CAncer bioMarker Prediction Pipeline (CAMPP)

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Introduction

The CAncer bioMarker Prediction Pipeline (CAMPP) is a simple bioinformatics tools intended to automatize identification of diagnostic and prognostic cancer biomarkers for experimental validation. The pipeline is versitile and may be used for analysis of a variety of quantitative biological data from high throughput platforms, including miRNAs, mRNAs, proteins and glycans. CAMPP currently supports; differential expression/abundance analysis, LASSO/Elastic net regression, Weighed Gene Co-expression Network Analysis, Correlation analysis and Survival analysis (Cox proportional hazard regression). CAMPP is written in R [1] and runs via a linux command-line with flags specifying arguments.

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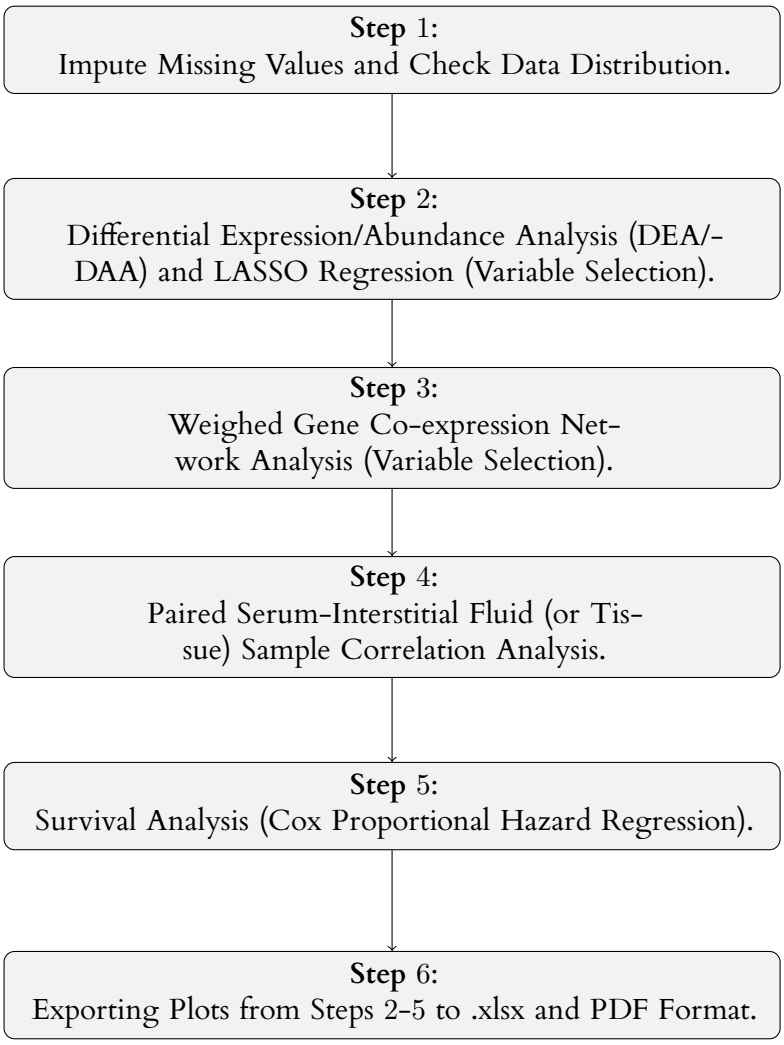
Workflow Overview



1 About CAMPP

The CAncer bioMarker Prediction Pipeline was developed for internal use at the Danish Cancer Society Research Center (DCRC) providing

researchers with an easy way to identify biomarkers for cancer diagnostics and prognostics. In its original form the pipeline was implemented using interstitial fluid samples from patients with breast cancer but can be run with any type of cancer data and tissue sample types.
The pipeline can perform the following types of analysis (I) Differential expression/abundance analysis (limma [14]), (II) LASSO/Elastic net regression (glmnet [6]), (III) Weighed Gene Co-expression Network Analysis (WGCNA [11]), (IV) Correlation analysis (Pearson/Spearman) and (V) Survival analysis (Cox proportional hazard regression, survcomp [16]). In addition to different types of analysis the pipeline performs missing value imputation, normalization () and transformation, along with data distributional checks. Differential expression/abundance analysis can be performed with as few as 3 biological replicates in each group, whereas LASSO/Elastic net regression, WGCNA, serum correlations and survival analysis is only advisable with a decently large number of samples. CAMPP may be run with a variety of biological molecules (mRNAs, miRNAs, proteins and N-glycans) from various platforms (high-throughput sequencing, microarray data, liquid chromatography–mass spectrometry, ect.). For differential expression/abundance analysis the limma package [14] for R is utilized. Though limma was originally designed for microarray data, and more recently RNAseq, a number of studies have shown the versatility of this software for the analysis of other -omics data [4, 10, 12]. LIMMA has few underlying statistical assumptions and is known to be powerful for small sample sizes as a result of shrinkage of feature-specific variances [17].

