The molecular recognition of phosphorylated proteins by designed polypeptides conjugated to a small molecule that binds phosphate.

Supporting Information:

Table of Contents

General information about the procedures and chemicals used in experimental section:
Phosphorylated Peptide Sequence, MALDI-MS (PhosPep)5
Methyl 3,5-bis(bromomethyl)-benzoate (2) ¹ 6
Methyl 3,5-bis[[bis(2 pyridylmethyl)amino]methyl]benzoate (3) ² 8
5-Bis[[bis(2-pyridylmethyl)amino]methyl]benzoic acid * TEA salt / PP1-OH*TEA (4)10
7-Methoxycoumarin-3-carboxylic acid 2,3,4,5,6-pentafluorophenyl ester (6)14
Peptide modyfication procedures:
On resin MMt deprotection18
Acm deprotection18
Tfa deprotection18
The incorporation of the PP1 (4) onto the resin bound peptide scaffold and cleavage from the resin.
Incorporation of the 7-Methoxycoumarin-3-carboxylic amide onto the polypeptide scaffold
Incorporation of the Fluorescein-5-pyrrolidine-2,5-dione onto the polypeptide scaffold19
Pluronic adsorption to the polystyrene particles
Polypeptide immobilization on the polystyrene beads20
Structural characterization of the peptide binders:20
Fluorescence Experiments:
Affinties ranking of the 4 Series Binders23
Extraction of 80% phosphate depleted α -casein by 4C15L8-PP123
4C15(coumarin) L8 – PP1 (MALDI, HPLC)24
4C10(coumarin) L17 – PP1 (MALDI, HPLC)
4C25(coumarin) L22 – PP1 (MALDI, HPLC)
4C37(coumarin) L34 – PP1 (MALDI, HPLC)
4C15(Tfa) L8 – PP1 – free SH (MALDI, HPLC)
4C10(Tfa) L17 – PP1 – free SH(MALDI, HPLC)
4C25(Tfa) L22 – PP1 – free SH(MALDI, HPLC)
4C37(Tfa) L34 – PP1 – free SH(MALDI, HPLC)

General information about the procedures and chemicals used in experimental section:

All reagents and solvents were purchased from commercial sources and were used without further purification. Thin layer chromatography (TLC) was performed on 60 F_{254} silica and 60 F_{254} aluminum oxide plates (Merck) and spots were visualized with UV light (λ =254 nm). ¹H NMR spectra were recorded on Varian Inova 500 MHz (499.9 MHz) spectrometer and ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded on Varian Unity 400 MHz (100.6 MHz) spectrometer. Spectra were recorded at 25 °C using deuterated chloroform as solvent. Chemical shifts (δ) in ppm are reported using TMS as an internal reference (1H δ 0.0) and residual chloroform signal (13C δ 77.0) and coupling constants (J) are reported in Hz. Low resolution mass spectra were recorded on Perkin Elmer SCIEX API 150EX spectrometer in the positive ion mode.

