Method Development and Applications of Capillary Electrophoresis, Liquid Chromatography and Mass Spectrometry for the Separation and Determination of Urinary Porphyrins

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Abstract

This thesis describes method development and applications of capillary electrophoresis (CE), high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) and mass spectrometry (MS) for the separation and detection of six urinary porphyrins with biological significances, namely uroporphyrin (UP), heptacarboxylic acid porphyrin (HEPTAP), hexacarboxylic acid porphyrin (HEXAP), pentacarboxylic acid porphyrin (PENTAP), coproporphyrin (CP) and mesoporphyrin (MP). Excessive accumulation and excretion of porphyrins often result from metabolic aberration. The measurement of total contents and individual concentrations of the urinary porphyrins in biological materials, therefore, is essential for the confirmation and diagnosis of various diseases associated with porphyrins such as porphyrias and liver diseases.

In Chapter 2, stacking and separation of the six urinary porphyrins were demonstrated in micellar and microemulsion electrokinetic chromatography (MEKC and MEEKC). Adequate resolution and efficiency and enhanced sensitivity were obtained by the introduction of the sample containing acetonitrile (ACN) and high salt content (ca. 1% NaCl) into the CE capillary at more than 10% capillary volume. The enrichment factors ranged from 12–32 in MEKC and 28–33 in MEEKC. Calibration curves obtained for the determination of CP isomers were linear between 30–400 nM with $R^2 = 0.999$ and the limit of detection (LOD) was 20 nM in MEEKC. Intra- and inter-day precisions from the analyses of spiked urine samples at concentrations of 40–400 nM were 0.1–0.4% for migration time and 0.7–7.6% for peak area. CP-III,
CP-I and UP were detected at levels of 80.7, 32.3 and 19.8 nM, respectively, in the healthy human urine samples. Different porphyrin profiles were observed in urine samples from porphyria cutanea tarda (PCT) patients.

In Chapter 3, a lab-made liquid junction interface of CE-ESI-MS was developed for the analysis of MP, CP and UP. The intra-day precisions of the porphyrins for migration time and peak area were 1.1–3.9% and 2.3–14.1%, respectively. The correlation coefficients of calibration curves were 0.9956–0.9862. The recoveries from urine were 73–96% and the LODs determined for MP, CP and UP were 57, 125 and 260 nM, respectively. The interface was demonstrated to be applicable for the potential quantitative analysis of clinical samples.

In Chapter 4, an HPLC-ESI-MS method was presented for the separation and determination of the six urinary porphyrins. The intra- and inter-day precisions for peak area were 3.96–9.74% and 5.49–15.3%, respectively. The recoveries of the porphyrins from urine were between 83.6–108%. The LODs were 0.18–3.06 nM. Endogenous UP, HEPTAP and PENTAP were detected at 42.4, 21.3 and 18.0 nM, respectively. CP was predominantly present at 135.6 nM, while MP and HEXAP were not detected in the healthy female urine. Significant increases of CP excretion levels in urine from liver disease patients indicated that monitoring of CP in human urine might be served as a diagnostic symptom of liver diseases.

In Chapter 5, summary and comparison of the methods for the determination of urinary porphyrins were made in terms of the separation efficiency, LOD, accuracy and precision.
Table of Contents

Declaration ........................................................................................................... i
Abstract .............................................................................................................. ii
Acknowledgements ........................................................................................ iv
Table of Contents ............................................................................................... vi
List of Tables ....................................................................................................... xi
List of Figures ..................................................................................................... xiii
List of Abbreviations .......................................................................................... xvi