> N.B The user should be careful with LASSO/Elastic Net regression, as this type of analysis needs a good number of samples, in a balanced group design, to yield reliable results. Recommended is a minium of 70 samples for each group in the design [6][]. To perform WGCNA [11] at least 15 samples must be available for analysis (section 5 in FAQ here: `https://horvath.genetics.ucla.edu/html/CoexpressionNetwork/Rpackages/WGCNA/faq.html`), see description of WGCNA on page X.

Survival (over-all, relapse-free) of patients based on the abundance/expression of a given marker is predicted using cox proportional-hazard model. Check for proportional hazard and linearity of continuous covariates are automatically performed. The model is corrected for age at diagnosis (surgery, entry into trail) by default, however, if correction for additional confounders is desired these should be specified by the user.

> N.B For every parameter added to the model more events are needed for appropriate statistical power. A rule of thumb is $\sim$ 10 events for each parameter, however, this will somewhat depend on the number of levels within a given parameter. Generally results of the survival analysis should be interpreted with caution as the pipeline is unable to account for all possible options and assumptions related to this type of analysis.
> The check for proportional hazard and linearity of continuous co-variates

should be OK before interpreting any results!

2 Requirements

To run CAMPP, a working R version 3.5.1 (or newer) is required [1]. The Pipeline relies on a variety of R-packages, see list below. CAMPPInstall.R script checks whether these packages are installed and helps the user download, install and load them (see section on 4).

Table 1: R-packages

Analysis	Packages
Missing value imputation	impute (v 1.56.0)
Distributional checks	fitdistrplus (v 1.0.11)
DEA/DAA	limma (v 3.38.2), sva (v 3.30.0), edgeR (v 3.24.3)
LASSO	glmnet (v 2.0.16)
Co-expression analysis	WGCNA (v 1.66)
Survival analysis	survcomp (v 1.32.0), survminer (v 0.4.3)
Excel formatting	openxlsx (v 4.1.0), xlsx (v 0.6.1)
Plotting	ggplot2 (v 3.1.0), heatmap.plus (v 1.3), viridis (v 0.5.1), squash (v 1.0.8)
Data management	plyr (v 1.8.4), data.table (v 1.11.8), scales (v 1.0.0), stackoverflow (v 0.1.2)

To obtain information on R-packages above, e.g. developers and release information (articles) go to R and type `citation("package_name")`.

3 Download

The CAncer bioMarker Prediction Pipeline is easily installed by following the few outlined steps below.

1. (1) Download the GitHub repository locally from the address below. (2) If you wish to work externally on a server you can upload the repository from your computer to the server using scp from the command-line or (3) use git for a direct download:

Box 3.1: Download

(1) `https://github.com/ELELAB/CAncer-bioMarker-Prediction-Pipeline-CAMPP`

(2) `scp CAncer-bioMarker-Prediction-Pipeline-CAMPP-master.zip name@login:/path-to-dir.`

(3) `git clone git://github.com/ELELAB/CAncer-bioMarker-Prediction-Pipeline-CAMPP.git`

If you are using the "git clone" option, make sure that the Git software has been installed.

2. Unzip the repository. From the command-line use "unzip" to decompress.

Box 3.2: Decompress

```
unzip CAncer-bioMarker-Prediction-Pipeline-CAMPP-master.zip
```

The unzipped repository should contain the following: `Readme.md LICENSE.md CAMPPInstall.R, CAMPPFunctions.R CAMPP.R` and a folder named `DataExamples`.

