



# The application of lipid profiling to understand dietary fat metabolism in breast-fed infants.

Albert Koulman, Georgia Billings, Animesh Acharjee,  
Philippa Prentice, Gail Goldberg

NIHR BRC Clinical Metabolomics and Lipidomics Laboratory  
University of Cambridge

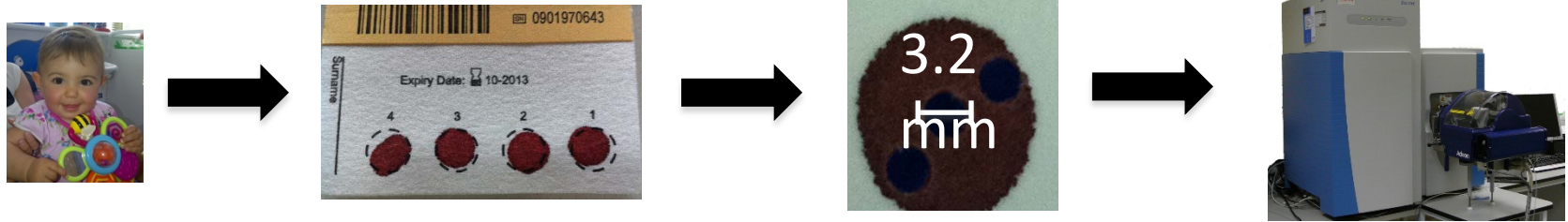
MRC Elsie Widdowson Laboratory



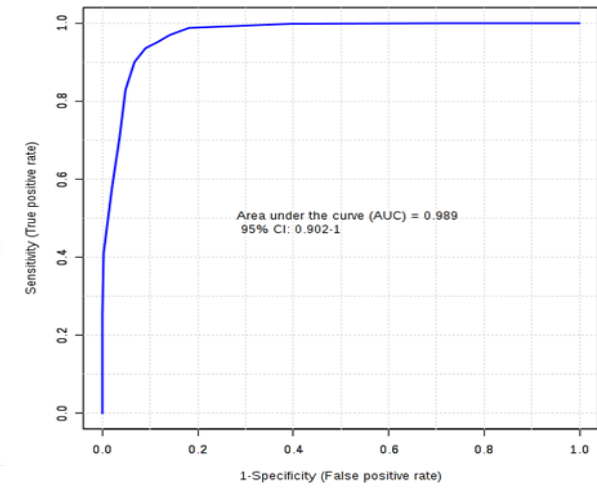
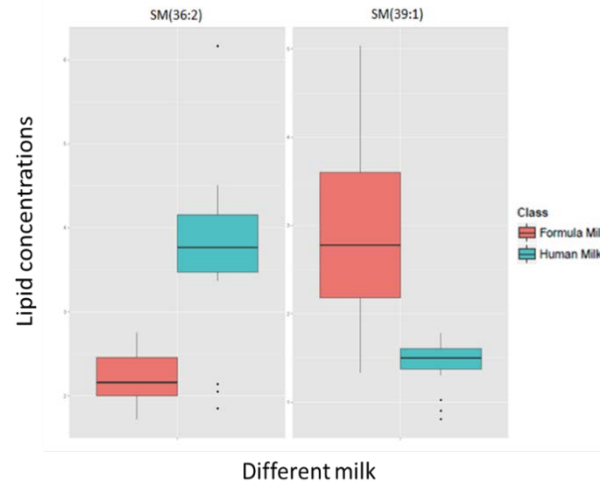
*National Institute for  
Health Research*

