

# How Do I Choose?

A guide to HPLC column selection

Mark Powell

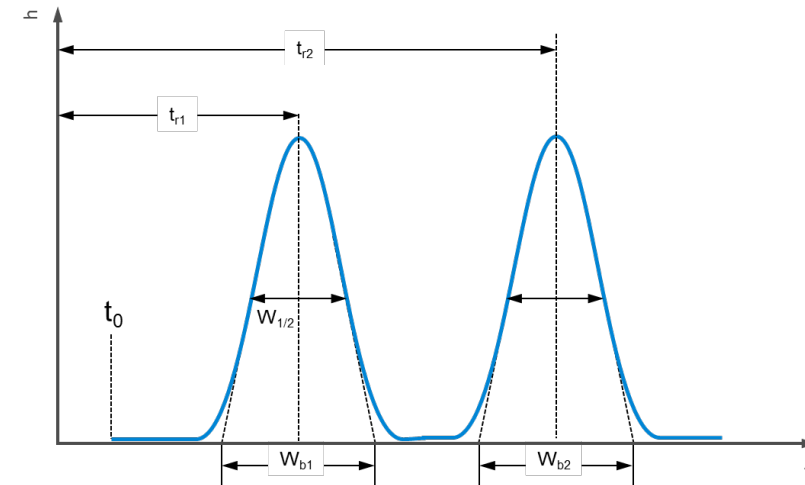
Columns and Supplies Technical Support

16 December 2021



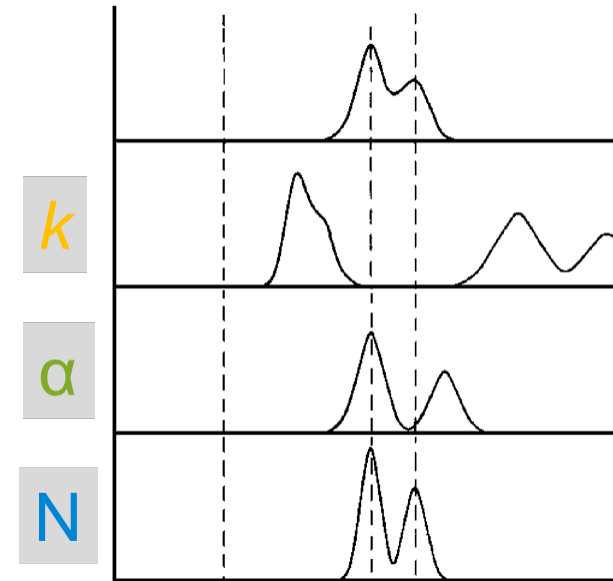
## How do I choose?

- Efficiency
  - Particle size
  - Column length
- Selectivity
  - Bonded phase
  - Mobile phase
- Retention
  - Polar bonded phase
  - HILIC



# Resolution Equation

$$R_s = \underbrace{\frac{1}{4} \sqrt{N}}_{\text{Efficiency}} \cdot \underbrace{\left(\frac{\alpha - 1}{\alpha}\right)}_{\text{Selectivity}} \cdot \underbrace{\left(\frac{k}{1 + k}\right)}_{\text{Retention}}$$



Improve resolution by improving any of these parameters:

- **Efficiency** describes the separation power of the column.
- **Selectivity** has the highest influence on the resolution. Small changes in selectivity can lead to big changes in resolution.
- **Retention** has only a significant influence at small  $k$  values.

$$N \propto \frac{L}{d_p}$$

Parameters influencing column **efficiency**:

- Column length (increasing column length increases efficiency)
- Particle size (decreasing particle size increases efficiency)

$$k = \frac{(t_R - t_0)}{t_0}$$

$t_R$  = retention time for sample peak

$t_0$  = retention time for unretained peak

The **retention factor** measures the period of time that the sample component resides in the stationary phase relative to the time it resides in the mobile phase. It is calculated from the retention time divided by the time for an unretained peak.

## When to choose which product family

### InfinityLab Poroshell 120

HPLC	UHPLC	LD-UHPLC
4 µm	2.7 µm	1.9 µm

#### Features

Modern column technology that offers higher performance at similar backpressure

or comparable performance at reduced backpressure

Designed in with Agilent LC instruments and supplies

Universal column platform with offerings for all separation modes, i.e., RP, NP, HILIC, SFC as well as chiral LC

Modern, high-performance HPLC and UHPLC columns designed in for state-of-the-art instruments.

### ZORBAX

HPLC	UHPLC	LD-UHPLC
5 µm, 3.5 µm	1.8 µm (RRHT)	1.8 µm (RRHD)

#### Features

Traditional, reliable columns that offer a vast amount of unique chemistries

Higher overall retention, especially for early eluters, accepts larger amounts of strong solvent during injection

Scalable phases that range from UHPLC to HPLC to research scale prep

Scalable from UHPLC to HPLC to Prep-LC with higher retention.

### Special Phases

HPLC	UHPLC	LD-UHPLC
5 µm, 3 µm	---	---

#### Features

Features	Phases
High carbon load columns	Pursuit XRs, Pursuit XRs Ultra
Analytical to Prep	Pursuit, Polaris
Alternative selectivity for polar and non-polar	Polaris C18-Ether, C18 Amide, NH2

Unique chemistries that help to solve non-standard applications from HPLC to Prep.

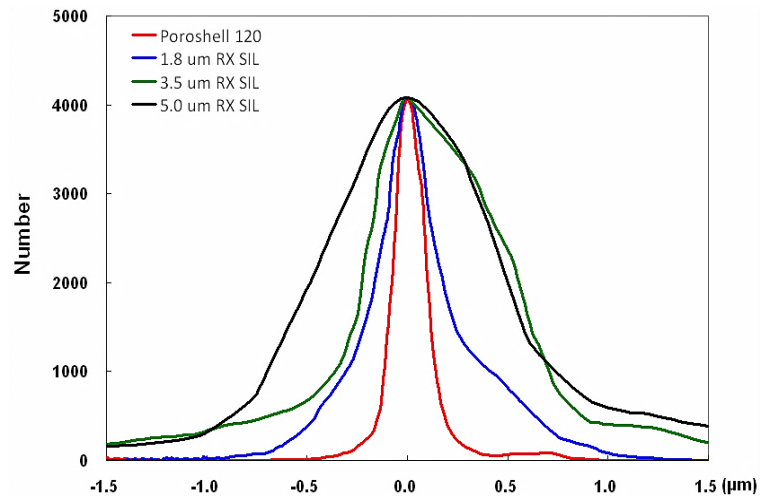
Strict monitoring of every production step ensures column performance and quality

## Step 1: Make the solid core

Poroshell 120 column cores have a very smooth surface and a uniform particle size which contributes to a tight overall particle size distribution. As a result, you get a more tightly packed column bed and therefore a better lifetime.

## Step 3: Apply the bonded phase

Most of the Poroshell chemistries are bonded in a single step. This further increases batch-to-batch reproducibility and method scalability from 1.9 to 2.7 to 4  $\mu\text{m}$ .



## Step 2: Apply the porous shell

In contrast to other manufacturers, Agilent applies the porous shell in one single step. This unique single-step process delivers better column-to-column reproducibility.

Designed along with your LC instruments for highest performance

SPP particle	For	Maximum pressure	Typical pressure	Efficiency	Target system
1.9 $\mu\text{m}$	Highest UHPLC performance	1300 bar	Similar to sub-2 $\mu\text{m}$ totally porous	~120% of sub-2 $\mu\text{m}$ totally porous	1290 Infinity II
2.7 $\mu\text{m}$	UHPLC performance at lower pressures	600 bar / 1000 bar	50% of sub-2 $\mu\text{m}$ totally porous	~90% of sub-2 $\mu\text{m}$ totally porous	1290 Infinity II 1260 Infinity II
4 $\mu\text{m}$	Improved HPLC performance	600 bar	Typically < 200 bar	~200% of 5 $\mu\text{m}$ totally porous	1260 Infinity II VL 1220 Infinity II (VL)

Column Type Particle	Traditional HPLC 4–5 µm	UHPLC 2.7 µm (SPP) / < 2 µm (FPP)				Low Dispersion UHPLC < 2 µm			
Recommended product (Max pressure / bar)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 µm Poroshell (600)</li> <li>3.5 and 5 µm ZORBAX (400)</li> <li>3 and 5 µm Pursuit, Polaris, HC/TC (400)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.7 µm Poroshell (600)</li> <li>1.8 µm ZORBAX RRHT (600)</li> </ol>				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.9 µm Poroshell (1300)</li> <li>1.8 µm ZORBAX RRHD (1200)</li> </ol>			
Column length (mm)	50–300	Short: 30–50		Long: 100–150		Short: 30–50		Long: 100–150	
Column id (mm)	3.0–4.6	2.1	3.0–4.6	2.1	3.0–4.6	2.1	3.0	2.1	3.0
<b>1300 bar Low Dispersion UHPLC – High Speed Pump (1290 Infinity II)</b>	H/I								
<b>1300 bar Low Dispersion UHPLC – Flexible Pump (1290 Infinity II)</b>	H/I					V			
<b>800 bar UHPLC – Quaternary Pump (1260 Infinity II Prime)</b>	H/I					V		P	P
<b>600 bar UHPLC – Binary Pump (1260 Infinity II)</b>		V				V+P	V+P	V+P	P
<b>600 bar UHPLC – Quaternary Pump (1260/1220 Infinity II)</b>		V	V	V		V+P	V+P	V+P	V+P
<b>400 bar HPLC (1100, 1260/1220 Infinity II VL)</b>		V	V	V+P	P	V+P	V+P	V+P	V+P

**400 bar =** 6000 psi  
**600 bar =** 9000 psi  
**1200 bar =** 17000 psi  
**1300 bar =** 19000 psi

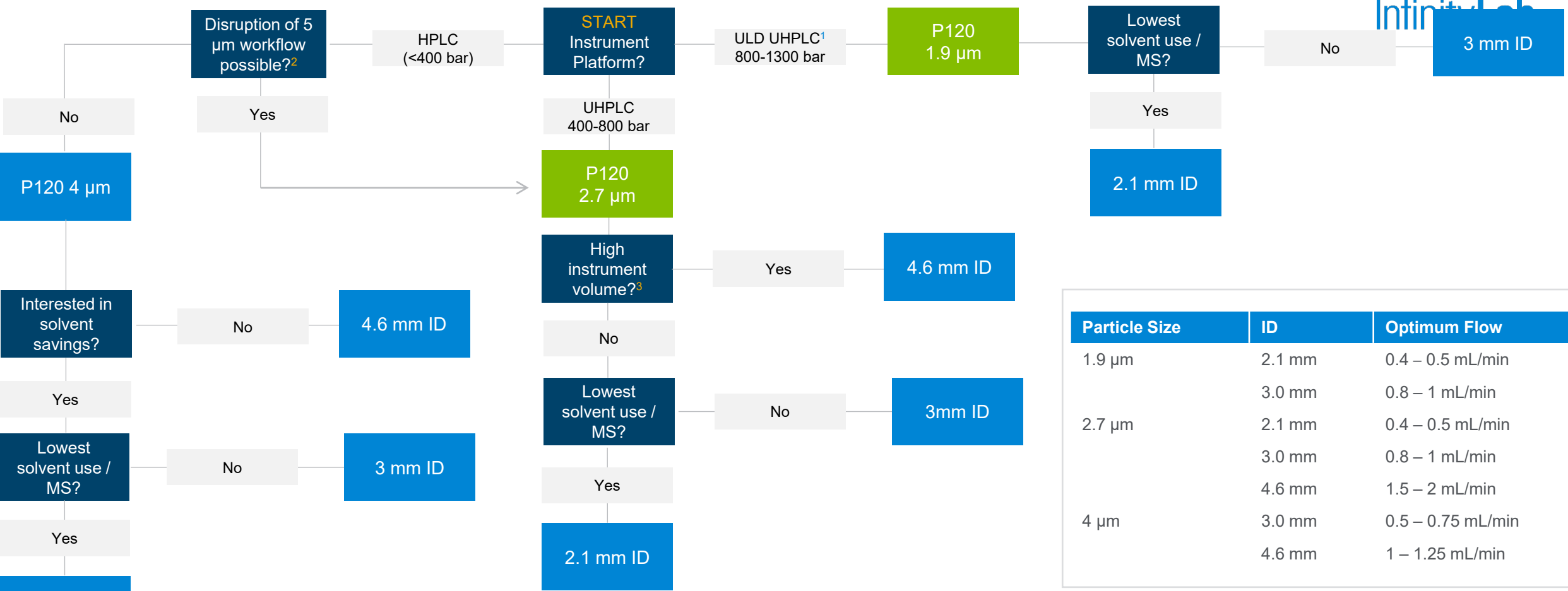
**Limitations**

**V** – System volume (dispersion/delay)  
**P** – Pressure limits  
**V+P** – System volume and pressure  
**H/I** – if instrument is used for HPLC methods / ISET emulation

<b>Recommended</b>
Acceptable
Limited Configurations
Not Recommended



# Particle Size and Dimension: P120



Particle Size	ID	Optimum Flow
1.9 μm	2.1 mm	0.4 – 0.5 mL/min
	3.0 mm	0.8 – 1 mL/min
2.7 μm	2.1 mm	0.4 – 0.5 mL/min
	3.0 mm	0.8 – 1 mL/min
	4.6 mm	1.5 – 2 mL/min
4 μm	3.0 mm	0.5 – 0.75 mL/min
	4.6 mm	1 – 1.25 mL/min

**Legend**

- decision 1 ULD kit recommended (p/n 5067-5963)
- 1<sup>st</sup> choice 2 not possible with regulated gradient methods, not recommended lab technicians that lack experience with UHPLC
- alternative 3 Delay and dispersion volume. E.g., 0.17 mm ID tubing or bigger + 10 mm classic flow cell, valves, long tubing connections, old mixer design

Column length	Recommended Use
50	High speed
100	High resolution
>=150	Ultra-high resolution

## Method Transferability Across Product Families

Traditional ZORBAX chemistries are aligned with InfinityLab Poroshell chemistries to offer simplified method transfer from fully porous particles to superficially porous particle columns.