4 Installation of R-packages

The CAncer bioMarker Prediction Pipeline consists of three R-scripts; CAMPPInstall.R, CAMPPFunctions.R and CAMPP.R. The CAMPPInstall.R only needs to be used the first time the pipeline is run - this script ensures that all required R-packages will be installed. The CAMPPFunctions is a script containing custom functions used in the analysis and must therefore be located in the directory from where the pipeline is run.

1. In order to ensure that all R-packages needed have been installed, run the CAMPPInstall.R script from the command-line.

Box 4.1: Install R-packages

```
Rscript CAMPPInstall.R
```

2. Running `CAMPPInstall.R` will generate a script named `CAMPP-missingpackages.R`. This script contains the names of any packages

not installed. If no `CAMPPmissingpackages.R` script is generated it means that the required R-packages already exist.

3. To require any missing packages open R in the command-line and source the `CAMPPmissingpackages.R` script. R will suggest a library to place the packages in and will query about a "CRAN-mirror" - pick the mirror closest to your geographical location.

Box 4.3: Install R-packages

```
R
source("CAMPPmissingpackages.R")
```

4. Although the CAMPPmissingpackages.R will aid the user in installing the required R-packages from both CRAN and Bioconductor, there may be instances where a package is not updated and compatible with the running version of R.

   ```
   Warning message:
   In install.packages("name_of_package") :  package 'name_of_pack-
   age' is not available...
   ```

   In this case the package may need to be installed directly from the github repository. In order to do this check that the R-package `devtools` is installed and loaded. Next, use `install.github()` to install:

Box 4.4: Install R-packages

```
install.packages("devtools")
library(devtools)
install_github(Bioconductor/name_of_package)
install_github(Bioconductor-mirror/name_of_package)
```

5 Running CAMPP

After installation of all R-packages the CAncer bioMarker Prediction Pipeline is ready be used.

> It is essential that the script `CAMPPFunctions.R` is located in the directory from which the pipeline is run.

The pipeline in run from the command-line using flags. In the folder `DataExamples` the user will find examples of files needed for running CAMPP.
The pipeline currently support three types of analysis. Differential expression/abundance with Limma, paired interstitial fluid (or solid tissue) and serum sample correlation and survival analysis with cox

proportional hazard model (Flowchart on page 2).

5.1 Mandatory Data Input

CAMPP needs as minimum two .xlsx files to run.

1. **Data:** An .xlsx file containing feature expression/abundance. With rows as variables, and columns as samples, e.g. columns are N-glycan, protein, (mi)RNA identifiers and rows are sample IDs. The folder `DataExamples` contains an example with N-glycans named: `glycandata.xlsx`.

2. **Data Variant:** The user must specify what type of data is provided in order for the pipeline to pick the appropriate normalization and/or transformation. Options include; array (mircoarray data), seq (high throughput sequencing data), ms (mass spectrometry data) or other (other type). If both tissue expression and paired serum expression data are provided, this option should be specified as a comma separated list (no quotes or parenthesis) of length two, first entry referring to dataset 1 and second entry referring to the dataset 2.

   - Sequencing data (**-v** is set to **seq**): Variables with low counts over all groups (tissue, treatment) are filered out, library sizes are scaled (normalization method is weighted trimmed mean of M-values, TMM) and data are voom transformed.
   - Microarray data (**-v** is set to **array**): Data are log2 transformed and either quantile normalized (normalizeBetweenArrays) or standardized using mean or median (specify option **-z**).
   - Mass spectrometry data (**-v** is set to **ms**): **IF** option **-t** is specified, then data will be log transformed (log2, log or logit as specified).

   > It should be noted that CAMPP does NOT perform within-array-normalization (normalizeBetweenArrays), which is standard for two color intensity data, e.g. this must be done before hand (see limma manual for more information [14]).

3. **Metadata:** An .xlsx file containing metadata. This file must contain at least two columns named "ids" with identifiers matching the column names in the data file and a column named "group" specifying a group for DE/DA analysis e.g. diagnosis (tumor or normal), tumor stage (1,2 or 3), drug treatment (A, B C) ect. The folder `DataExamples` contains an example with N-glycans named: `glycanmetadata.xlsx`.

   - **Batch:** If the data comes from experimental batches and the user wants to correct for this, a column named "batch" specifying which batch each sample belongs to (A,B or C, batch1, batch2, batch3 or batch4, ect.) should also be included in the metadata.