**Note: for non-commercial purposes only**

# Infant Lipid Metabolism

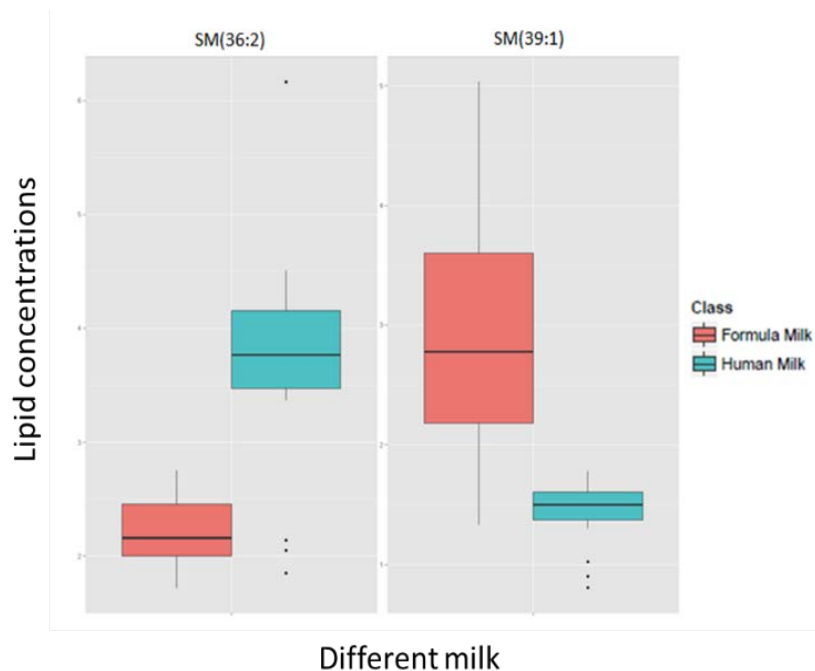


- Robust lipid profiling using dried blood spots
- Providing information on circulating intact lipids
  - Cholesterol / Cholesterol-esters
  - Phosphatidylcholine lipids
  - Phosphoethanolamine
  - Sphingomyelins
  - Triglycerides



Prentice P, Koulman A, et al., J Pediatr. 2015;166(2):276-81  
 Koulman A, Prentice P, et al., Metabolomics. 2014;10(5):1018-1025.  
 Lu L, Koulman A et al., Diabetes Care. 2016 on line

# Nutrition determines lipid profile in DBS



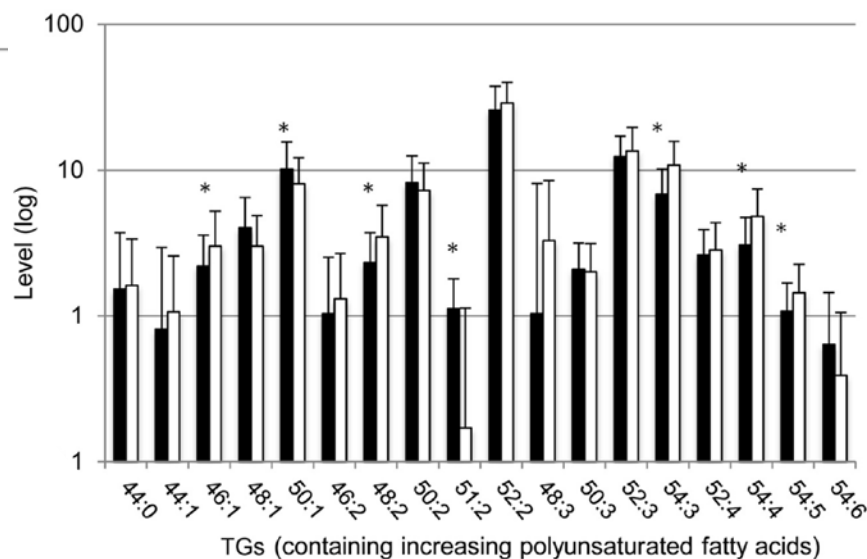
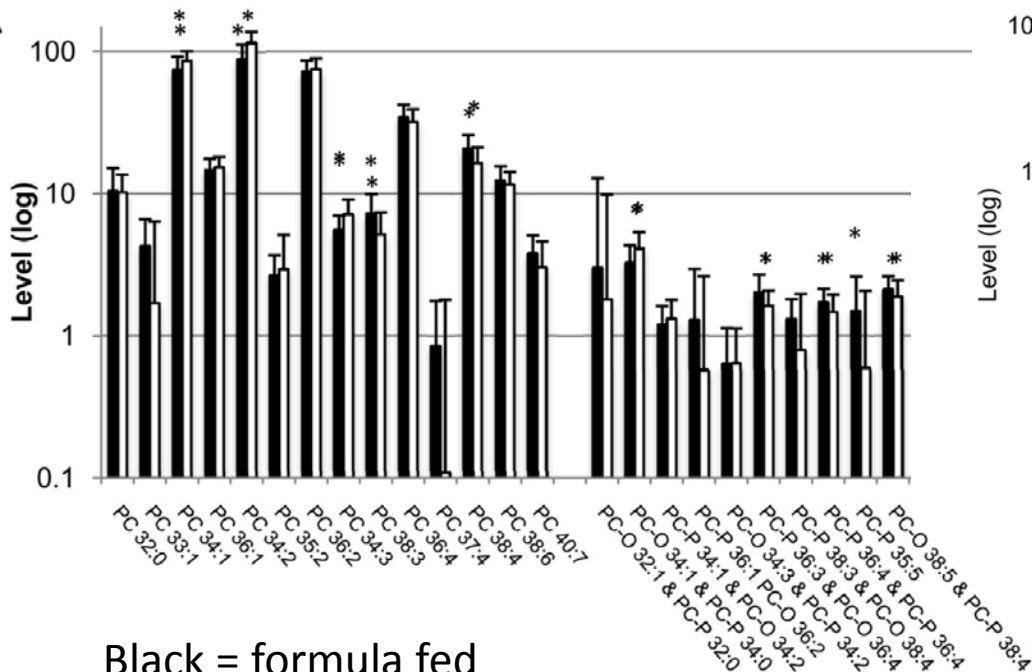
**Table IV.** Associations between 3-month lipid and infancy weight