The synthesis of the peptide was carried out using automated, solid-phase methodology on the Applied Biosystems 433A peptide synthesizer employing standard Fmoc (9-Fluorenylmethyloxycarbonyl) chemistry using the FastMoc synthesis program. The synthesis was performed on 0.1 mmol scale and H₂N-RinkAmide-ChemMatrix (PCAS BioMatrix Inc) resin with a loading of 0.46 mmol g⁻¹ was used as a solid support. All the coupling steps were conducted with a HCTU((2-(6-Chloro-1H-benzotriazole-1yl)-1,1,3,3-tetramethylaminium hexafluorophosphate)/DIPEA (N,N-diisopropylethylamine) (Iris Biotech GmbH and Pepnet Inc.) activation coctail. All reagents used in the peptide synthesis were prepared according to the manufacturer's protocols. The side chains of the amino acids (Iris Biotech GmbH and Pepnet Inc.) were protected by base-stable groups: tert-butyl ester (Asp, Glu), trityl (His, Asn, Gln) and 2,2,4,6,7-pentamethyldihydrobenzofuran-5-sulfonyl (Arg). To allow flexible orthogonality in attaching the binding warhead, fluorescent probe or attaching to the polystyrene beads, Lys15 and Lys8 were protected with trifluoracetyl (Tfa) and 4-methoxytrityl (MMt). Cys side chain was protected with acetylaminomethyl (Acm). Purifications of the peptides were performed by HPLC (semi-preparative hypersil C-18 column 250×20 mm, 5 µm particle size) using two set of solvents: A (10% CH₃CN / 90% H₂O / 0.1% TFA), B (90% CH₃CN / 10% H₂O / 0.1% TFA). Details about the mobile phase composition are included in the following procedures. Identification of the peptide was done by MALDI-TOF MS (Applied Biosystems, Voyager-DE PRO) using α -cyano-4-hydroxy-cinnamic acid as a matrix. HRMS experiments were performed on an Apex-Qe Ultra 7T instrument (Bruker Daltonics) equipped with a dual electrospray ionization/matrix-assisted laser desorption/ionization (ESI/MALDI) source. The instrument was operated in the positive ion mode and calibrated with the Tunemix mixture (Bruker Daltonics). The mass accuracy was approx. 1 ppm. The instrumental parameters were as follows: scan range, 300-2500 m/z; drying gas, nitrogen; temperature of drying gas, 200 °C; potential between spray needle and orifice, set at 4.5 kV; source accumulation time, 0.5 s; and ion accumulation time, 0.5 s. The samples for MS experiments (~0.05 mg) were dissolved in 1 ml of an acetonitrile/water mixture containing formic acid (50:50:0.1, v/v/v) or or in the methanol containing 10^{-4} M NaCl.

CD spectroscopy (JASCO J-810) was done at 25 °C using peptide concentrations of 50 μ M to 1 μ M in 5 mM HEPES buffer. The pH was set to 7.2 prior to measuring. All CD measurements were performed in 1 mm and 10 mm quartz quvettes.

IR experiments performed on Perkin Elmer Spectrum-100 FT-IR spectrometer equipped with an ATR accessory.

All fluorescence experiments were conducted in 96 well polystyrene plates. All readings were performed by plate reader Molecular Devices Spectra max GEMINI XPS at 25 °C. Each plate contained 300 μ L of analyte. All polystyrene plates were specially prepared prior the measurements in order to minimize the unspecific binding of the analyte: The wells were filled with 1% aqueous solution of Pluronic (BASF) and left overnight. After thorough washing the wells were filled with the solution containing peptide (0.3 mg / mL) structurally similar to the peptide used in the further experiments. The plates were incubated overnight and then thoroughly washed and dried.

Polystyrene Beads (nominal diameter: 1 μ m and 15 μ m) were purchased as a suspension in water from Bangs Laboratories,Inc. Pluronic was purchased from BASF and Pluronic F108-PDS was supplied by Allvivo Inc. (Lake Forest, CA, USA). All proteins were purchased from Sigma Aldrich. Biosphere Filter Tips, 10 μ L type Eppendorf was purchaised from SARSTEDT. All reagents and gels used for gel electrophoresis were from Invitrogen. SDS-PAGE electrophoresis was conducted using NuPAGE® Novex 4-12% Bis-Tris Gel 1.5 mm. Gel development was conducted in MES buffer. All gels were stained using silver staining kit SilverQuestTM kit.

Phosphorylated Peptide Sequence, MALDI-MS (PhosPep)

Ac - N A A D NIe E A A I K H L A R R NIe A A K G P V D A A Q NIe A E H L <u>pY</u> R R F E A F A R A G - NH2

Mass: 4678.48

Phosphorylated peptide was synthesis. In a automatic manner using automatic peptide synthesier Pionner. The synthesis was performed on 0.1 mmol. scale using Fmoc strategy. Peptide with all protecting groups was cleaved using standard cleavage mixture (TFA/TIS/H2O – 95:2.5:2.5). Purification was performed by reversed phase HPLC (38% to 63% B in 45 minutes).

Main product elutes at 24.25 minutes.



Methyl 3,5-bis(bromomethyl)-benzoate (2)¹.