Batch type must be denoted as a character, meaning numbers alone are not allowed.

- **Matched Serum:** If the user is interested in performing correlation analysis a column named "serum" must be included in the metadata, specifying (in a binary way) which samples have a matched serum samples (denoted by 1) and which that do not (denoted by 0).

> N.B. if paired samples are available for analysis the column 'serum' should only have the value 1 for those samples (either tumors or normals, A or B ect.) you choose to test for - not both.

- **Survival Information:** If the user is interested in performing survival analysis a column named 'survival' must be included, specifying (in a binary way) which samples have survival information (denoted by 1) and which do not (denoted by 0).

> N.B. if you have (paired) cancer and normal samples the column 'survival' should only have the value 1/0 for tumor samples (NA or other character values should be used for normal samples).

5.2 Arguments

1. **A Simple Run:** To run the pipeline, arguments (flags) must be set to specify the input. In the simplest case we are interested in performing differential abundance/expression analysis and for this we only need to specify the two mandatory inputs.

Box 5.2.1: Mandatory Arguments

`-d`: Quantitative data
`-m`: Metadata
`-v`: Data variant

The box below shows an example of the simplest possible CAMPP run.

Box 5.2.2: First Run Example

```
Rscript CAMPP.R -d glycandata.xlsx -m glycanmetadata.xlsx
-v seq -o TRUE
```

2. The output of the command above will be an .xlsx file with the identifiers, test-statistics, fold changes (logFC) and p-values of any differentially expressed/abundant variables, as well as a multidimensional scaling plot, here specified by the option **-o**.

Table 2: Example of .xlsx Output

logFC	t	P.Val	adj.P.Val	B	name	dir.	comp.
2.1	11.6	7.7e-22	4.9e-20	38.9	pA	up	T-N
1.3	8.3	8.4e-14	1.1e-12	20.6	pK	up	T-N
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
-1.2	-10.2	4.1-18	1.3e-16	30.5	pH	down	T-N

N.B. The pipeline logs while running and produces a text file, `CAMPPlog.txt`, with any errors or comments accumulated during analyses - this file should be viewed carefully.

3. **Help:** In addition to the two mandatory arguments above there are a range of optional arguments which may be utilized. The -h (help) option allows the user to obtain information about all available flags.

Box 5.2.3: Title.

```
Rscript CAMPP.R -h
```

4. **Other Arguments:** The table below show a some useful arguments.

Box 5.2.4: Optional Arguments

`-l`: LASSO Regression
`-w`: Weighed Gene Co-expression Analysis
`-s`: Serum Analysis
`-u`: Survival Analysis
`-b`: Batch Correction
`-t`: Data Transformation
`-o`: Multidimensional Scaling Plot
`-k`: Distributional Checks

- **LASSO Regression (-l):** The flag `-l` may be set to specify LASSO (least absolute shrinkage and selection operator) regression. LASSO is performed using the R-package **glmnet** [6]. K-fold (default is 10) cross validation (cv.glmnet) is used to estimate the optimal value for the hyperparameter, lambda. Specifying the flag `-l` will produce a list of variables selected by LASSO and a file with the overlap between differential expression/abundance analysis and LASSO regression. LASSO is run with n (default is 10) different random seeds and the consensus set of variables is returned.

N.B LASSO it not appropritate for heavily unbalanced group designs! When running LASSO all classification errors are returned. The user should evaluate the class error for each run.

- **Weighed Gene Co-expression Network Analysis (`-w`):** The flag `-w` must be set in order to perform Weighed Gene Co-expression Network Analysis with the R-package WGCNA [11]. WGCNA, despite its name, is in this case not exclusive to gene expression data but may be applied to any quantitative expression data. The cutoff for top most interconnected variables (genes, proteins ect.) in an identified module is set to 25% by default. The user may specify a different cutoff with the flag `-x`.
  N.B the softpower plot generated by a WGCNA run should be inspected before interpretation of results. If the data is very heterogeneous, or if there are too few variables or samples (minimum 15 samples for WGCNA) the scale-free topology fit index (printed to the screen while running) might fail to reach values above 0.8 for reasonable powers (see point 5 in WGCNA tutorial: `https://horvath.genetics.ucla.edu/html/CoexpressionNetwork/Rpackages/WGCNA/faq.html`). If this is the case, the dataset is not appropriate for WGCNA.