Lipid	3-mo weight SDS		12-mo weight SDS		3- to 12-mo weight gain SDS	
	Spearman	<i>P</i> value	Spearman	<i>P</i> value	Spearman	<i>P</i> value
PC-0 34:1*	0.2	.003	0.2	.009	-0.03	.7
PC 34:1*	0.2	<.0005	0.2	.003	0.01	.9
PC 38:4†	-0.2	<.0005	-0.2	.002	-0.04	.6
SM 34:2†	0.06	.4	-0.07	.3	-0.2	.005
PC-0 36:4†	-0.1	.1	-0.2	.02	-0.2	.004

\*Lower values in exclusively breast-fed.  
 †Higher values in exclusively breast-fed.

The ratio between 2 lipids (PC(34:2) and SM(36:2) enough to distinguish breast-fed and formula fed infants.

# Differences across all lipid classes



Black = formula fed  
White = breast fed

# Circulating lipids associate with growth

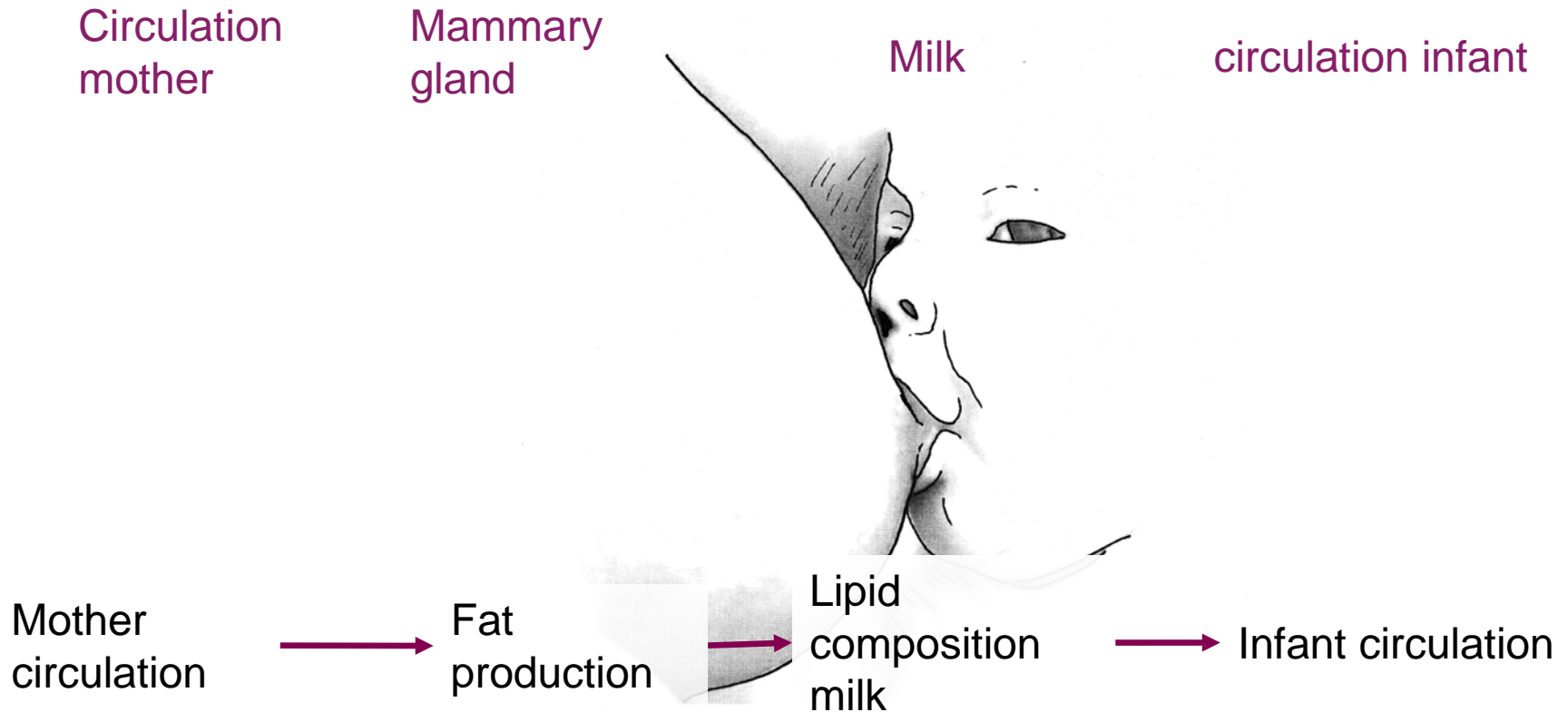
## Associations between circulating lipids at 3 months and infancy weight