3,5-dimethylbenzoate (5 g, 30 mmol) was dissolved in of CCl₄ (50 mL) followed by the addition of NBS (16.2 g, 90 mmol) and dibenzoyl peroxide (BPO) (0.2 g, 0.8 mmol) in three equal portions during 1 h. The reaction mixture was refluxed overnight. The precipitate was filtered off and washed with DCM (50 mL). Combined filtrates were washed with a saturated solution of NaHCO₃ and brine. The solvent was evaporated resulting in a yellow oil which was dissolved in dry THF (20 mL), cooled to 0 °C and diethyl phosphite(12.6 g, 90 mmol) and DIPEA (11.78 g, 90 mmol) were added .The solution was gradually warmed to r.t. and stirring was continued overnight. The mixture was evaporated to approx. half of the volume and was poured into an ice/water mixture and extracted with the Et₂O (2 X 50 mL). The organic layer was washed with 1M HCl and brine and evaporated. The crude product was purified by means of flash chromatography (Silica gel: AcOEt/n-pentane 1:9) resulting in a white powder. Yield: 5.5 g (56%). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.00 (d, *J* = 1.7 Hz, 2H), 7.62 (s, 1H), 4.50 (s, 4H), 3.94 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 165.8, 138.9, 138.5, 133.7, 133.3, 131.3, 129.9, 129.5, 52.4, 45.0, 31.8, 31.8. ESI-MS (m/z): calculated for C₁₀H₁₀Br₂O₂: 321.9 observed: 344.2 [M+Na]⁺ (342.9, 346.7 also visible)





Methyl 3,5-bis[[bis(2 pyridylmethyl)amino]methyl]benzoate (3)².

T. Routasalo, J. Helaja, J. Kavakka, A. M. P. Koskinen, Eur. J. Org. Chem. 2008, 3190-3199

Compound **2** (500 mg, 1.6 mmol) and di-(2-picolyl)-amine (800 mg, 725 μ L, 4 mmol) were dissolved in CH₃CN followed by the addition of dry K₂CO₃ (1.1 g , 7.9 mmol). The reaction mixture was refluxed overnight with a reflux condenser equipped with a CaCl₂ tube. The reaction mixture was filtered and the filtrate was evaporated. The yellow residue was purified by flash chromatography (Al₂O₃ neutral, firstly AcOEt was used to elute impurities and then MeOH/AcOEt = 1:9 (v/v)) affording pure **3** as a yellow oil. Yield: 850 mg (95%). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl3₃) δ 8.51 (m, 4H), 7.94 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 2H), 7.70 (s, 1H), 7.61 (m, 8H), 7.12 (m, 4H), 3.92 (s, 3H), 3.81 (s, 8H), 3.73 (s, 4H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 197.9, 167.1, 159.5, 148.9, 139.7, 136.2, 133.8, 130.2, 128.7, 122.8, 121.9, 60.1, 58.2, 52.0. MS (ESI, m/z): calculated for C₃₄H₃₄N₆O₂: 558.7 observed: 559.5 [M+H]⁺.





5-Bis[[bis(2-pyridylmethyl)amino]methyl]benzoic acid * TEA salt / PP1-OH*TEA (4).

Compound **3** (1 g , 1.8 mmol) was dissolved in MeOH (50 mL) and a 10% solution of NaOH (5 mL) was added. The reaction mixture was refluxed for 2 h (the reaction progress was monitored by TLC, Al₂O₃, MeOH/AcOEt 1:9 (v/v)). The reaction mixture was cooled to 0 °C followed by the addition of 10M HCl until pH=2 was reached followed by solvent evaporation under reduced pressure. The obtained yellow oily suspension was redissolved in water (50 mL) and TEA (3.6 g, 36 mmol) was added dropwise. The aqueous solution was extracted with DCM (2 x 50 mL) and the organic layers were combined, evaporated and dried under high vacuum to obtain **4** as a viscous oil. Yield: 1.1 g (95%). IR (ATR) 3005, 2913, 2818, 2483, 1902 (br), 1698, 1588, 1569, 1432, 1363, 1301, 1214, 1046, 1015, 994, 951, 761, 695. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.50(m, 3H), 7.99 (d, *J* = 1.3 Hz, 2H), 7.66 (d, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 1H), 7.59 (m, 8H), 7.11(m, 4H), 3.82 (s, 8H), 3.70 (s, 4H), 3.06 (q, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 6H), 1.29 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 9H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 170.2, 159.4, 148.9, 148.6, 138.8, 136.6, 136.5, 133.4, 132.7, 129.1, 122.9, 122.0, 77.3, 76.7, 60.1, 59.8, 58.5, 45.0, 8.5. MS (ESI, m/z): calculated for C₃₃H₃₃N₆O₂: 545.3 observed: 545.5 [M+H]⁺. HRMS: calculated for C₃₃H₃₃N₆O₂: 545.2665 observed: 545.2666 [M+H]⁺









HPLC program: 1% Methanol/99% H2O to 10% Methanol/90% water in 40 minutes.



