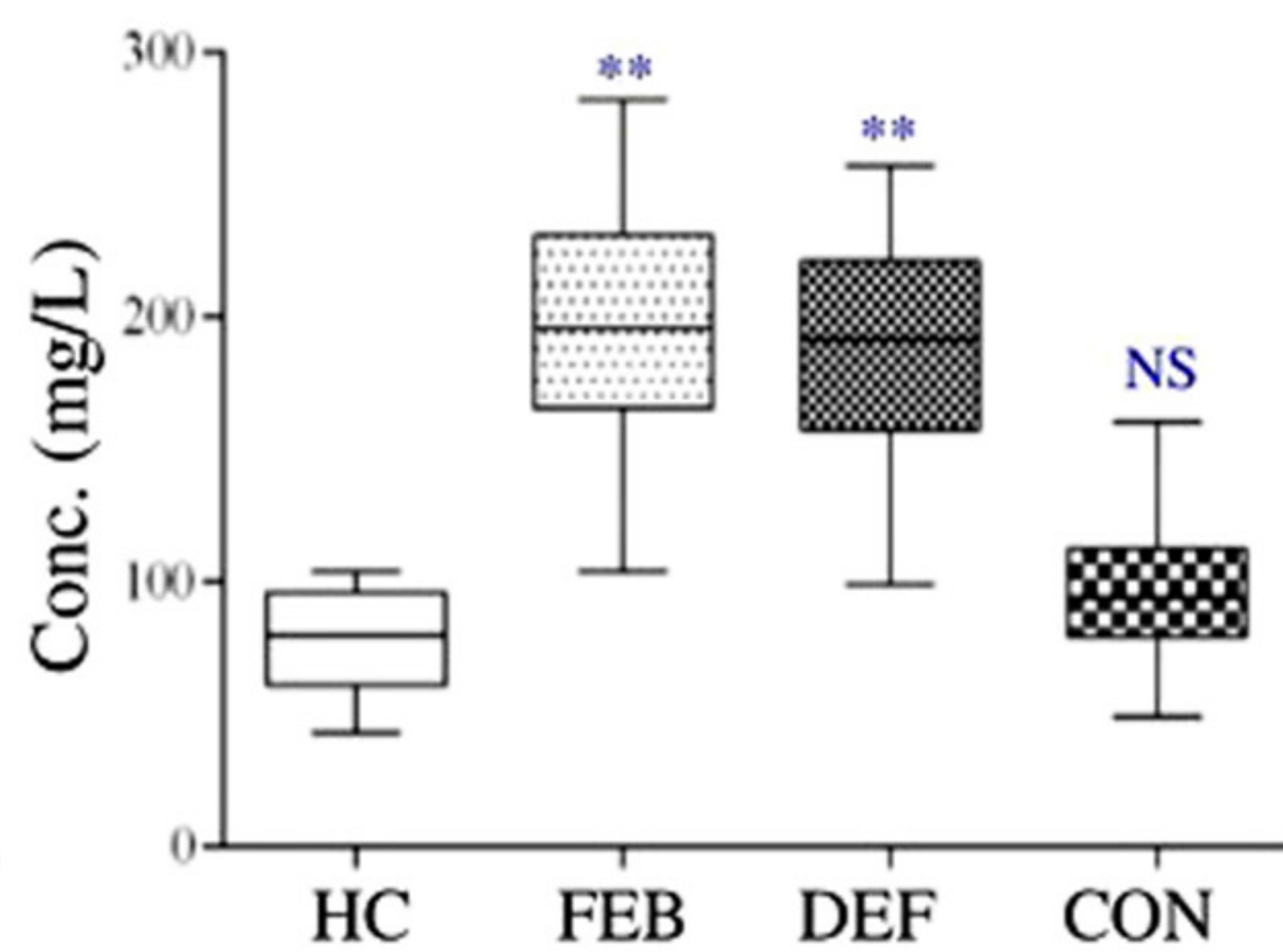




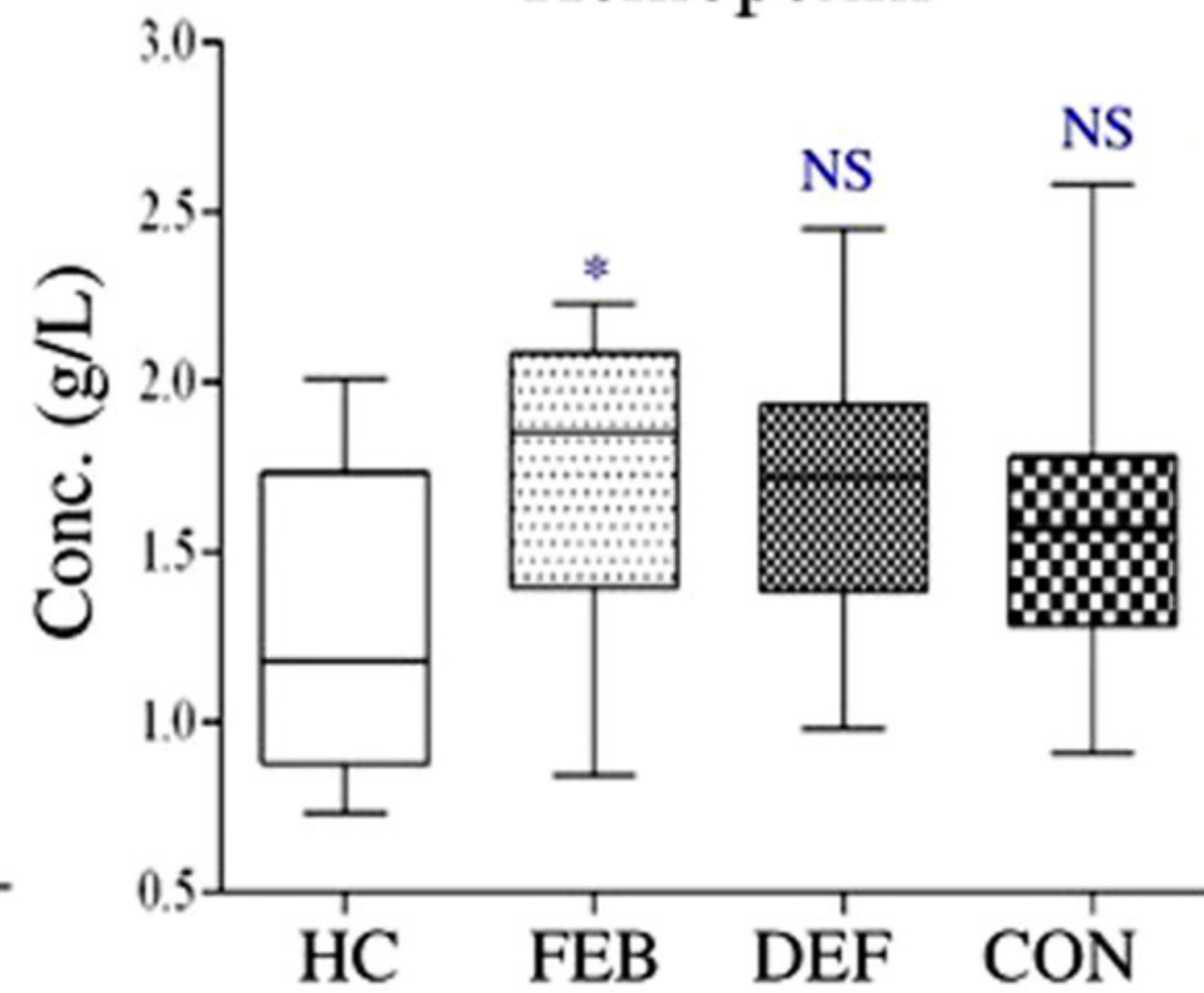