### InfinityLab Poroshell Chemistries

InfinityLab Poroshell 120 EC-C18

InfinityLab Poroshell 120 EC-C8

InfinityLab Poroshell 120 Phenyl-Hexyl

InfinityLab Poroshell 120 SB-C18

InfinityLab Poroshell 120 SB-C8

InfinityLab Poroshell 120 SB-Aq

InfinityLab Poroshell 120 Bonus-RP

InfinityLab Poroshell 120 EC-CN

InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC



### Aligned Chemistry

ZORBAX Eclipse Plus C18

ZORBAX Eclipse Plus C8

ZORBAX Eclipse Plus Phenyl-Hexyl

ZORBAX StableBond SB-C18

ZORBAX StableBond SB-C8

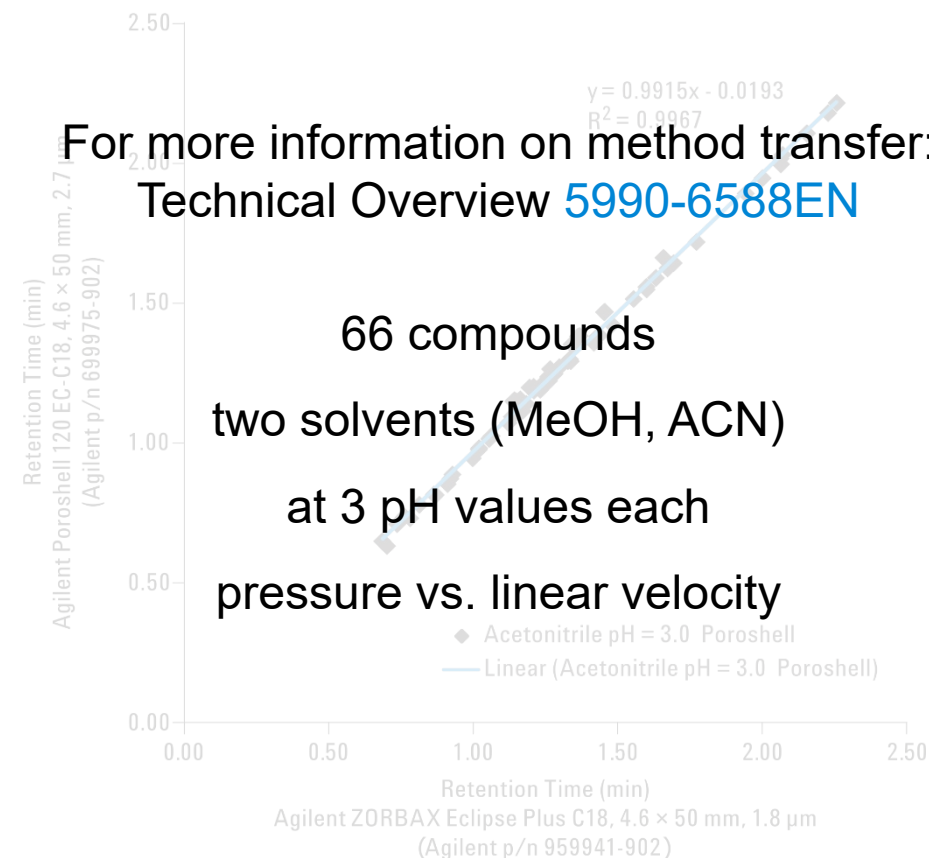
ZORBAX StableBond SB-Aq

ZORBAX Bonus-RP

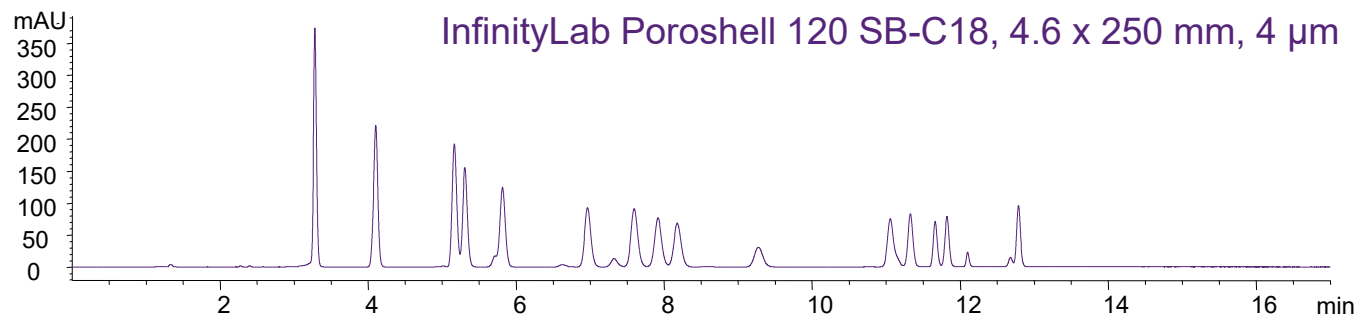
ZORBAX Eclipse XDB-CN

ZORBAX HILIC-Plus

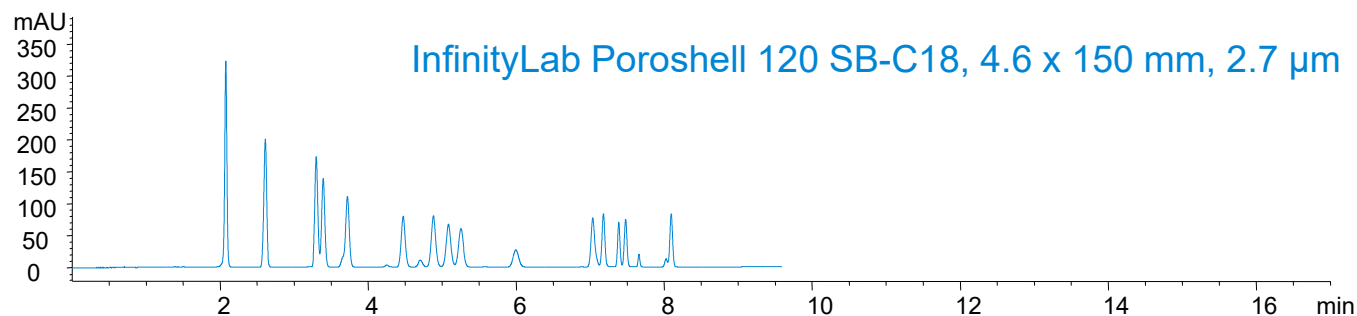
Acetonitrile pH 3.0, Agilent Poroshell 120 EC-C18 versus Agilent ZORBAX Eclipse Plus C18



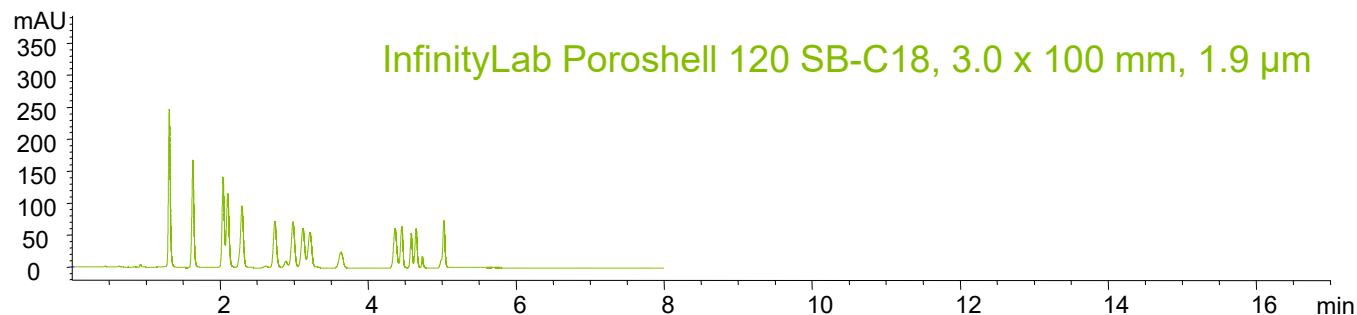
## An example of scalability between particle sizes



HPLC (4 $\mu\text{m}$ )	Value	Difference
Run time	14 min	--
Response / injection volume	80 mAU / $\mu\text{L}$	--
Solvent consumption	21 mL	--
<b>Samples per 8 h day</b>	<b>24</b>	--

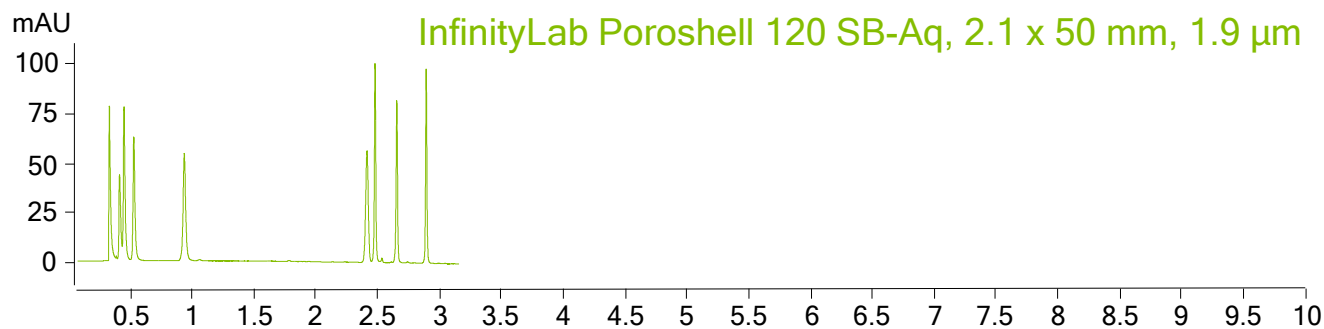
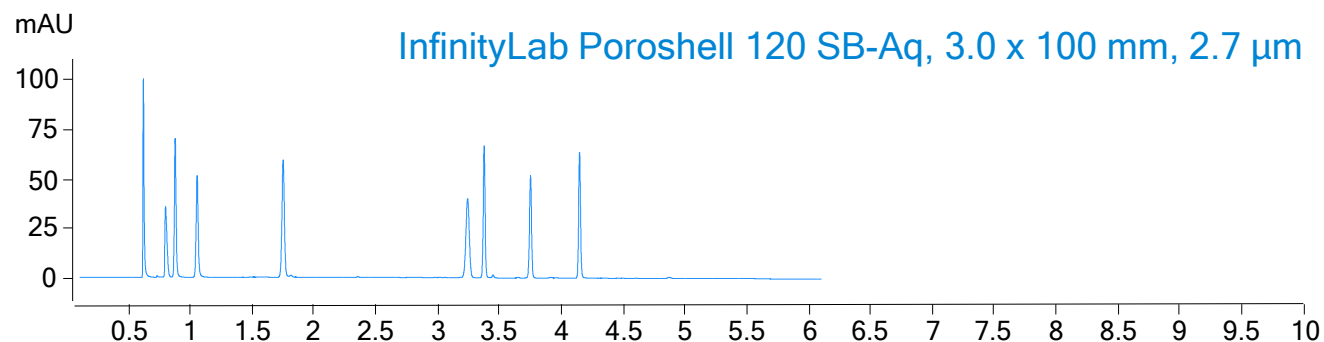
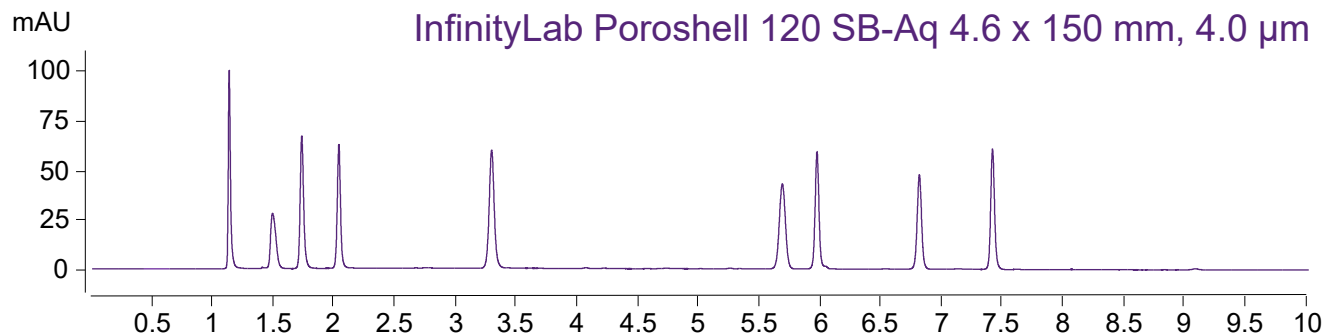