- **Serum Correlation Analysis (`-s`):** The flag `-s` must be set to perform correlation analysis between interstitial fluid samples (or tissue) and matched serum. The user must provide an .xlsx sheet with the expression/abundance values in serum with rows as variables and columns as samples - with the same sample order as the matched interstitial fluid (tissue) samples from the data .xlsx file. In addition to this, a column named 'serum' must be added to `metadata.xlsx`, specifying (in a binary way) whether a given sample has a match serum sample (1) or not (0) - this allows for cases of missing samples. The folder `DataExamples` contains an example with N-glycans named, `glycanserum.xlsx`.

- **Survival Analysis (`-u`):** The flag `-u` must be set to TRUE in order to perform survival analysis using cox proportional hazard model. For survival analysis the `metadata.xlsx` sheet must contain at least four columns in addition to the sample IDs named; 'age' (age in years at diagnosis, surgery or entry into trail), 'outcome.time' (time until end of follow-up, censuring or death in weeks, months or years), 'outcome' (numeric 0 = censuring, 1=dead) and 'survival' (numeric 0 = no survival info, 1=survival info available). If the user wishes to correct for potential confounders (e.g. tumor grade, hormone levels, drug-treatment ect.) these should also be included in the `metadata.xlsx`. CAMPP checks two underlying assumptions of the cox model before performing survival analysis (I) a linear relationship of continuous co-variates with log hazards and (II) proportional hazards of categorical and continuous co-variates, e.i. constant relative hazard. If the requirement of linearity is not fulfilled, cubic splines will be added to the

co-variate(s) in question.

- **Batch Correction (-b):** The flag `-b` may be added if the user has experimental batches in the expression/abundance data and wants to correct for this. The flag is boolean, e.g. it is set to either TRUE or FALSE (default = FALSE). In order to perform batch correction the metadata file must contain a column named 'batch' specifying which sample belongs to which batch (A, B or C, batch1, batch2, batch3 or batch4, ect.). Batch type must be denoted as a character, meaning numbers alone are not allowed.
- **Data Transformation(-t):** The flag `-t` may be set if the user desires the expression/abundance data to be transformed before analysis. A logarithmic transformation is recommended as the variance of measurements, from most platforms, depend on the expression/abundance level itself. The log-transformation reduces this dependency and additionally pushes the negative binomial distribution, displayed by count data (miRNA, mRNA), towards a normal distribution. The user may choose between log2, log10, logit or voom tranformation. For RNA-seq the voom transformation is recommended due to the variable library sizes assocated with this type of data [14], while a log transformation may be more appropriate for proteomics and N-glycan abundances. If both tissue expression and paired serum expression data are provided, this option should be specified as a comma separated list (no quotes or parenthesis) of length two, first entry referring to dataset 1 and second entry referring to the dataset 2.
- **Multidimensional Scaling plot (-o):** The flag `-o` may be used to generate a preliminary multidimensional scaling (MDS) plot. Multidimensional scaling (MDS) reduces high-dimensional data to two (or more) "observable" dimensions (M1 and M2) in such a way that the inter-sample distance relationship in the simplified dimensions mimic the distance relationship between the original values of samples in n-dimensional space (n = number of variables). MDS was performed with the euclidean distances as the distance metric. A MDS plot may help to determine whether there appears to be any "grouping" of data in a desired way (tumor samples together and normal samples together) or in an undesired way (experimental batches) before performing the DE/DA analysis.
- **Distibutional Checks(-k):** The flag `-k` may be set to FALSE to remove the default check of variable distributions. If the flag is not specified (or set to TRUE), the pipeline will produce plots including histograms, quantile-quantile plots and probability plots. By default 6 random variables are picked from the dataframe for plotting (here we are assuming that most variables in an gene expression matrix or protein abundance matrix will belong to the same family of distributions.) **We heavily recommend always running the data checks and to NOT ignore the output, as this vital to whether or not results are reliable!**.

6 N-glycan Serum Markers for BC Diagnostics

This section contains an example of how CAMPP is run using different flags in the command-line and what output the user can expect. The files used for running this example may be found in the repository folder `DataExamples`.
The case below uses N-glycans abundances measured using high resolution quantitative Ultra-Performance Liquid Chromatography (UPLC) [15] from interstitial samples [7] and matched serum. Tumor interstitial fluid (TIF), normal interstitial fluid (NIF) and serum samples were collected from $\sim$ 90 women diagnosed with breast cancer (BC). A total of 165 N-glycan groups were identified [18].