Serum Amyloid A



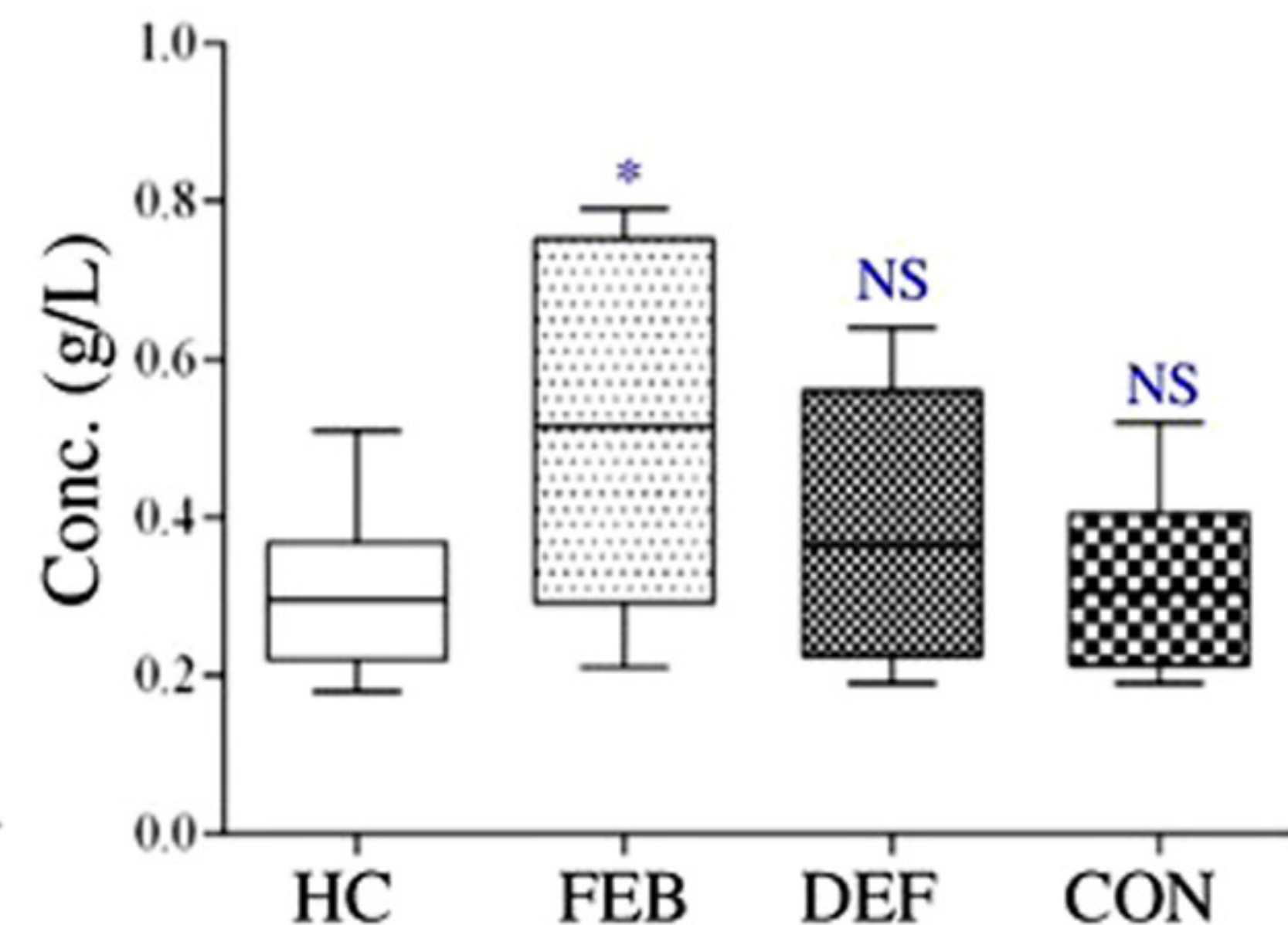