UHPLC (2.7 $\mu\text{m}$ )	Value	Difference
Run time	8.75 min	- 37.5%
Response / injection volume	113 mAU / $\mu\text{L}$	+ 41%
Solvent consumption	13.1 mL	- 37.5%
<b>Samples per 8 h day</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>+24</b>



LD UHPLC (1.9 $\mu\text{m}$ )	Value	Difference
Run time	5.25 min	- 62.5%
Response / injection volume	295 mAU / $\mu\text{L}$	+ 269 %
Solvent consumption	3.36 mL	- 84 %
<b>Samples per 8 h day</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>+56</b>

## Scaling Water-Soluble Vitamins on InfinityLab Poroshell 120 SB-Aq



HPLC (4 $\mu$ m)	Value	Difference
Run time	8 min	--
Response / injection volume	83.3 mAU / $\mu$ L	--
Solvent consumption	12 mL	--
<b>Samples per 8 h day</b>	<b>48</b>	--

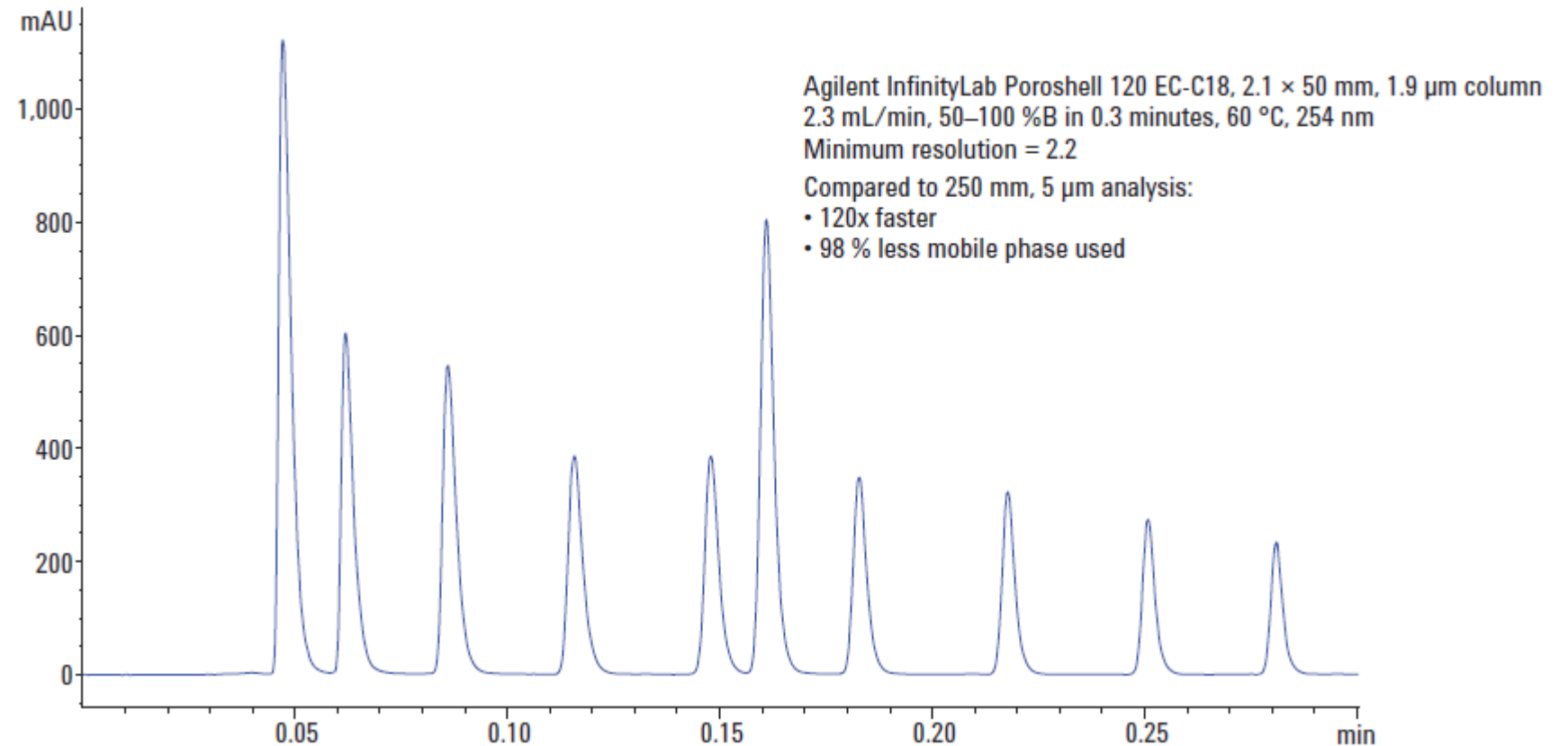
UHPLC (2.7 $\mu$ m)	Value	Difference
Run time	4.5 min	- 44.8%
Response / injection volume	250 mAU/ $\mu$ L	+200%
Solvent consumption	4.5 mL	-43.8%
<b>Samples per 8 h day</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>+ 32</b>

LD UHPLC (1.9 $\mu$ m)	Value	Difference
Run time	3.1 min	- 61.3%
Response / injection volume	800 mAU / $\mu$ L	+900%
Solvent consumption	1.55 mL	-87.1%
<b>Samples per 8 h day</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>+ 97</b>

# Increase Throughput with Ultrafast Separations

Modern columns help to increase the number of samples measured per day

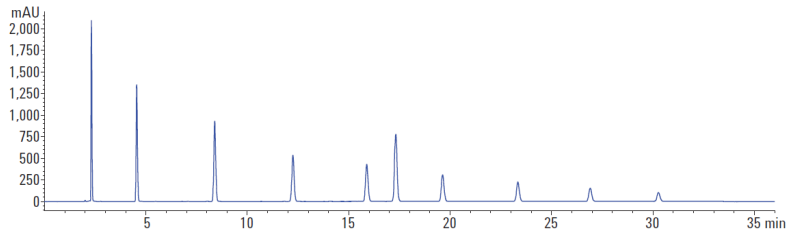
High throughput UHPLC  
at 1150 bar and 60 °C



# Increase Throughput with Ultrafast Separations

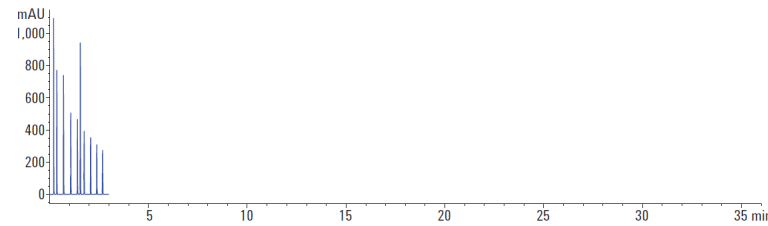
Increase the amount of samples analyzed per day

## Traditional HPLC



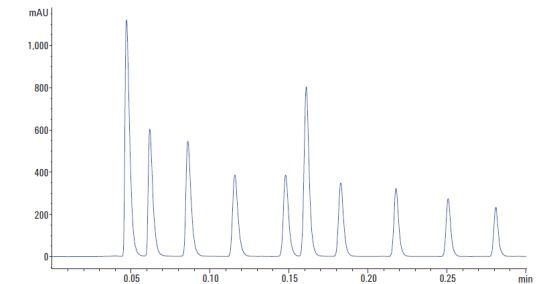
- ZORBAX Eclipse Plus C18, 5  $\mu\text{m}$
- 36 min runtime

## UHPLC



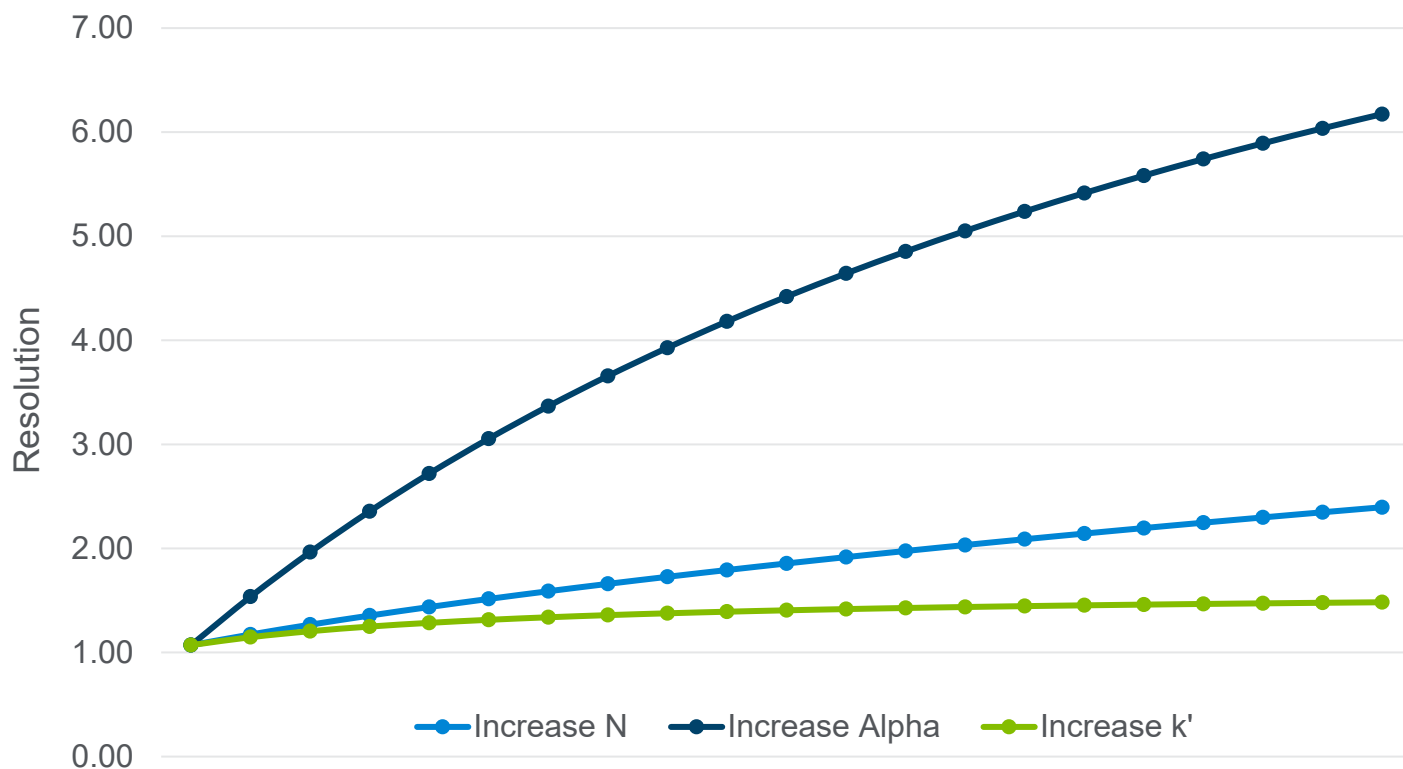
- Poroshell 120 EC-C18, 1.9  $\mu\text{m}$
- 3 min runtime (12 x faster)
- 96% less solvents used
- 95% less sample injected

## Ultrafast UHPLC



- Poroshell 120 EC-C18, 1.9  $\mu\text{m}$
- 0.3 min runtime (120 x faster)
- 98% less solvent