7-Methoxycoumarin-3-carboxylic acid 2,3,4,5,6-pentafluorophenyl ester (6).

7-Methoxycoumarin-3-carboxylic acid (500 mg, 2 mmol) and 2,3,4,5,6-pentafluorophenol (552 mg, 3 mmol) were dissolved in a mixture of CH₃CN/pyridine (10 mL, 9:1) followed by the addition of DIC (N,N'-Diisopropylcarbodiimide) (380 mg, 470 μ L, 3 mmol). The reaction mixture was stirred overnight and solvents were then evaporated. The obtained oily residue was redissolved in CHCl₃ and the obtained solution was washed with 1% HCl_{aq} (50 mL) and the organic phase was dried with anhydrous MgSO₄ and evaporated. The semi-solid residue was purified by flash chromatography (Silica Gel, DCM as an eluent) resulting **6** as a white powder. Yield: 820 mg (92%). IR (ATR) 3040, 1784, 1731, 1623, 1517, 1475, 1435, 1381, 1304, 1213, 1167, 1144, 1071, 995, 915, 848, 786. 1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.78 (s, 1H), 7.59 (d, 1H, J=8.67), 6.94 (dd, 1H, J=8.67, 2.32), 6.86-6.85 (d, 1H, J=2.32), 3.95 (s, 3H), 13C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl3) δ 166.7, 159.3, 158.6, 156.3, 152.1, 140 (m, 6C), 131.7, 114.5, 111.6, 110.4, 100.7, 56.4, 19F NMR (376 MHz, CDCl3) δ -152.59 (m), -157.82 (m), -162.43 (m), HRMS: calculated for C₁₇H₇F₅O₅Na: 409.0111 observed: 409.0107 [M+Na]⁺





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Peptide modyfication procedures:

On resin MMt deprotection.

Peptide-containing resin was washed with a mixture containing TFA/TIS (triisopropylsilane)/DCM (10 mL, 1:1:98 (v/v)) changing the washing solution every 10 min. until the yellow color did not come up any more. The resin was washed with DCM (5 times) and dried *in vacuo*.

Acm deprotection.

The peptide (1 µmol) was dissolved in 0.50 mL of TFA containing 2% (v/v) of anisole. The solution was cooled to 0 °C and a solution of AgOTf (silver trifluoromethanesulfonate) (26 mg, 0.1 mmol, 100 equiv) in 0.5 mL TFA was added. The reaction mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 1 h and then allowed to attain r.t. The stirring was continued for 12 hours at r.t. The silver salt of the peptide was precipitated from the reaction mixture by adding cold diethyl ether and centrifuging. The supernatant solution was discarded and the residue was dissolved in 0.5 mL distilled water. A solution of DTT (DL-dithiothreitol) (8 mg, 0.05 mmol, 50 equiv) in 0.5 mL glacial acetic acid was added to the solution of the peptide. The mixture was allowed to stir for 2 h and centrifuged. The residue was discarded and the peptide contained in the supernatant was purified using SEP-PACK Plus (C-18 cartridges, Waters) and HPLC solvents A and B. The sample was diluted to 10 mL with HPLC solvent A and loaded on the SEP-PACK cartridge. The cartridge was washed with gradually increasing polarity of the mobile phase. The collected fractions were analyzed by MALDI and those containing the desired product were combined and freeze-dried.

Tfa deprotection.

The peptide (1 μ mol) was dissolved in water (1 mL) and the solution was cooled to 0 °C. To the stirred solution, piperidine (200 μ L, 2 mmol) was added and stirring was continued for 2 h at 0 °C. The solution was neutralized by addition of cold TFA (154 μ L, 2 mmol) and purified using SEP-PACK Plus (C-18 cartridges, Waters) and HPLC solvents A and B. The sample was diluted to 10 mL with HPLC solvent A and loaded on the SEP-PACK cartridge. The cartridge was washed with gradually increasing polarity of the mobile phase. The collected fractions were analyzed by MALDI and those containing the desired product were combined and freeze-dried.

The incorporation of the PP1 (4) onto the resin bound peptide scaffold and cleavage from the resin.