Apolipoprotein E



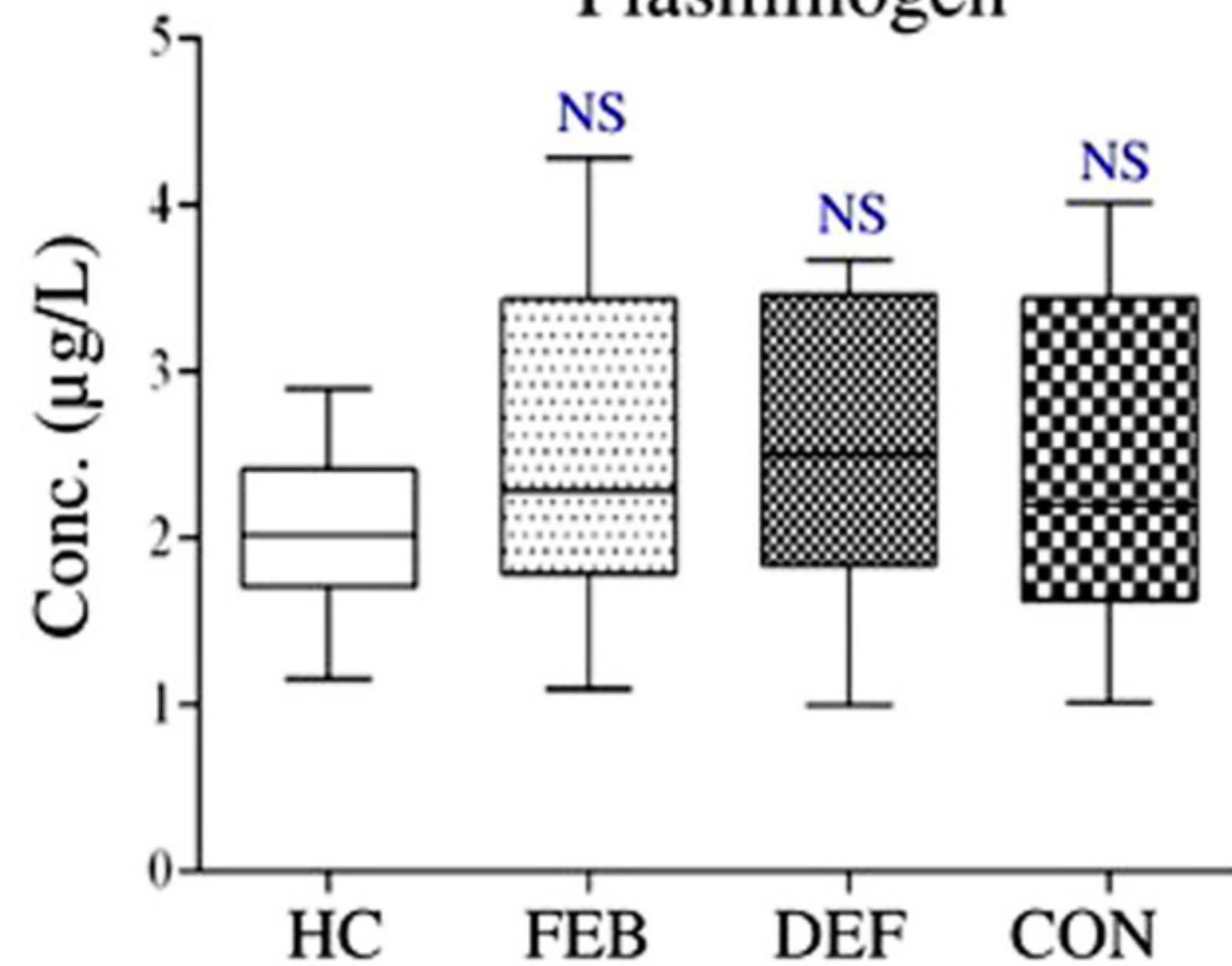