## Selectivity impacts the resolution most



<b>Alpha</b>	<b>1.10</b>	<b>1.35</b>	<b>1.60</b>	<b>1.85</b>	<b>2.1</b>
plates	5,000	10,000	15,000	20,000	25,000
k'	2.0	4.5	7.0	9.5	12.0

$$R_s = \frac{\sqrt{N}}{4} \left( \frac{\alpha - 1}{\alpha} \right) \cdot \frac{k'}{k' + 1}$$

### Selectivity impacts resolution

- Stationary and mobile phase
- Temperature
- N is strongly influenced by alpha

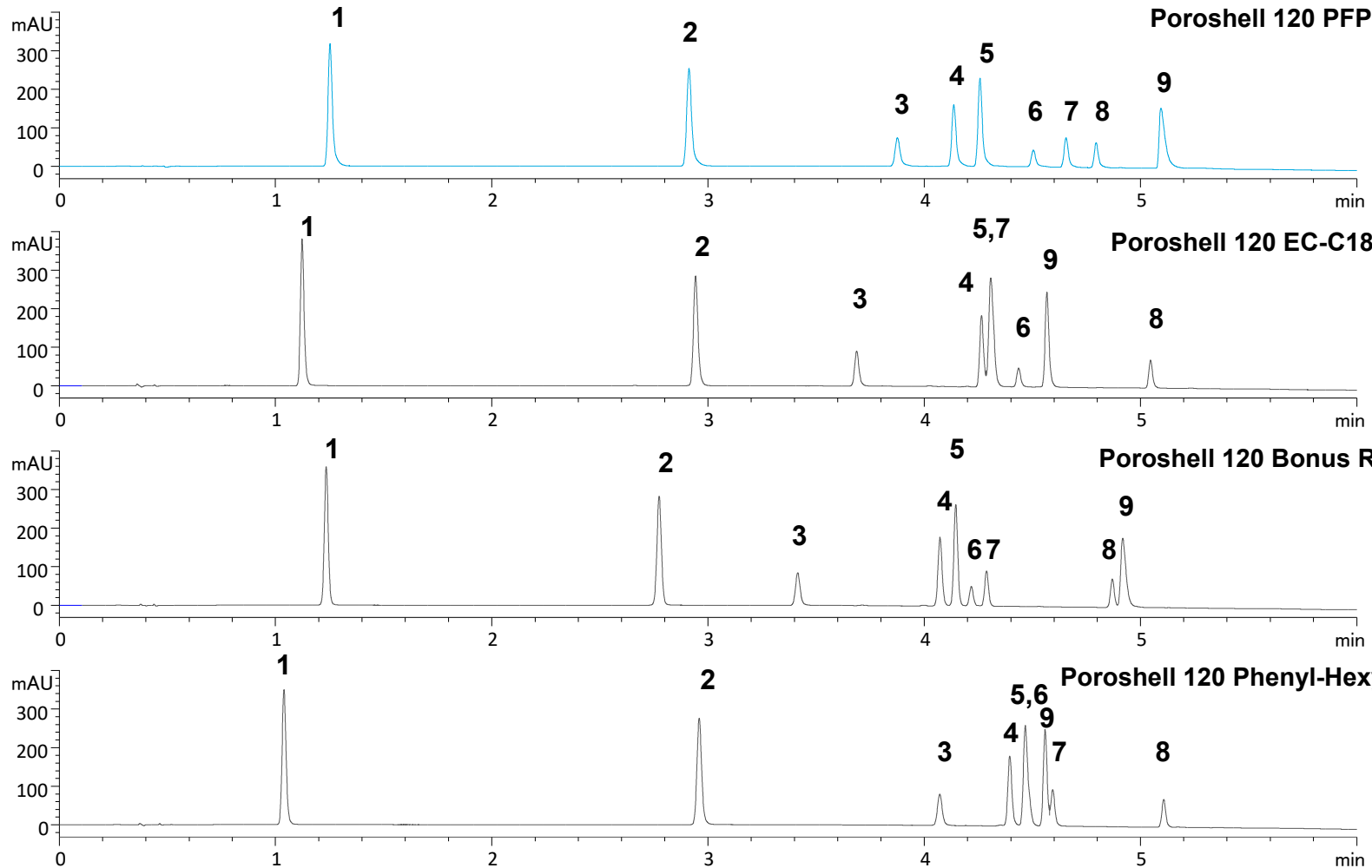
# The InfinityLab Poroshell 120 Portfolio

Agilent Poroshell columns are designed for multiple separation modes

Best all around	Best for <b>low pH</b> mobile phases	Best for <b>high pH</b> mobile phases	Best for alternative selectivity	Best for more polar analytes	Chiral
<b>EC-C18</b> <sup>A</sup> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>SB-C18</b> <sup>A</sup> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>HPH-C18</b> <sup>A</sup> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>Bonus-RP</b> <sup>A,B</sup> 2.7 μm	<b>SB-Aq</b> <sup>A,B</sup> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>Chiral-V</b> <sup>A,C,D</sup> 2.7 μm
<b>EC-C8</b> <sup>A</sup> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>SB-C8</b> <sup>A</sup> 2.7 μm	<b>HPH-C8</b> <sup>A</sup> 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>PFP</b> <sup>A,B,D</sup> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>EC-CN</b> <sup>A,B,C,D</sup> 2.7 μm	<b>Chiral-T</b> <sup>A,C,D</sup> 2.7 μm
<b>Phenyl-Hexyl</b> <sup>A</sup> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm		<b>CS-C18</b> <sup>A</sup> 2.7 μm ← →		<b>HILIC</b> <sup>C,D,E</sup> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>Chiral-CD</b> <sup>A,C,D</sup> 2.7 μm
<b>Legend</b> A reversed phase B can be operated at 100% aqueous C Normal phase D SFC E HILIC				<b>HILIC-Z</b> <sup>C,D,E</sup> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm	<b>Chiral-CF</b> <sup>A,C,D</sup> 2.7 μm
				<b>HILIC-OH5</b> <sup>C,D,E</sup> 2.7 μm	



## The influence of stationary phase on selectivity and resolution



Time	% Organic
0	8
6	100
7	100
8	8

2mL/min      254 nm

### Compounds:

1. APAP, 2. Phenacetin, 3. Piroxicam, 4. Tolmetin, 5. Ketoprofen, 6. Naproxen, 7. Sulindac, 8. Diclofenac, 9. Diflunisal

## Starting Recommendation

Poroshell 120 EC-C18

Change Selectivity Slightly	Change Selectivity Significantly	For Many Early Eluters	No retention at 98+% Aqueous in RP	Acidic Solvents (pH < 2)	Basic Solvents (pH > 6)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Poroshell Phenyl-Hexyl</li> <li>2. Polaris C18-A</li> <li>3. Poroshell EC-C8</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Poroshell Bonus-RP</li> <li>2. Poroshell PFP</li> <li>3. Pursuit XRs Diphenyl</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Poroshell SB-Aq</li> <li>2. Poroshell PFP</li> <li>3. Poroshell HILIC-Z</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Poroshell HILIC-Z</li> <li>2. Poroshell PFP</li> <li>3. Poroshell HILIC-OH5</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Poroshell SB-C18</li> <li>2. Poroshell SB-Aq</li> <li>3. PLRP-S</li> <li>4. Poroshell SB-C8</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Poroshell HPH-C18</li> <li>2. PLRP-S</li> <li>3. Poroshell CS-C18</li> </ol>

### Top 3 to keep around (covers 95% of analyses)

Poroshell EC-C18    Poroshell HILIC-Z    Poroshell PFP

### Recommended Solvent A (Weak)

1. 0.1% Formic Acid (pH ~2.7)
2. 10 mmol Ammonium Acetate (adj. pH 5)
3. 0.1% Ammonium Hydroxide (pH ~10)
4. 0.1% Trifluoroacetic acid (pH ~1.5, *no MS*)
5. 150 mmol Sodium Phosphate (adj. pH 3, *no MS*)

### Solvent B (Strong)

1. Acetonitrile
2. Methanol
3. Isopropanol
4. THF
5. Acetone

### USP L1

1. Poroshell 120 EC-C18
2. Polaris C18-A
3. Polaris C18-Ether
4. Pursuit XRs C18

### USP L7

1. Poroshell 120 EC-C8
2. Polaris C8-A

### USP L8

1. Polaris NH2
2. ZORBAX NH2

### USP L3

1. Poroshell 120 HILIC
2. ZORBAX Rx-Sil
3. Pursuit XRs Si

### USP L11

1. Poroshell Phe-Hex
2. Pursuit XRs Diphenyl

### Sugars (RI or ELSD)

1. Poroshell HILIC-Z
2. Hi-Plex H
3. Hi-Plex Ca
4. Polaris NH2

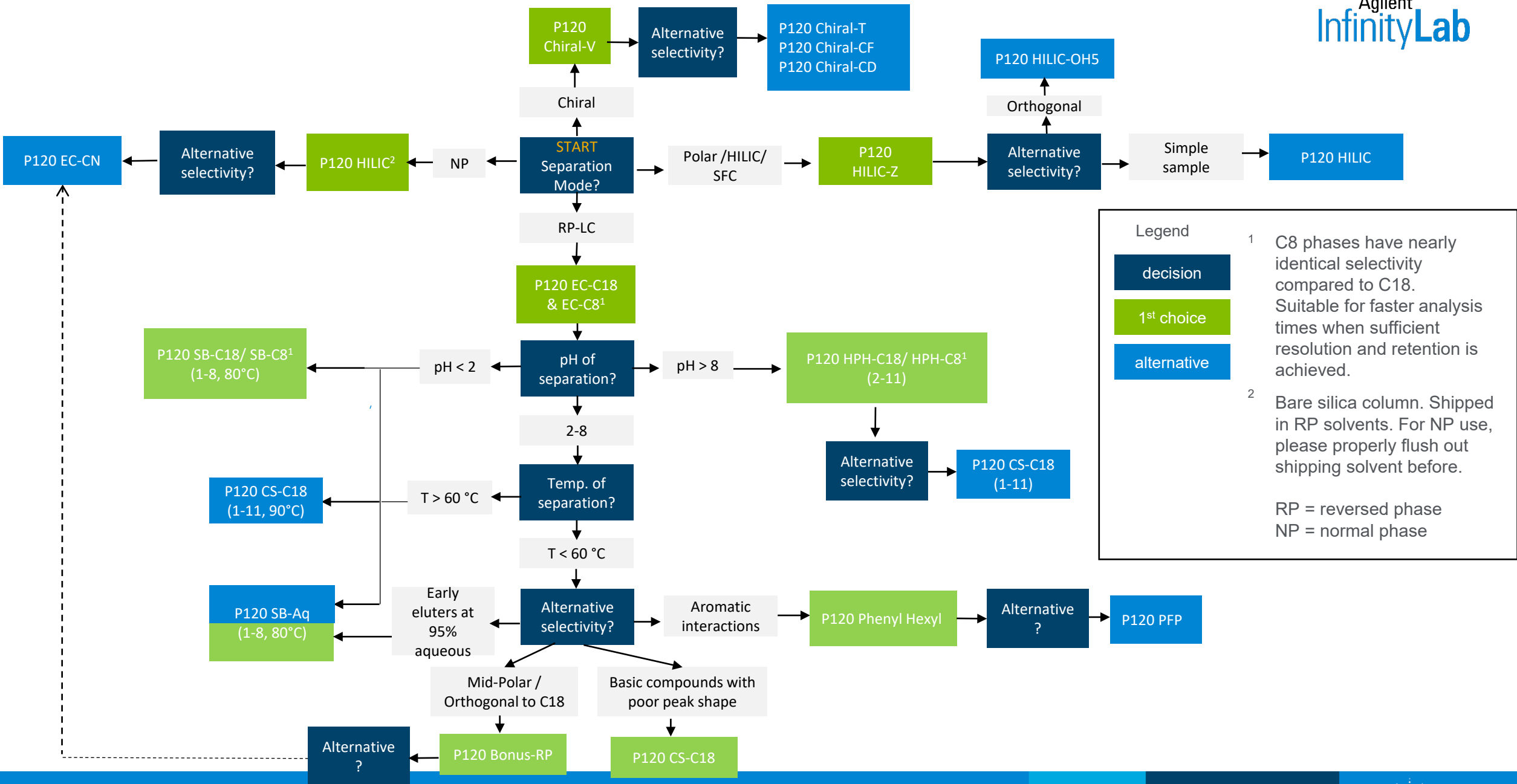
### Normal Phase

1. Poroshell HILIC
2. Poroshell EC-CN
3. Polaris NH2

### Chiral

1. Poroshell Chiral-V
2. Poroshell Chiral-T
3. Poroshell Chiral-CD
4. Poroshell Chiral-CF

# HPLC Chemistry Selection: Poroshell 120



**Legend**

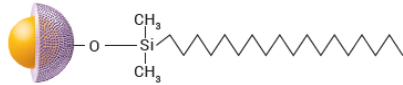

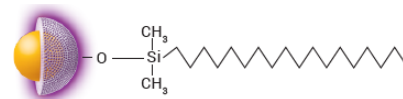

- decision
- 1<sup>st</sup> choice
- alternative

<sup>1</sup> C8 phases have nearly identical selectivity compared to C18. Suitable for faster analysis times when sufficient resolution and retention is achieved.