Peptide- containing resin (0.025 mmol of the peptide) was immersed in NMP (1.5 mL) solution of 5 (80 mg, 0.125 mmol), PyBOP (benzotriazol-1-yloxy)tripyrrolidinophosphoniumhexafluorophosphate) (65 mg, 0.125 mmol) and DIPEA (32 mg, 0.25 mmol) and incubated overnight. The resin was washed with DMF (3 times) and DCM (3 times). The peptide was then cleaved from the resin using a mixture containing TFA/TIS/H2O (95:2.5:2.5 v/v) for three hours and precipitated using chilled MTBE (methyl tert-butyl ether) from the filtrate. The peptide pellet was redissolved in a minimal amount of TFA and precipitation was repeated using cold Et2O. The peptide was dissolved in water, freeze-dried and then purified by means of HPLC.

Incorporation of the 7-Methoxycoumarin-3-carboxylic amide onto the polypeptide scaffold.

Peptide possessing a free amino group (1 μ mole) was dissolved in a mixture of DMSO/pyridine (9:1 v/v, 1mL) and **6** (1 mg, 2.5 μ mole) dissolved in DMSO (100 μ L) was added. The reaction mixture was stirred until all the reagents dissolved followed by the addition of DIPEA (1 μ L, 8 μ mole). The reaction progress was followed by HPLC (usually the reaction was complete after approx 1h). The product of the reaction was purified by preparative HPLC (Gradient: 30% B to 60% B in 40 min). All the products were eluting between 13 and 18 minutes depending on the sequence.

Incorporation of the Fluorescein-5-pyrrolidine-2,5-dione onto the polypeptide scaffold.

The peptide 4C15L8-PP1 possessing a free thiol group (1 μ mole) dissolved in anhydrous DMSO (0.5 mL) was added to a solution of fluorescein-5-maleimide in DMSO (0.5 mL) The solution was left stirred overnight at r.t. Then 100 μ L of pyridine was added. The solution was mixed well and cold Et₂O was added in the amount that enabled complete precipitation of the peptide conjugate (approx. 5 mL). The cloudy solution was centrifuged and two phases were obtained. The upper layer was discarded and the lower one (yellow) was chilled and redissolved in TFA (0.5 mL) and Et₂O was added to precipitate the peptide conjugate as a yellow solid. The precipitate was dissolved in HPLC solvent A and purified by HPLC. HPLC program used: 30% to 55% B in 40 min.

Pluronic adsorption to the polystyrene particles.

Polystyrene Beads (1 μ m or 15 μ m, 10 mg) were washed once with miliQ-water and then centrifuged (14,000 rpm for 7 min). The particles were resuspended in aqueous solution of F108-PDS (1 mL, 2%) and shaken end-over-end for 24 h. Pluronic-coated particles were then separated from the excess of surfactants by means of centrifugation (14,000 rpm for 7 min). The beads were resuspended in miliQ-water and centrifuged again. Beads pellet was resuspended in HEPES buffer (pH=7.2, 10 mM HEPES, 150 mM NaCl, 1 mM EDTA), sonicated and centrifuged again. The procedure was repeated three times.

Polypeptide immobilization on the polystyrene beads.

Pluronic-PDS – coated Polystyrene Beads (1 μ m , 10 mg) were washed with HEPES buffer (pH=7.2, 10 mM HEPES, 150 mM NaCl, 1 mM EDTA) purged with nitrogen. Thereafter the beads were immersed in 1 mL solution containing peptide with free cysteine(0.5 mg) dissolved in nitrogen-saturated aqueous HEPES buffer (pH=7.2, 10 mM HEPES, 150 mM NaCl, 1 mM EDTA). All manipulations were conducted under oxygen-free conditions. After incubation for 12 h the beads were washed with an aqueous solution of HEPES buffer (pH=7.2, 10 mM HEPES, 150 mM NaCl) (three times) followed by washing with an aqueous solution of TRIS buffer (pH = 8) containing Zn ions (pH=8.2, 10 mM TRIS, 5 mM Zn(NO₃)₂). The beads were washed and resuspended in HEPES buffer (pH=7.2, 10 mM HEPES, 150 mM NaCl).