Lipid	3-mo		12-mo		3- to 12-mo	
	weight SDS		weight SDS		weight gain SDS	
	Spearman	P value	Spearman	P value	Spearman	P value
PC-O(34:1)*	0.20	0.003	0.20	0.009	-0.03	0.7
PC(34:1)*	0.20	<.0005	0.20	0.003	0.01	0.9
PC(38:4)†	-0.20	<.0005	-0.20	0.002	-0.04	0.6
SM(34:2)†	0.06	0.4	-0.07	0.3	-0.20	0.005
PC-O(36:4)†	-0.10	0.1	-0.20	0.02	-0.20	0.004

\*Lower values in exclusively breast-fed.

†Higher values in exclusively breast-fed.

# Understanding the role of lipids





# Do dietary lipid influences the circulating lipids?

Proof of principle

Samples collected in the rural Gambia (Drs Georgia Billing & Gail Goldberg).

Infants ca 12 weeks old.

Infant's plasma, mother's plasma collected on the same day, milk collected the next day

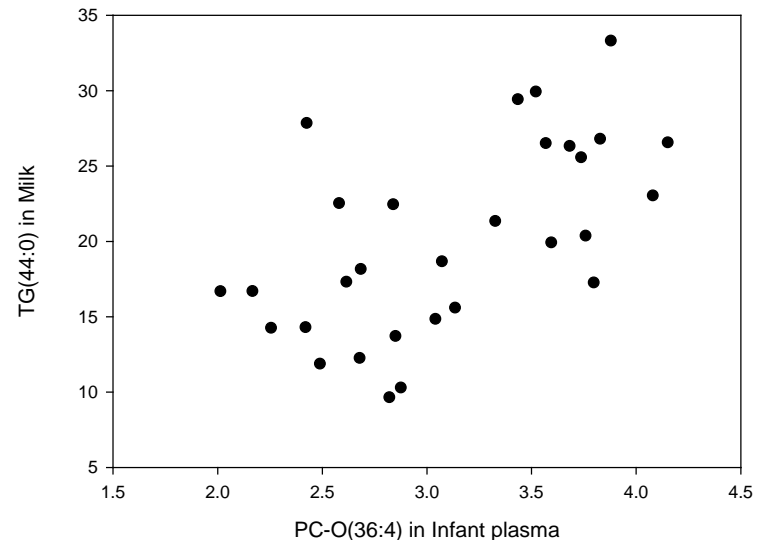
30 infant-mother pairs.