<sup>2</sup> Bare silica column. Shipped in RP solvents. For NP use, please properly flush out shipping solvent before.

RP = reversed phase  
NP = normal phase

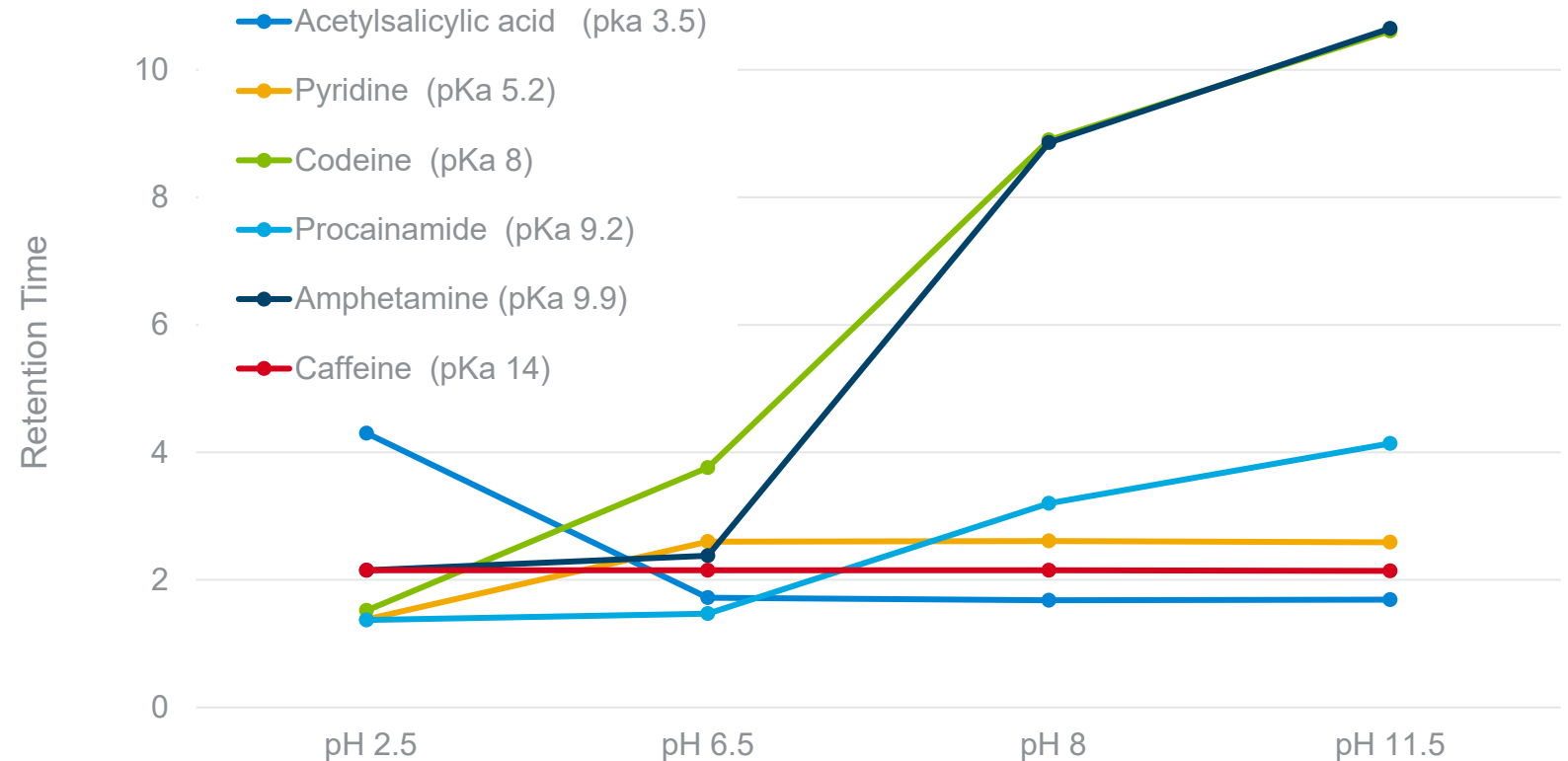
# Choosing Between C18s

InfinityLab Poroshell 120	Chemistry	Pore Size	Endcapped	Carbon Load	Surface Area	Best For
<b>EC-C18</b> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm		120 Å	Yes	10%	130 m <sup>2</sup> /g	General Purpose Excellent peak shape and efficiency for acids, bases, neutrals
<b>SB-C18</b> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm		120 Å	No	9%	130 m <sup>2</sup> /g	Low pH Excellent stability and peak shape in highly acidic conditions
<b>HPH-C18</b> 1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm		100 Å	Yes	Proprietary	95 m <sup>2</sup> /g	High pH capable Robust performance and long lifetimes
<b>CS-C18</b> 2.7 μm		100 Å	Yes	Proprietary	95 m <sup>2</sup> /g	Alternate selectivity Improved peak shape and sample capacity for basic compounds with low ionic strength mobile phases High pH capable

# A pH Change Can Strongly Affect Selectivity

Mobile phase pH is a powerful method development tool for separating ionizable compounds

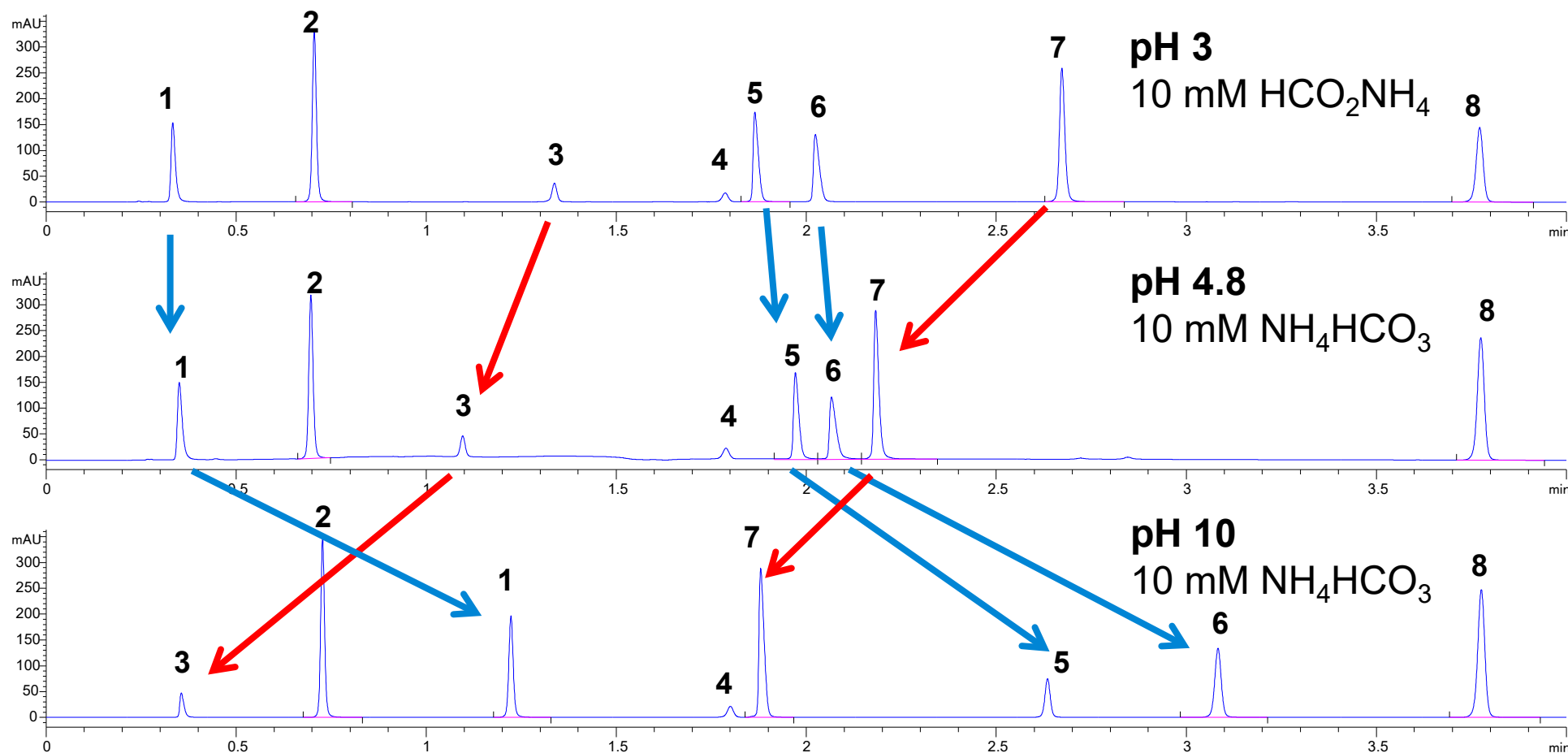
- In RPLC mode, ionizable analytes are more retained in their neutral state
- **Acids** are more retained at low pH
- **Bases** are more retained at high pH
- **Neutrals** are not impacted by mobile phase pH