Briefly, the involvement of N-glycosylation in development and progression of BC has been documented by both in vitro and in vivo studies [3, 5, 8]. Several circulating N-glycan patterns with altered glycan structures, possibly originating from a primary tumor or from other organs in response to a neoplastic process, have recently been described in a number of studies by using high-throughput N-glycan profiling [2, 9, 13, 15].

6.1 Data Normalization, Transformation and Distributional Checks

If an input dataset contains missing values CAMPP will automatically impute these, unless missing per column > 70%. Depending on which data input is given CAMPP will perform data normalization and transformation **(Argument -v, data variant, see section on mandatory input)**. The quantitative N-glycan data (used in this example) are relative (fractional) meaning that the sum of all values within one sample yields 100. Abundances of N-glycans were quantified using liquid chromatography tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS). The dataset had already been standardized by the MS-software, therefore the option **-v** was set to **ms** and the option -t was set to log2. As the N-glycan data were quantified over three LC-MS/MS runs, the argument **-b** to set to TRUE, e.g. data were corrected for experimental batch (b1, b2, b3). Before performing any analysis it is advisable to evaluate the distribution of the normalized data [ref]. CAMPP automatically generates distributional plots for n (default is 6) randomly selecting input variables for the user to evaluate - to skip this step the argument **-k** may be set to FALSE).

Output:

1. A 5-panel plot for each of the n (default is 6) randomly selected variables. The plot contains, a quantile and probability plots, a histogram of expression/abundance values with fitted distributions and a skewness-kurtosis plot (Cullen and Frey graph, see fitdistrplus manual [ref]) - See **Figure 1**.

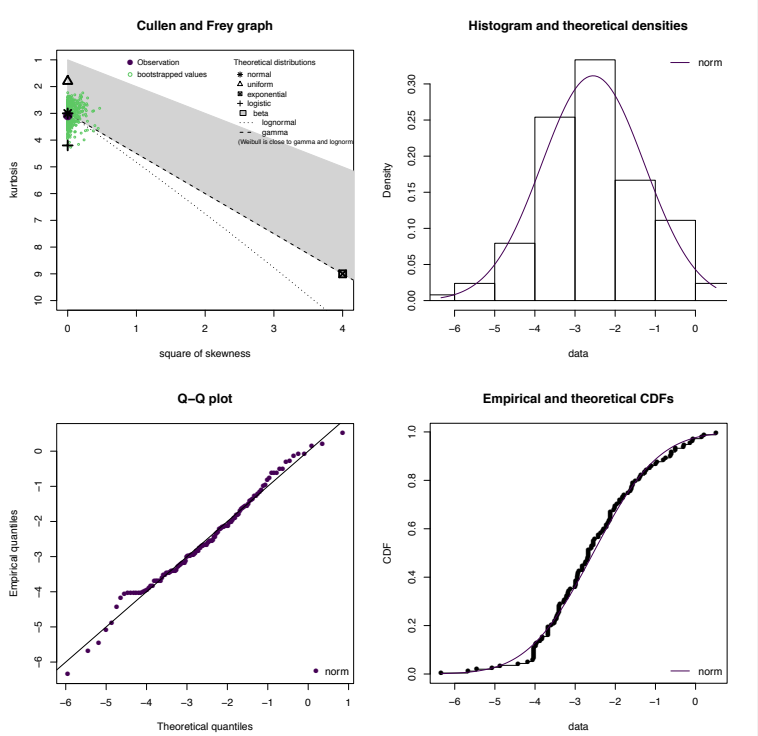


Figure 1: Data distributional check for N-glycan GP13 (randomly selected from dataset). Based on the all four plots above (fifth plot, probability-probability plot, is left out due to redundancy), log2 transformed GP13 abundances appear to follow a normal distribution.