Hemopexin



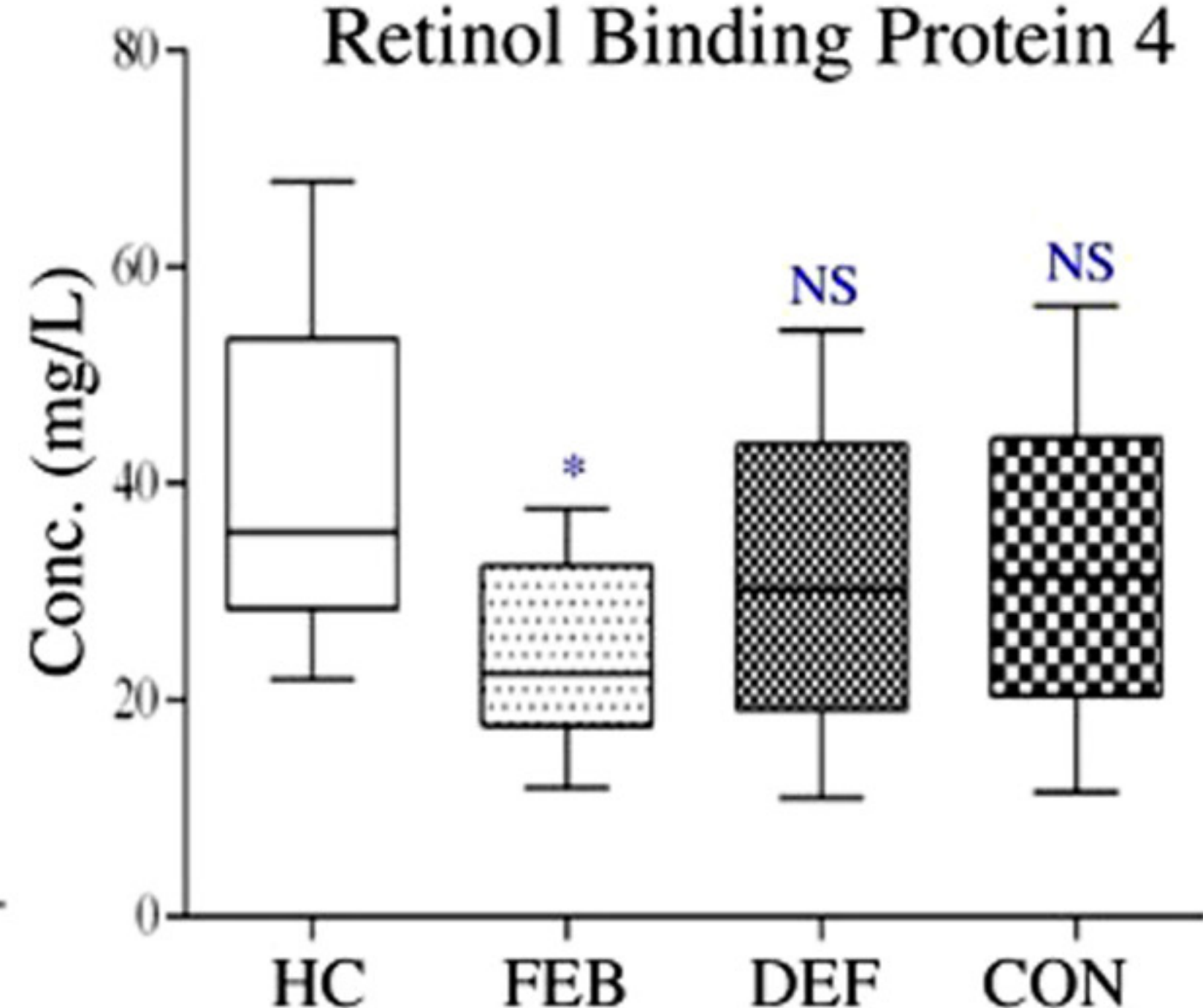