Mobile phase: 45% Methanol, 55% 20 mM Phosphate Buffer

# Selectivity Can be Controlled by Changing pH

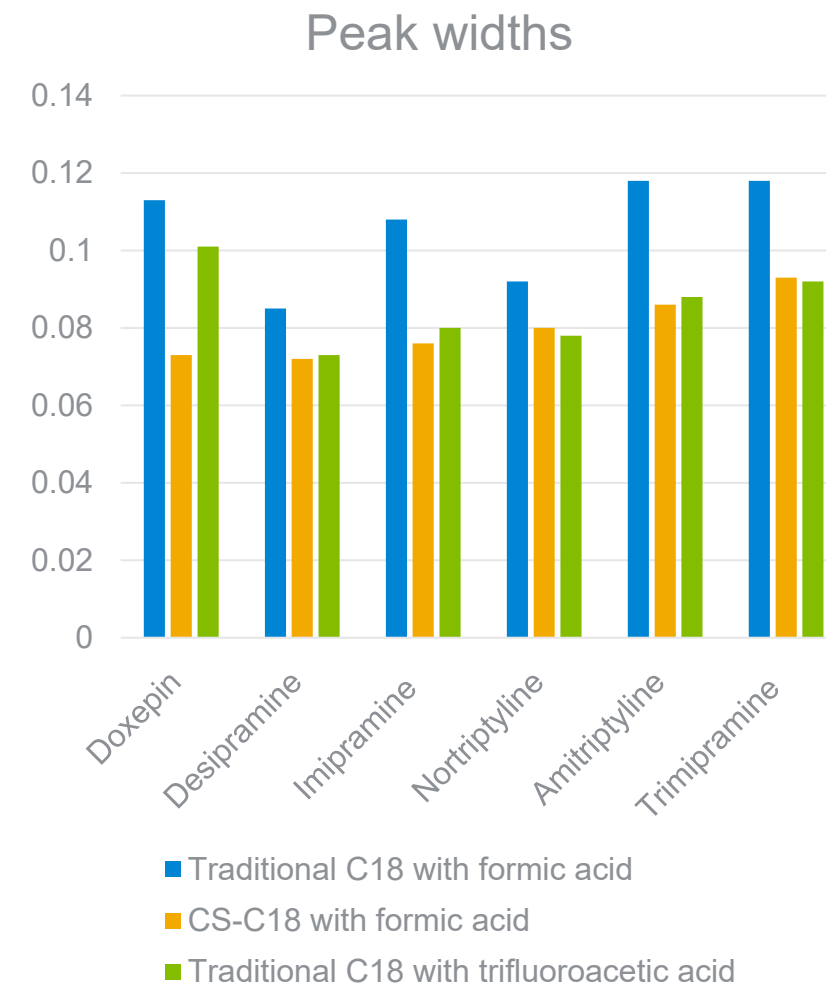
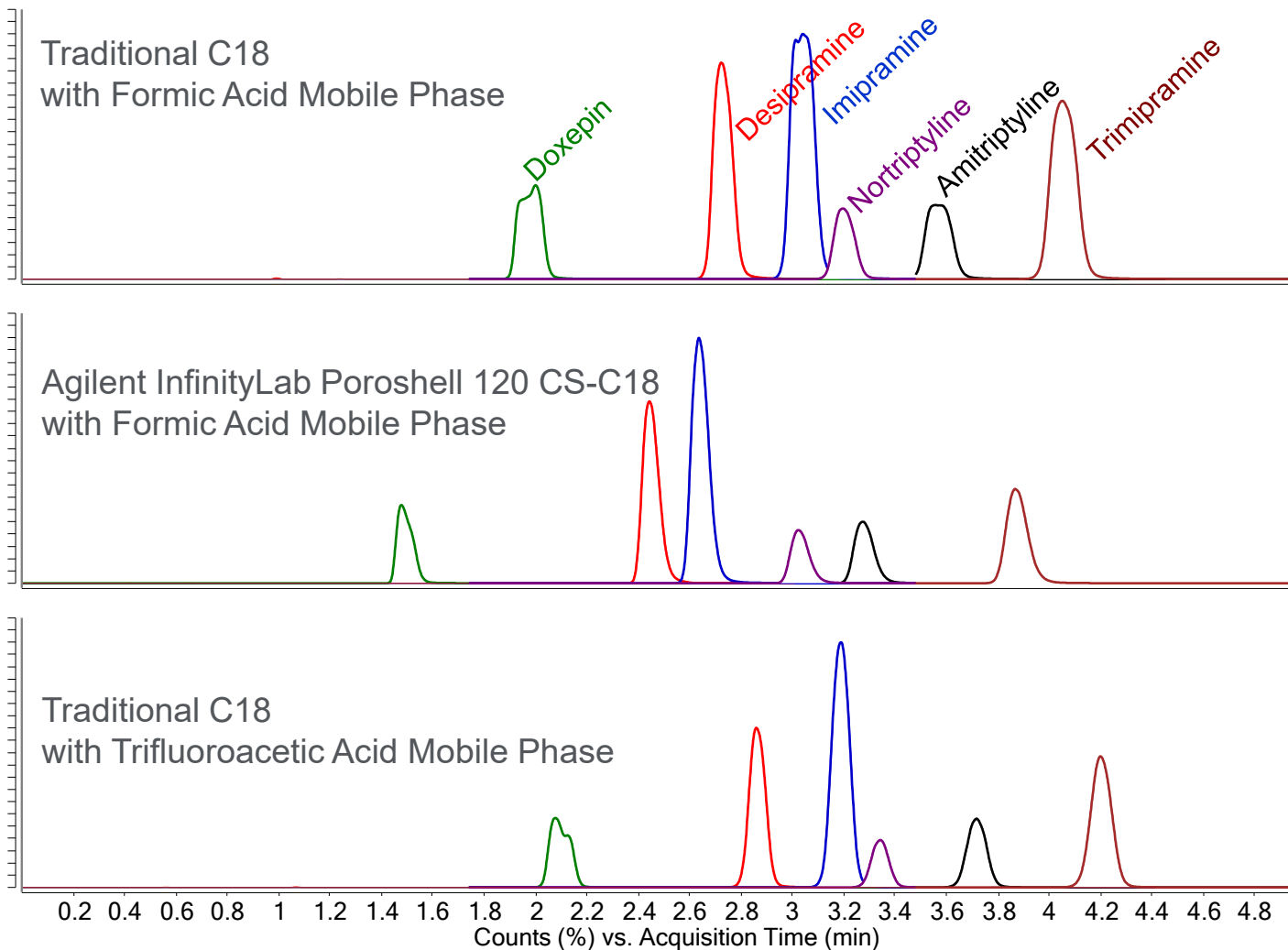
## Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell HPH-C18 4.6 x 50 mm, 2.7 $\mu\text{m}$



1. Procainamide
2. Caffeine
3. Acetyl Salicylic Acid
4. Hexanophenone Deg.
5. Dipyrimadole
6. Diltiazem
7. Diflunisal
8. Hexanophenone

Time	% Buffer	% MeCN
0	10	90
5	90	10
7	10	90
2 ml/min		254 mn

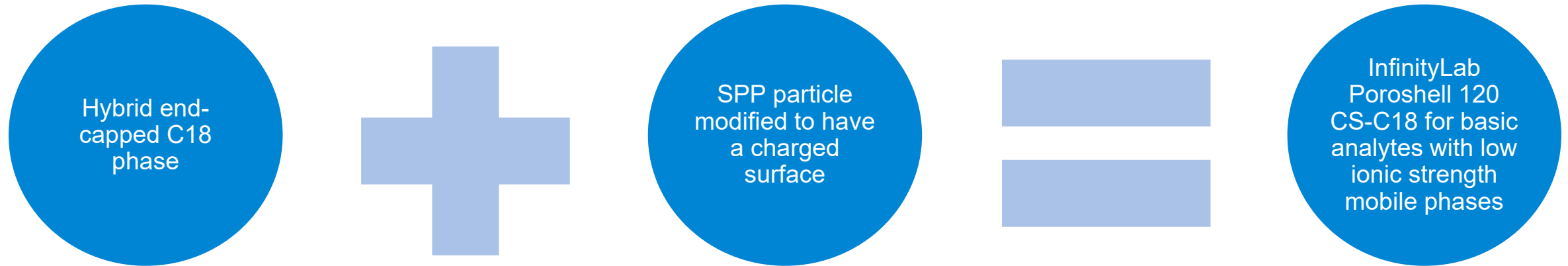
# Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 CS-C18 Gives Better Peak Shape for Basic Analytes with Formic Acid Mobile Phase than a Traditional C18



A: 0.1% formic acid or 0.2% trifluoroacetic acid in water; B: acetonitrile; 0.4 mL/min; isocratic: %B varies; 2.1 x 100 mm columns, 1 µL injection, 30 °C, LC/MS: ESI+, dMRM; Sample: 5 µg/mL of doxepin, desipramine, imipramine, nortriptyline, amitriptyline, trimipramine

**Read more: [Agilent application note: 5994-2095EN](#)**

# InfinityLab Poroshell 120 CS-C18



- High pH stable
- Alternate C18 selectivity

- Better peak shape for basic compounds
- Formic acid compatibility
- Reduced operating pressures
- Increased speed of analysis

## Column dimensions

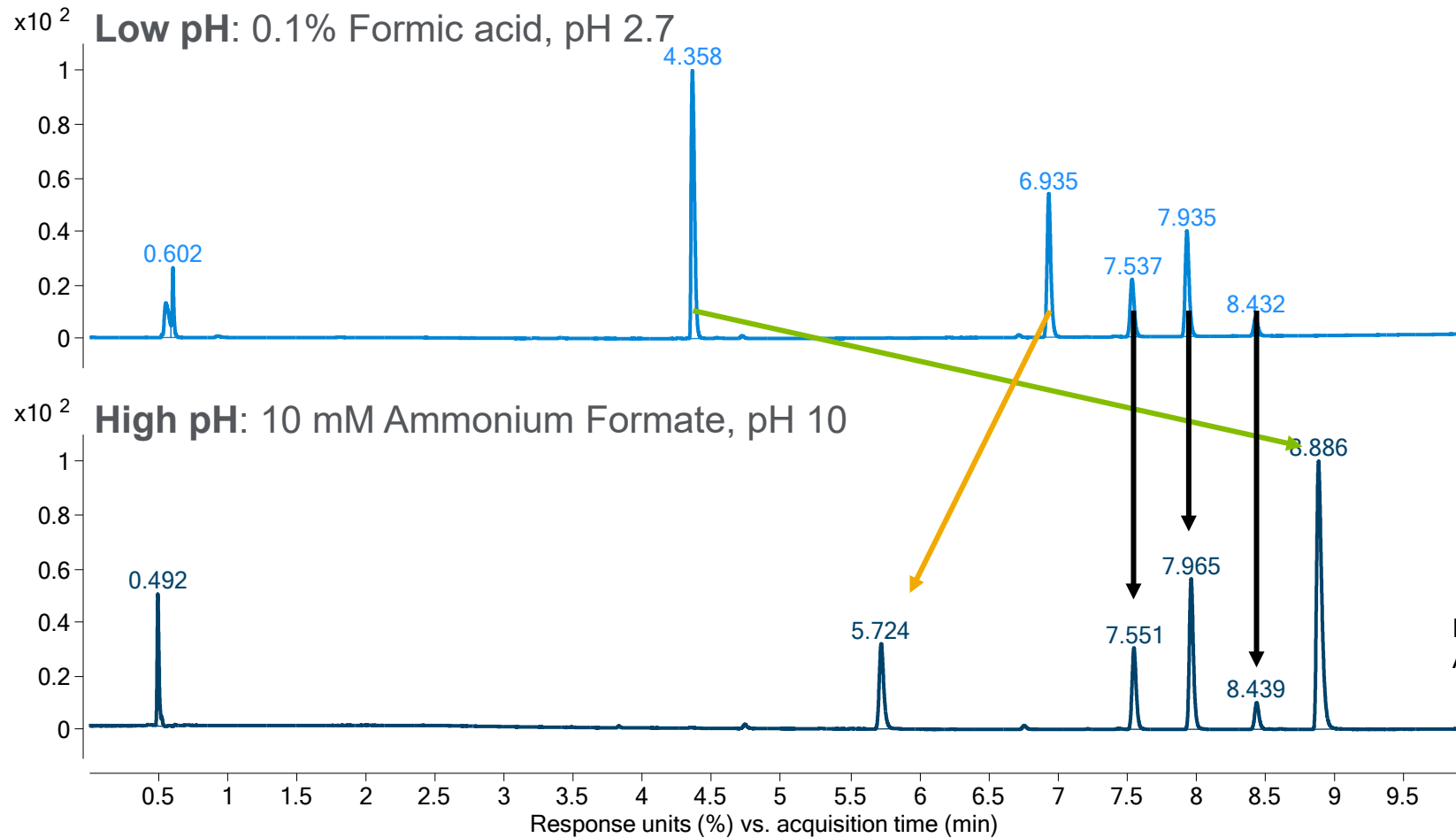
- 2.1, 3, 4.6 mm id x 50, 100, 150 mm length
- PEEK-lined options ★

★ PEEK-lined column options are rare in the reverse phase column market and help with challenging metal sensitive compounds.



# A pH Change Can Strongly Affect Selectivity

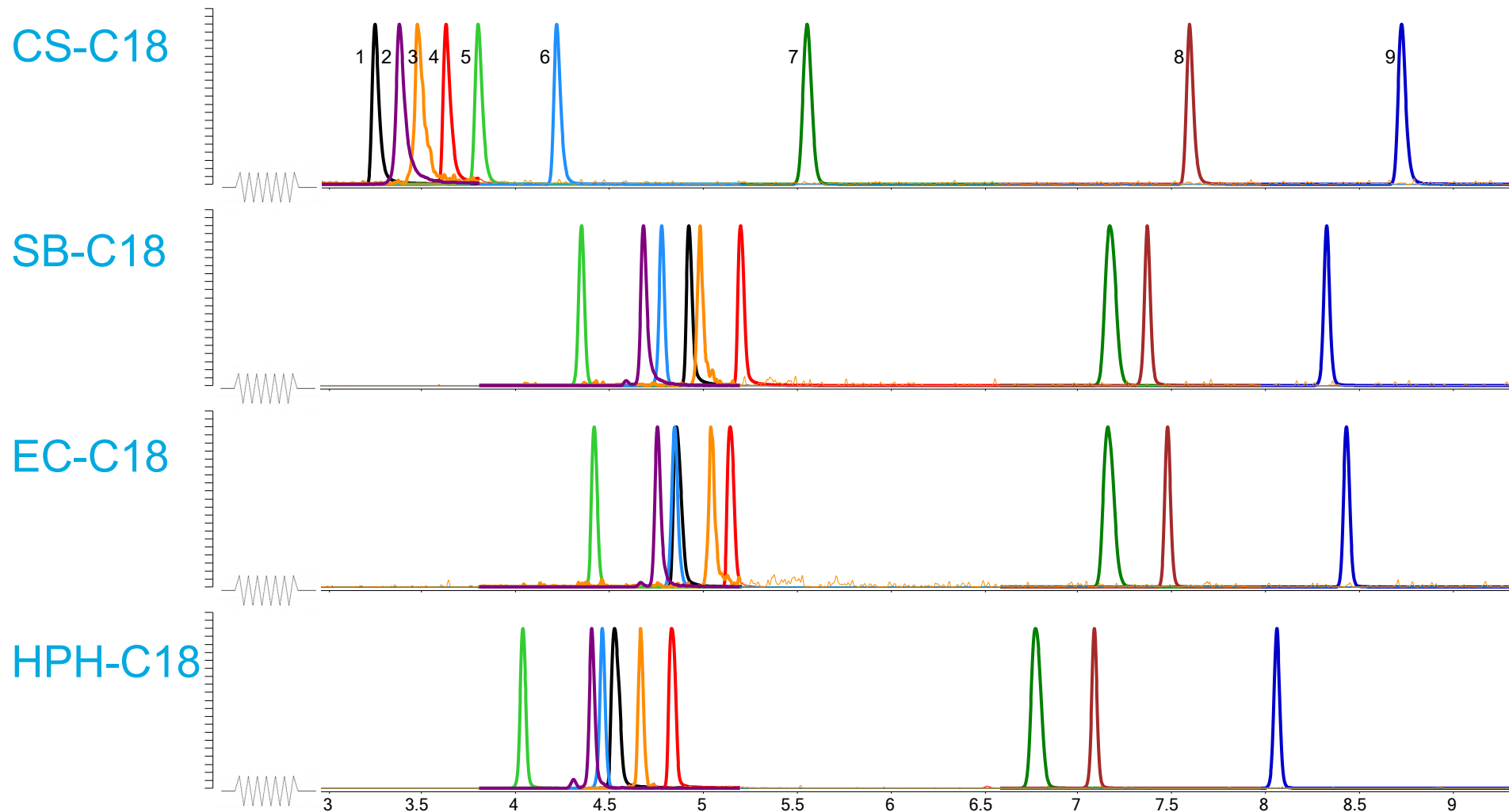
CS-C18 is another high-pH compatible L1 stationary phases