# Milk lipids in relation to infant plasma lipids

Spearman correlation between infant plasma lipids and mother milk lipids

Infant plasma	Mother Milk				
	PC(36:4)	TG(44:0)	TG(46:0)	TG(50:2)	TG(57:3)
PC(34:1)	0.026	0.322	0.214	-0.406	-0.289
PC(38:4)	-0.165	0.419	0.292	-0.248	-0.414
PC-O(34:1)	-0.548**	0.224	0.220	-0.129	-0.282
PC-O(36:4)	-0.228	0.591**	0.550**	-0.469*	-0.529**
SM(34:2)	-0.362	0.228	0.161	-0.554**	-0.293

\*= p<0.01; \*\*=p<0.00268



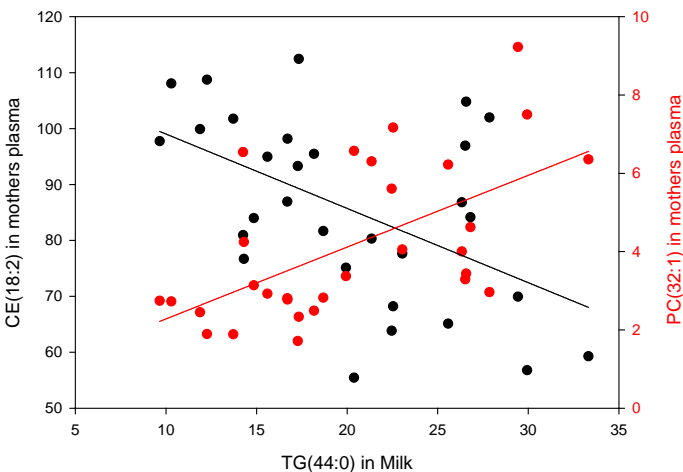


# From mothers milk to mother plasma

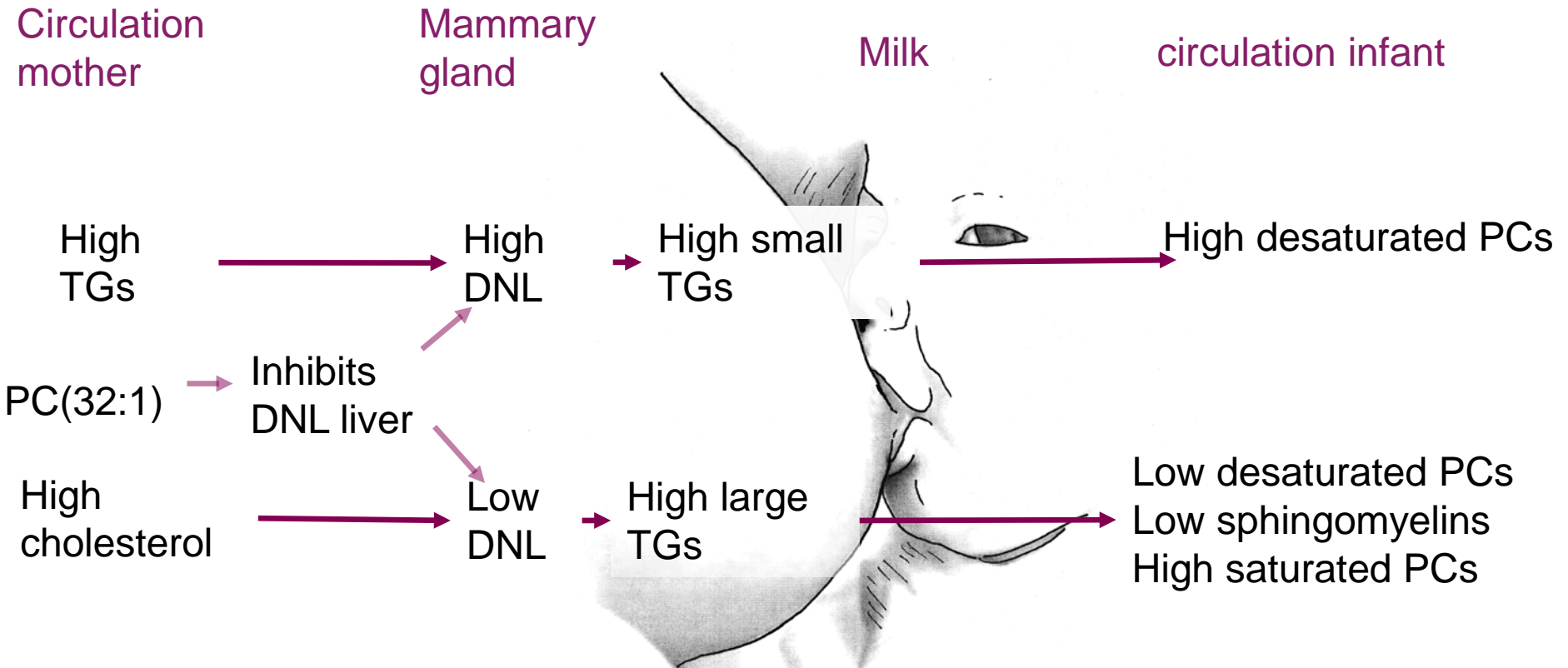
Spearman correlations between mother milk lipids and mother plasma lipids