6.2 Differential Abundance Analysis and LASSO Regression

Differential Abundance Analysis with CAMPP was run with correction for experimental batch (b1, b2, b3). The data were log2 transformed (flag `-t`) and a preliminary MDS plot was generated (flag `-o`.) The cut-off for a significant hit was an FDR <= 0.05 (default) - no logFC cut-off was set to define N-glycan differential abundance (flag `-f`). Files used for this example may be found in the `DataExamples` folder. By adding the parameter (flag `-l`) to this command, LASSO regression will be performed. If the (flag `-l`) is added, two additional outputs will be obtained - a file containing LASSO results and a file containing the overlap of DE and LASSO.

The box below shows an example of DE/DA analysis with CAMPP.

Box 6.1: Differential Abundance Analysis.

```
Rscript CAMPP.R -d glycandata.xlsx -m glycanmetadata.xlsx
-v ms -t log2 -b TRUE -o TRUE -n FirstRunOutput
```

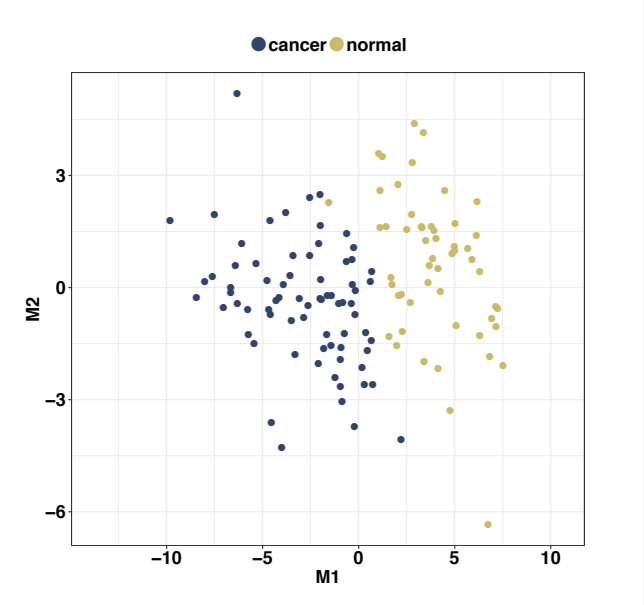


Figure 2: Multidimensional Scaling Plot showing the separation of tumor interstitial and normal interstitial fluid samples based on N-glycan abundances. The data was batch corrected before plotting.

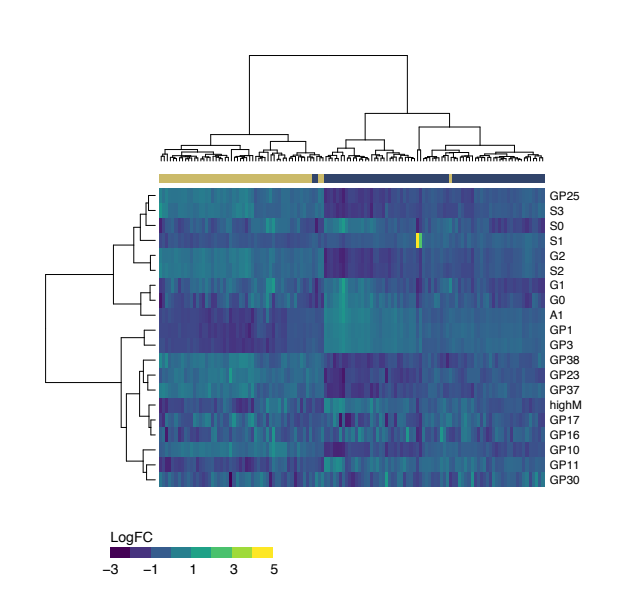


Figure 3: Heatmap showing the partitioning of TIF and NIF samples based on 20 N-glycan peaks/groups identified as differentially abundant.

Output:
The run above generates three outputs:

1. A multidimensional scaling plot (`FirstRunOutput_MDSplot.pdf`) using the abundance/expression of variables (in this case N-glycans). The components M1 and M2 in the plot below are those which best retained the distance relationship between samples in two dimensions [ref]. - See **Figure 2.**
2. An .xlsx file (`FirstRunOutput_DE.xlsx`) with the stats for significant differentially abundant/expressed variables (in this case N-glycans) - See example of format in **Table 2.**
3. A heatmap (`FirstRunOutput_heatmap.pdf`) visualizing the power of the identified DA/DE variables (in this case N-glycans) for partitioning of the samples in groups/condition/treatment (in this case NIF and TIF samples)- See **Figure 3**.