Chapter 1  Introduction ....................................................................................... 1
  1.1  Background ............................................................................................... 1
  1.1.1  Structures and Chemical Properties of Porphyrins ................... 1
  1.1.2  Biological Significances of Porphyrins ....................................... 4
  1.2  Applications of Porphyrins in Analytical Chemistry ............... 9
  1.3  Analytical Methods for the Separation and Determination of Porphyrins .............................................................. 13
  1.3.1  HPLC Analysis of Porphyrins ................................................... 16
  1.3.2  CE Analysis of Porphyrins ......................................................... 19
  1.4  HPLC and CE Separation Techniques ........................................... 22
  1.4.1  HPLC ............................................................................................... 22
  1.4.1.1  Normal-Phase HPLC ............................................................... 22
  1.4.1.2  Reversed-Phase HPLC ............................................................. 23
1.4.2 CE ................................................................................................................. 24
1.4.2.1 History of CE ......................................................................................... 24
1.4.2.2 Fundamentals of CE ............................................................................. 25
1.4.2.3 Different Separation Modes of CE ...................................................... 26
   A. Capillary Zone Electrophoresis (CZE) ...................................................... 27
   B. Micellar Electrokinetic Chromatography (MEKC) .............................. 27
   C. Microemulsion Electrokinetic Chromatography (MEEKC) .............. 28
1.4.2.4 Enhancement of Concentration Detection Sensitivity in CE ...... 30
   A. Off-Line Sample Concentration in CE .................................................... 31
   B. On-Line Sample Concentration in CE .................................................... 31
       B1. Transient Isotachophoresis (tr-ITP) .................................................... 35
       B2. Acetonitrile (Organic solvents) Sample Stacking ............................ 35
1.5 CE/HPLC Coupled with Electrospray Ionization Mass Spectrometry (ESI-MS) ................................................................. 39
1.5.1 Electrospray ionization-Ion Trap Mass Spectrometry ...... 39
1.5.2 Fundamental and Considerations for LC-MS ................................. 40
1.5.3 Fundamental and Considerations for CE-MS ................................. 42
1.6 Aims of the Thesis Project ................................................................. 44

Chapter 2 Stacking and Separation of Urinary Porphyrins by Acetonitrile-Salt Mixtures in Micellar and Microemulsion Electrokinetic Chromatography ........................................ 45
2.1 Introduction ............................................................................................ 45
2.1.1 Comparison of MEEKC and MEKC ................................................. 45
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2</td>
<td>On-Line Acetonitrile-Salt Stacking for CE Separation</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.3</td>
<td>Biological Importance and Analysis of Porphyrins</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1</td>
<td>Chemicals</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2</td>
<td>Apparatus</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3</td>
<td>Preparation of Standards, Micellar and Microemulsion Solutions</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.4</td>
<td>Preparation of Urine Samples</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.5</td>
<td>Method Validation</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Results and Discussion</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1</td>
<td>On-Line Stacking and MEKC Separation of Porphyrins</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2</td>
<td>MEEKC Separation of Porphyrins and the Comparison to MEKC</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3</td>
<td>Analysis of the Porphyrins in Human Urine</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Chapter Summary</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 3 On-Line Capillary Electrophoresis-Electrospray Ionization Mass Spectrometry Analysis of Urinary Porphyrins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.1</td>
<td>Chemicals and Reagents</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.2</td>
<td>Apparatus</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3</td>
<td>Preparation of Standard Sample and Electrolyte Solutions</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.4</td>
<td>Urine Sample Preparation</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3 Results and Discussion ........................................... 84
  3.3.1 Liquid Junction Interface for CE-MS ....................... 84
  3.3.2 Effect of Buffer Concentrations and Sheath Liquids .......... 88
  3.3.3 Effect of Acetonitrile in Running Buffer ....................... 91
  3.3.4 Determination of Porphyrins by CE-MS ......................... 99
  3.3.5 Analysis of Urine Samples .................................... 101
3.4 Chapter Summary .................................................. 104

Chapter 4 Analysis of Urinary Porphyrins by High-Performance Liquid Chromatography-Electrospray Ionization Mass Spectrometry ... 105
  4.1 Introduction ........................................................ 105
  4.2 Experimental ...................................................... 107
    4.2.1 Chemicals and Materials .................................... 107
    4.2.2 Apparatus and Conditions .................................... 107
    4.2.3 Preparation of Standard Sample Solutions and Mobile Phases ... 108
    4.2.4 Urine Sample Preparation .................................... 109
    4.2.5 Recovery, Quantitation and Linearity Studies ................. 110
  4.3 Results and Discussion ........................................... 111
    4.3.1 LC-MS Analysis of Porphyrin Standards ..................... 111
    4.3.2 Method Performance ......................................... 116
    4.3.3 Determination of Porphyrins in Human Urine ................ 121
  4.4 Chapter Summary .................................................. 127
Chapter 5  Conclusions ................................................................. 128

Chapter 6  References ................................................................. 133

Curriculum Vitae ................................................................. 149

Outcome of the Thesis Work ............................................. 150
  A.  Publications ................................................................. 150
  B.  Conference and Symposium Presentations ..................... 150