Read more:  
Application Note 5994-2274EN

5-95% CH<sub>3</sub>CN in 10 min, 4 min post run, mobile phase A varies, 0.4 mL/min, 2.1 x 100 mm, 2.7 μm Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 CS-C18, 30 °C, DAD: 254 nm, 80 Hz; Sample: uracil, amitriptyline, butyl paraben, dipropyl phthalate, acenaphthene

# The Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 CS-C18 Offers Alternative Selectivity to Other C18s to Facilitate Method development at Low pH



Veterinary Drugs		
1	Ciprofloxacin	-----
2	Oxytetracycline	-----
3	Tetracycline	-----
4	Enrofloxacin	-----
5	Sulfamerazine	-----
6	Sulfamethazine	-----
7	Erythromycin	-----
8	Penicillin-G	-----
9	Oxacillin	-----

Method Parameters:  
 A: 0.1% formic acid in water  
 B: acetonitrile  
 0.4 mL/min, 0-95% B in 15 min  
 0.05 µL injection  
 Sample: 0.1 mg/mL in water  
 Column: 30 °C, 2.1 x 100 mm, 2.7 µm  
 Detection: LC/MS, ESI+, dMRM

Agilent Application Note: 5994-2358EN

# What is HILIC and When Should I Consider it?

## HILIC Complements RPLC

Reversed-phase LC		Hydrophilic interaction LC (HILIC)
Non-polar stationary phase (e.g., C18)	Polarity	Polar stationary phase (e.g., silica)
Polar mobile phase H <sub>2</sub> O/CH <sub>3</sub> OH, H <sub>2</sub> O/CH <sub>3</sub> CN	Mobile Phase	Polar mobile phase H <sub>2</sub> O/CH <sub>3</sub> CN
Decrease retention by decreasing polarity of mobile phase  ddH <sub>2</sub> O ↓ = retention ↑ CH <sub>3</sub> CN ↑ = retention ↓	Gradient	Retains hydrophilic (polar and ionized) compounds well and often reverses elution order vs RPLC  ddH <sub>2</sub> O ↑ = retention ↓ CH <sub>3</sub> CN ↓ = retention ↑
polar to non-polar	Elution Order	non-polar to polar

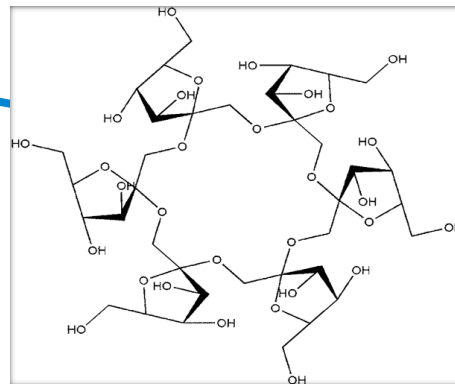
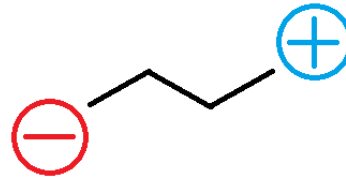
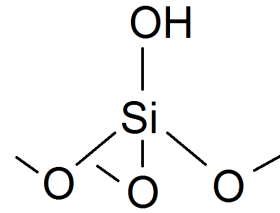
## InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC column options

### Best for polar analytes

InfinityLab Poroshell  
**HILIC**  
1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm

InfinityLab Poroshell  
**HILIC-Z**  
1.9 μm, 2.7 μm, 4 μm

InfinityLab Poroshell  
**HILIC-OH5**  
2.7 μm



### HILIC

- Bare silica chemistry
- For very simple mixtures, low column bleed

### HILIC-Z

- Proprietary zwitterionic chemistry, high pH stable
- **Most modern and robust column – start method development here**
- PEEK-lined version available

### HILIC-OH5

- Brushed fructan chemistry
- Alternative selectivity

## Starting mobile phases

### Mobile Phase A (Strong phase, H<sub>2</sub>O):

- Typical buffer concentration: 5-30 mM
  - 10 - 20 mM is most common

**Basic Analytes**

- Ammonium Formate, pH 3

- Ammonium Acetate, pH 4–5

**Acidic Analytes**

- Ammonium Acetate, pH ~7

- Ammonium acetate solution is near pH 7, before adjusting with other modifiers
- Not a true buffer, but still commonly used at mid-pH

- Ammonium Acetate or Formate, pH 9–10

- Can be formate or acetate because the ammonium ion is buffering
- **HILIC-Z only!**

**Sugars**

- Ammonium Hydroxide, pH 10–11

- **HILIC-Z only!**

- *Phosphate buffers are not recommended \**

### Mobile Phase B (Weak phase, CH<sub>3</sub>CN):

- Buffer concentration should match Mobile Phase A for improved reproducibility
- Adding 10% water in ACN generally recommended for improved solubility and faster re-equilibration
- Pure MeOH is too strong a solvent for most HILIC separations. Mixed with ACN in small quantities (<15%), it can be used to change selectivity slightly.

### Example of mobile phase preparation:

**Stock:** 200 mM ammonium formate adjusted to pH 3 with formic acid

**A:** 900 mL water + 100 mL stock

**B:** 900 mL acetonitrile + 100 mL stock

\*Note: Phosphates have low solubility in high % ACN (1-30 mM). Always test solubility before running. Never run in >80% ACN to avoid precipitation.

## Starting Mobile Phases

In HILIC mode, ionizable compounds are better retained when they are ionized

- Acids at high pH
- Bases at low pH

Once the analyte is fully ionized, retention should stabilize

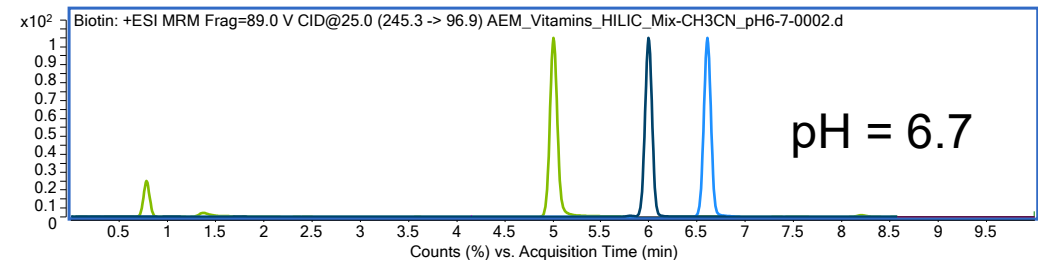
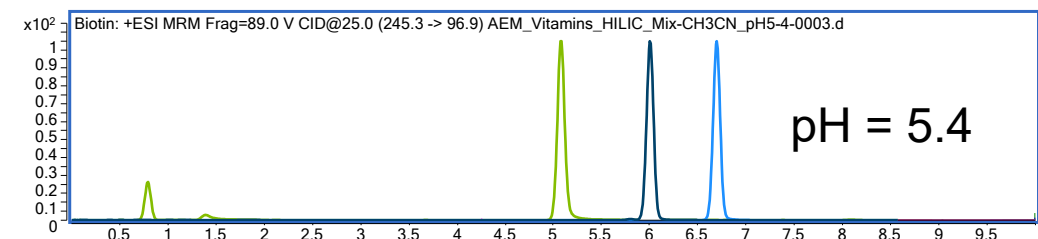
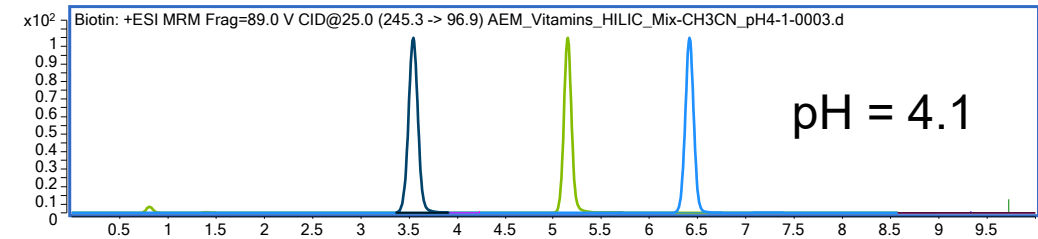
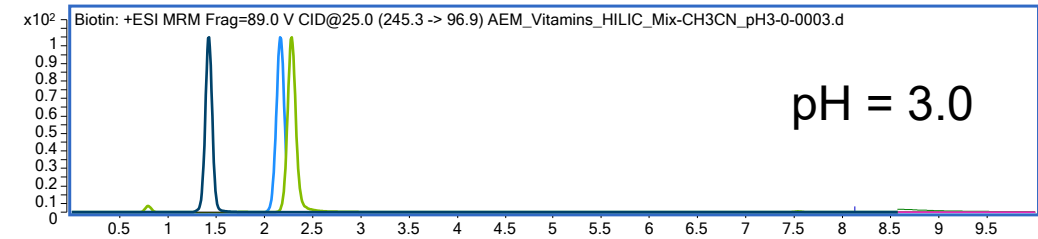
- Note: if other retention mechanisms are occurring, this may not be true