Ceruloplasmin



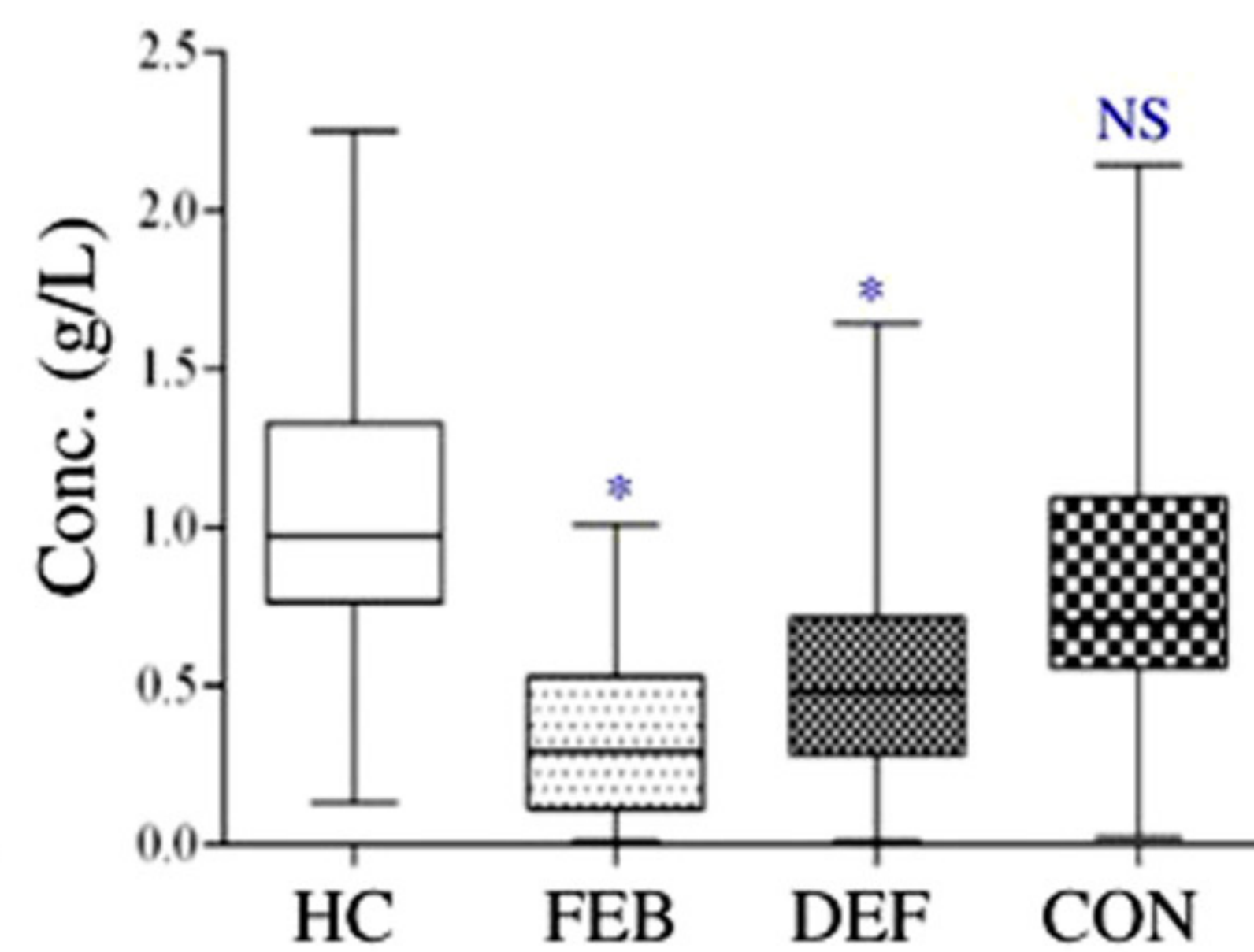
Plasminogen



Retinol Binding Protein 4



Haptoglobin



Apolipoprotein A1