Structural characterization of the peptide binders:

SM Table1. Mean residue ellipticities (deg cm² dmol⁻¹) at 222 nm of 4-C15L8 at various stages of assembly in 10 mM HEPES buffer, 150 mM NaCl and pH 7.2 at 298 K

	Peptide concentration		
	50 µM	10 µM	1 µM
4C15L8Cys24 ^[a]	-13011	-11439	-10650
4C15L8Cys24-PP1 ^[b]	-12874	-11960	-12970
4C15*L8Cys24-PP1 ^[c]	-13254	-12545	-13336
2Zn (4C15L8Cys24-PP1) ^[d]	-10610	-9013	-8661

[a] 4C15L8 with Tfa amide at side chain of Lys15 and free amino group at side chain of Lys8. [b] 4C15L8 with Tfa amide at side chain of Lys15 and PP1 at side chain of Lys8 . [c] 4C15L8 with 7-methoxycoumarin-3-amide at side chain of Lys15 and PP1 at side chain of Lys8. [d] 4C15L8 with Tfa amide at side chain of Lys15 and Zn2+ chelate of PP1 at side chain of Lys8. The concentrations of peptides were estimated from weight and may be associated with significant errors, but relative measurements are accurate since solutions were prepared from stock solutions. $Zn(NO_3)_2$ was added in 20% excess of peptide concentration.

Fluorescence Experiments:



SM Fig.1 Identification of high-affinity binders for α -casein from the 4-series of polypeptides using three step titration using 7methoxycoumarin-3-carboxylic acid as the fluorescence probe. Emission spectrum of 500 nM binder in 10 mM Hepes buffer and 150 mM NaCl at pH 7.2 is shown without α -casein (blue), and in the presence of 500 nM (red),1000 nM (green) and 1500 nM (violet) α -casein. The intensity is decreased as a consequence of binding and binding is saturated at 500 nM concentration in the presence of 500 nM protein, suggesting strong binding with K_D in the low nM range or lower.



SM Fig.2 Identification of high-affinity binders for α -casein from the 3-series of polypeptides using three step titration using 7methoxycoumarin-3-carboxylic acid as the fluorescence probe. Emission spectrum of 500 nM binder in 10 mM HEPES buffer and 150 mM NaCl at pH 7.2 is shown without α -casein (blue), and in the presence of 500 nM (red),1000 nM (green) and 1500 nM (violet) α -casein. The intensity is increased as a consequence of binding and binding is increased with increasing amounts of α -casein, without reaching saturation, suggesting binding with K_D in the high nM to μ M range. The binder 3-C10L17-PP1 appears to be saturated at a concentration of 1000 nM of α -casein, indicating a dissociation constant of 60 nM.

Affinties ranking of the 4 Series Binders



SM Fig 3. Extracts from solutions of α -casein in 10 mM HEPES buffer and 150 mM NaCl at pH 7.2 by binder molecules immobilized on beads coated with Pluronics. Lane1. 4C15L8-PP1 extract from 10 nM α -casein. Lane 2 . 4C15L8-PP1 extract from 100 nM α -casein. Lane 3. 4C10L17-PP1 extract from 10 nM α -casein. Lane 4. 4C10L17-PP1 extract from 100 nM α -casein. Lane 5. 4C25L22-PP1 extract from 10 nM α -casein. Lane 6. 4C25L22-PP1 extract from 100 nM α -casein. Lane 7. 4C37L34-PP1 extract from 10 nM α -casein. Lane 8. 4C37L34-PP1 extract from 100 nM α -casein. Lane 9. Negative control. Extract from 500 nM α -casein by beads coated with Pluronic. Lane 10. Positive control, α -casein.

Extraction of 80% phosphate depleted α -casein by 4C15L8-PP1



Lane1. Positive control, α -casein; Lane2. Extract from 500 nM solution of α -casein, Lane3. Extract from 500 nM solution of dephosphorylated α -casein with a level of phosphorylation 20% of native

4C15(coumarin) L8 – PP1 (MALDI, HPLC).



4C10(coumarin) L17 – PP1 (MALDI, HPLC).



4C25(coumarin) L22 – PP1 (MALDI, HPLC).



4C37(coumarin) L34 – PP1 (MALDI, HPLC).



4C15(Tfa) L8 – PP1 – free SH (MALDI, HPLC).



4C10(Tfa) L17 – PP1 – free SH(MALDI, HPLC).









References:

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