**Biotin pKa = 4.5**

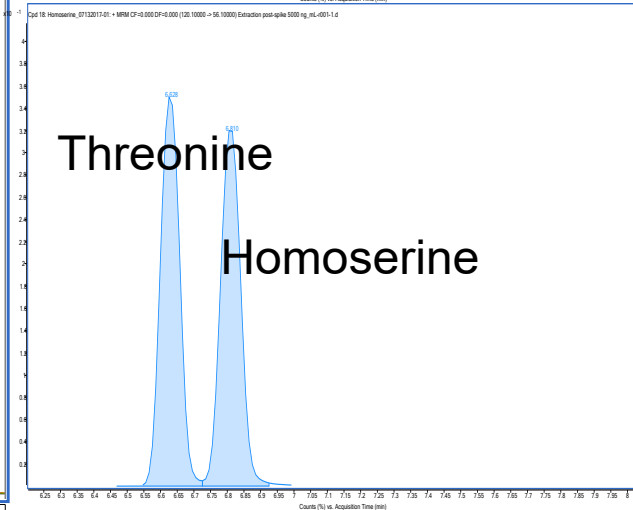
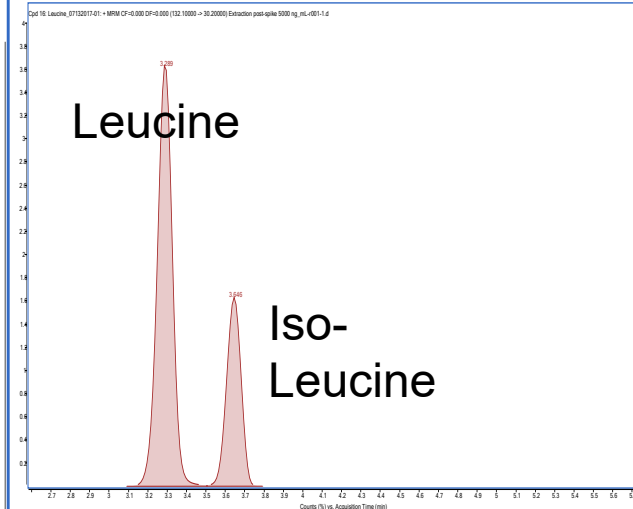
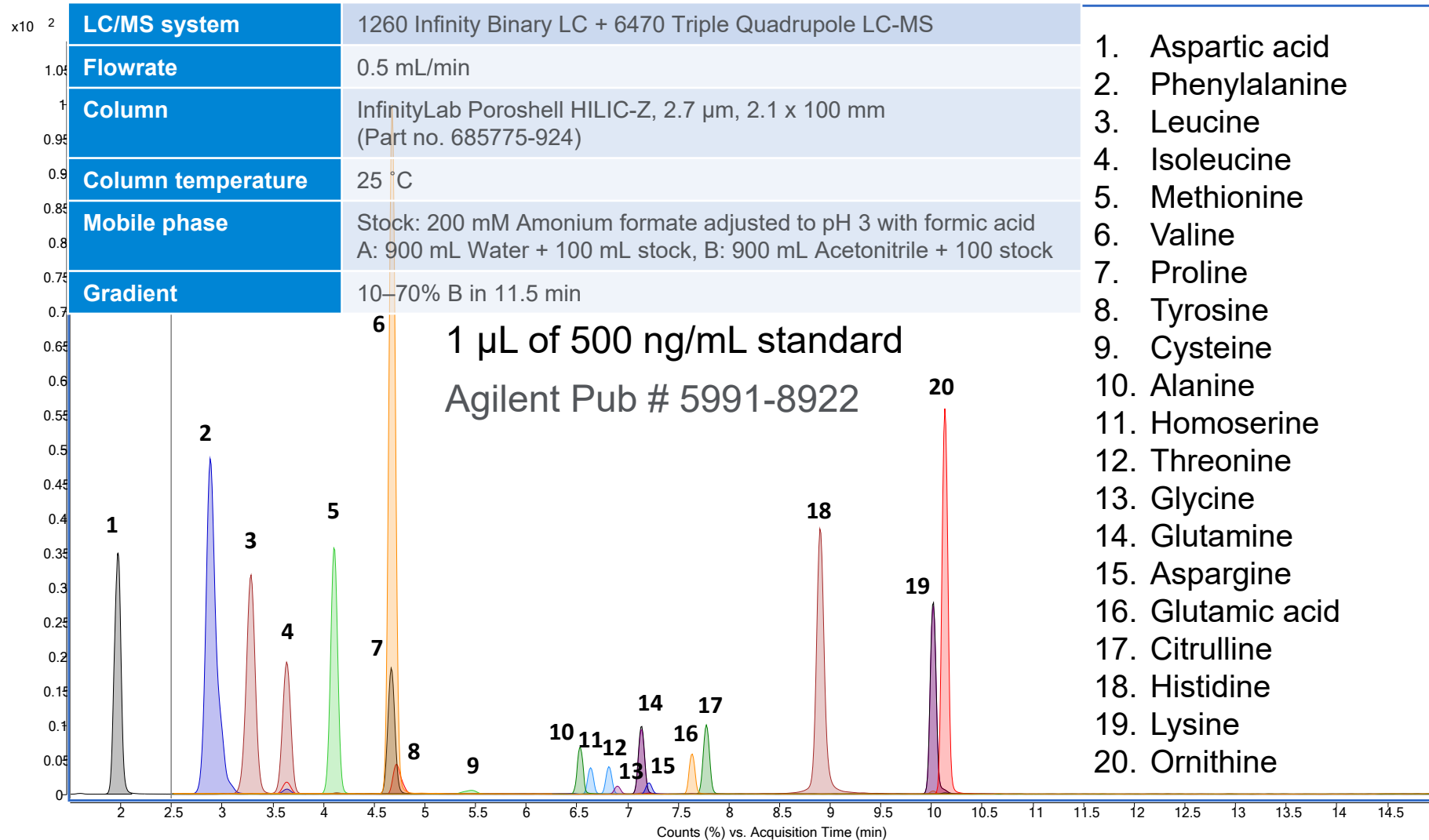
**Nicotinic acid pKa = 4.8**

**Pantothenic acid pKa = 4.3**

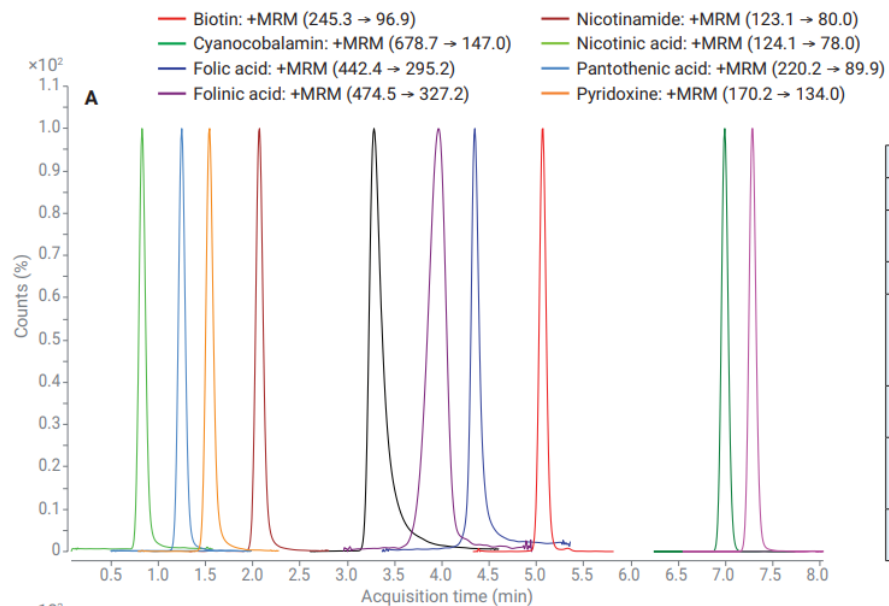
Mobile Phase A: H<sub>2</sub>O, B: CH<sub>3</sub>CN, D: varies, 200 mM Ammonium Formate or Acetate; Flow Rate: 0.5 mL/min; Gradient: 95% B for 1 min, 95–65% B in 9 min, hold 5% D constant throughout analysis, 5 min post run; Injection: 0.5 µL of 13.3 µg/mL each in CH<sub>3</sub>CN/H<sub>2</sub>O 19:1; Column: 25 °C, 2.1 x 100 mm, 2.7 µm Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-Z; Detection: Ultivo TQ/MS ESI+ dMRM



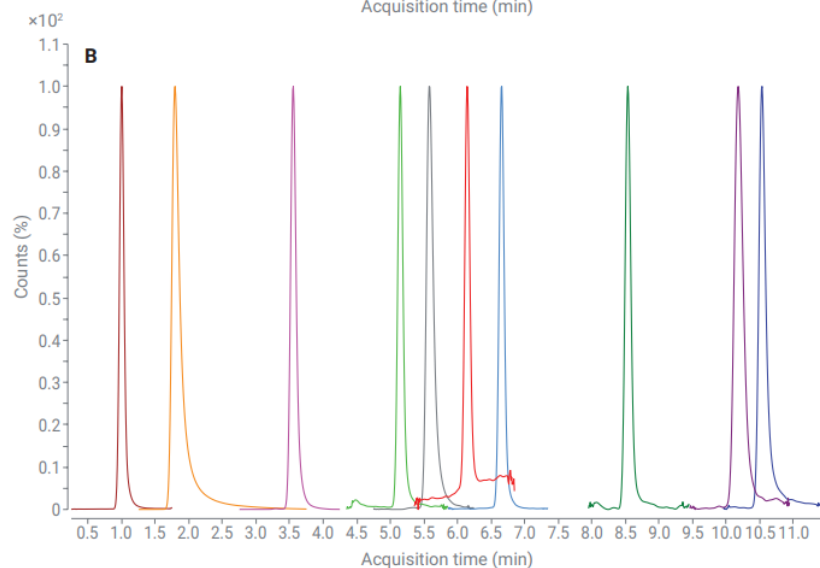
# Analysis of Amino Acids (and Isobars) in Plant Tissue with LC-MS/MS



# Reversed Phase versus HILIC



Mobile Phase A	H <sub>2</sub> O
Mobile Phase B	CH <sub>3</sub> CN
Mobile Phase D	200 mM ammonium acetate + 0.2% acetic acid, pH ~5.3
Flow Rate	0.5 mL/min
Gradient	0% B for 1 minute, 0 to 25% B in 8 minutes, hold 5% D constant throughout analysis, 3 minutes post run
Injection	0.5 µL of 0.4 µg/mL vitamin standard in H <sub>2</sub> O
Column	25 °C, Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 Phenyl-Hexyl, 2.1 × 100 mm, 2.7 µm
Detection	Agilent Ultivo TQ/MS ESI+ dMRM, DAD Sig = 260 nm, 80 Hz



Mobile Phase A	H <sub>2</sub> O
Mobile Phase B	CH <sub>3</sub> CN
Mobile Phase D	200 mM ammonium acetate (no pH adjustment), pH ~6.7
Flow Rate	0.5 mL/min
Gradient	95 to 65% B in 10 minutes, hold 5% D constant throughout analysis, 5 minutes post run
Injection	0.5 µL injection of 0.4 µg/mL vitamin standard in CH <sub>3</sub> CN
Column	25 °C, Agilent InfinityLab Poroshell 120 HILIC-OH5, 2.1 × 100 mm, 2.7 µm
Detection	Agilent Ultivo TQ/MS ESI+ dMRM (parameters above), DAD Sig = 260 nm, 80 Hz

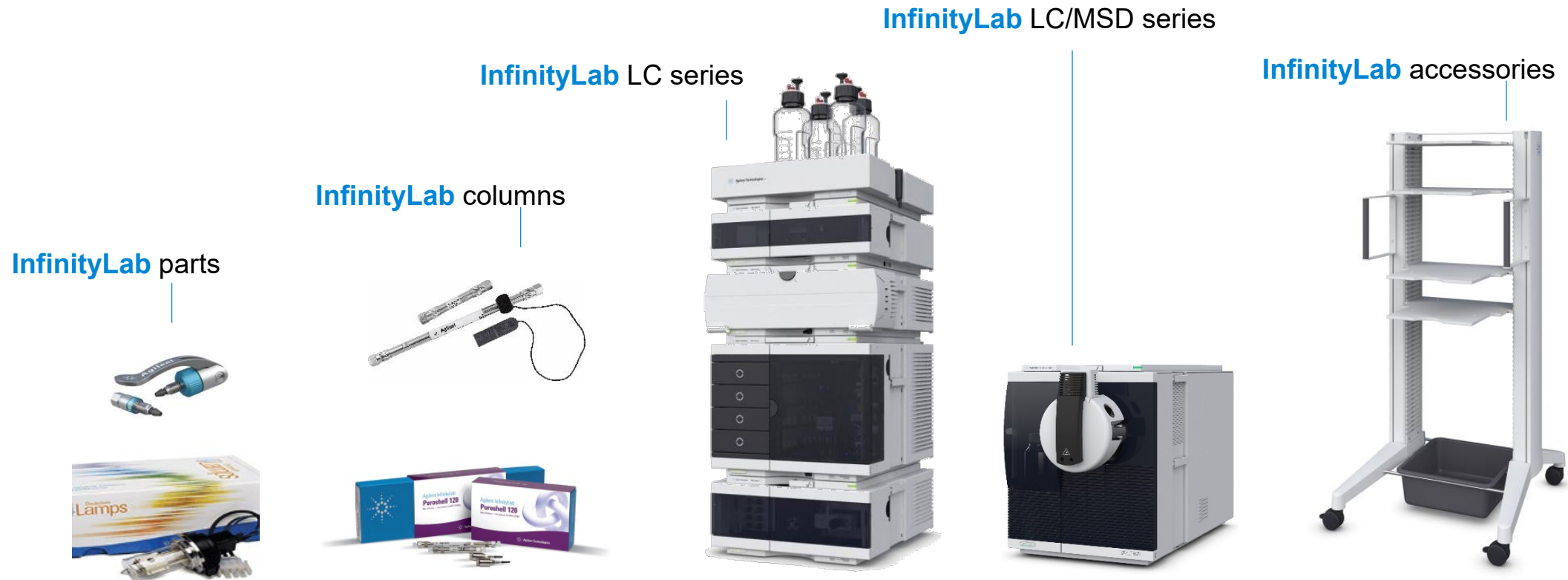


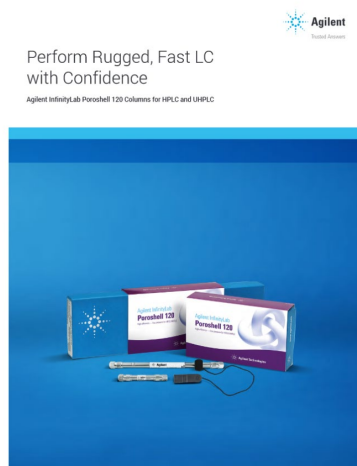
# Full Compatibility



Designed to seamlessly integrate into the InfinityLab family

Agilent **InfinityLab** products are designed to provide you the best efficiency in your liquid chromatography workflow - regardless of application area. When relying on Agilent **InfinityLab instruments**, **columns**, and **supplies** be assured that every part works together seamlessly.





[Poroshell 120  
portfolio brochure](#)

5991-8750EN

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