	Mother Milk				
	PC(36:4)	TG(44:0)	TG(46:0)	TG(50:2)	TG(57:3)
LysoPC(16:1)	-0.310	0.414	0.540**	0.024	-0.243
CE(16:1)	-0.338	0.456	0.551**	-0.145	-0.236
CE(18:3)	-0.199	0.498*	0.572**	-0.191	-0.207
CE(18:2)	0.376	-0.518*	-0.615**	0.041	0.477*
PE(34:1)	-0.301	0.419	0.579**	-0.049	-0.367
PC(32:1)	-0.359	0.588**	0.686***	-0.074	-0.320
PE(36:1)	-0.281	0.662***	0.741***	-0.162	-0.419
PC(34:4)	-0.268	0.533**	0.613**	-0.167	-0.194
PC(34:3)	-0.300	0.497*	0.583**	-0.126	-0.238
PE(38:3)	-0.308	0.553**	0.628**	-0.115	-0.357
PE(38:1)	-0.300	0.651***	0.651***	-0.128	-0.432
PC(36:1)	-0.209	0.563**	0.534**	-0.173	-0.374
TG(46:2)	-0.288	0.434	0.617**	-0.002	-0.311
TG(46:1)	-0.224	0.456	0.601**	-0.015	-0.300
TG(46:0)	-0.261	0.435	0.587**	0.032	-0.302
TG(48:3)	-0.320	0.390	0.590**	0.017	-0.370
TG(48:2)	-0.367	0.526*	0.701***	-0.058	-0.382
TG(48:1)	-0.325	0.510*	0.678***	-0.026	-0.360
TG(48:0)	-0.323	0.502*	0.639**	-0.018	-0.346
TG(49:3)	-0.214	0.274	0.557**	0.177	-0.303
TG(49:2)	-0.327	0.609**	0.787***	-0.096	-0.462
TG(49:1)	-0.289	0.631**	0.769***	-0.147	-0.470*
TG(50:4)	-0.369	0.307	0.535**	0.023	-0.371
TG(50:3)	-0.389	0.408	0.618**	-0.056	-0.404
TG(50:2)	-0.395	0.561**	0.739***	-0.110	-0.413
TG(50:1)	-0.330	0.542**	0.699***	-0.109	-0.393
TG(51:6)	-0.143	0.542**	0.597**	-0.328	-0.227
TG(51:3)	-0.346	0.562**	0.740***	-0.131	-0.519*
TG(51:2)	-0.292	0.683***	0.815***	-0.203	-0.483*
TG(51:1)	-0.306	0.675***	0.778***	-0.184	-0.465*
TG(52:2)	-0.247	0.445	0.601**	-0.158	-0.360
TG(53:3)	-0.250	0.506*	0.619**	-0.144	-0.441
TG(53:2)	-0.291	0.632**	0.733***	-0.188	-0.486*
TG(53:1)	-0.292	0.438	0.567**	-0.080	-0.381
TG(55:5)	0.029	0.479*	0.557**	-0.119	-0.251

\*= p<0.01; \*\*=p<0.00268; \*\*\*= p<0.000144



# Understanding the role of lipids



# Proof of Concept

## Limitation

- Selection of circulating lipids based on UK study.
- Milk was collected on the day following blood sampling.
- Did not capture fluctuations milk composition.
- Only lipids were analysed.

## Conclusions

- There is strong indirect effect of the plasma lipid profile of the mother on the lipid composition of breastmilk.
- Lipid composition of the milk affects how lipids are metabolised by the infant.

# Thank you

**Larissa Richardson (CMaLL)**

**Animesh Acharjee, James West, Lee Matthews, Luke Marney, James Smith,  
Jules Griffin (LPS)**

**Sophie Moore (MCN)**

**Gail Goldberg, Georgia Billing (NBH)**

**Ken Ong, Nita Forouhi, Nick Wareham (MRC Epidemiology)**

**Philippa Prentice, David Dunger (Paediatrics UCam)**