The multidimensional scaling plot in **Figure 2** indicates that N-glycan abundance patterns may confer a separation of tumor interstitial fluid and normal interstitial fluid samples from patients with breast cancer - at least when all N-glycans variables are retained. The MDS plot may be used as an indicator of whether the differential expression analysis is likely to yield any results, e.g. no clustering of samples from different groups/conditions/treatments implies that the biological data does NOT reflect the sample classification.

6.3 Correlation of abundances in TIF and serum

In order to determine whether N-glycans with differential abundances in tumour -and normal interstitial fluids displayed corresponding patterns in serum, correlation was performed using TIF samples and matched serum.

For correlation analysis with CAMPP, the user must provide:

1. An .xlsx sheet with serum abundances (rows as variables and columns as samples). See section 5.2.4 for specifications. An example of such a file may be found in the folder `DataExamples`.
2. The file `metadata.xlsx` must contain a column named 'serum'. See section 5.1.2 for specifications.
3. If the serum samples are produced in batches the option `-e` may be used to correct for this before analysis. Serum batches should be included (like other sample batches) in the `metadata.xlsx` in a column named 'sbatch'.
4. In this example with N-glycans both data and serumdata were produced by tandem mass spectrometry and -v was therefore set to ms,ms. Also, both sets were log2 transformed (argument -t).

Files used in the example below, can be found in the `DataExamples` folder.
Command-line box 6.2.3 shows an example of a CAMPP correlation analysis run. TIF and serum N-glycan abundances were corrected for experimental batch and log2 transformed before correlation.

Box 6.2.3: Correlation Analysis.

```
Rscript CAMPP.R -d glycandata.xlsx -m glycanmetadata.xlsx
-b TRUE -v ms,ms -t log2,log2 -s glycanserum.xlsx
-e TRUE -n SecondRunOutput
```

Output:
The run above generates three outputs:

1. An .xlsx file (`SecondRunOut_corr_serum_.xlsx`) with the stats for variables (in this case N-glycans) displaying significant correlation of abundance/expression in tumor sample (interstitial fluid) and matched serum.

> **N.B** Only variables found to be DA/DE between the tested groups/condition/treatment are included in the correlation analysis.

2. A correlation plot (`SecondRunOutput_corrplot.pdf`) visualizing the correlation coefficients and adjusted p-values of all differentially expressed/abundant variables - in this case N-glycans found to partition TIF and NIF. See **Figure 4**.
3. Individual scatter plots (`SecondRunOutput_individual_corrplots.pdf`) for the variables displaying a significant correlation between expression/abundance in TIF/tissue and serum (FDR <= 0.05 is default). See **Figure 5**.

Based on the .xlsx sheet with coefficients and adjusted p-values (not shown), three N-glycans, GP1, GP37 and GP38 where found to display significant correlations of abundances in TIF and serum (see Figure 4). It is worth noting that levels of GP1 in TIF and serum are negatively correlated indicating an accumulation of this N-glycan within the tumor interstitium, perhaps as a result of primary tumor response. GP37 and GP38 have positive correlation coefficients and may be considered as potential diagnostic serum markers.
Figure 4 shows the scatter plots (TIF abundance plotted against serum abundance) of GP1, GP37 and GP28, with confidence shading of regression lines.

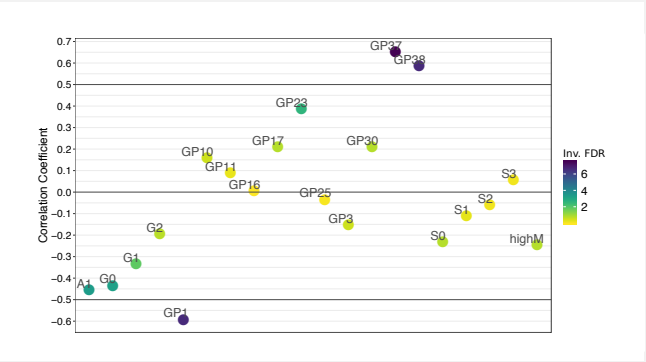


Figure 4: Correlation plot depicting correlation coefficients associated with abundances of N-glycans in TIF and matched serum. Correlation was performed with the 20 N-glycans identified as DA in normal and tumor fluids. Dots are colored in accordance with inverse (scaled) FDRs, e.g. darker shade indicates smaller adjust p-value and vice versus.

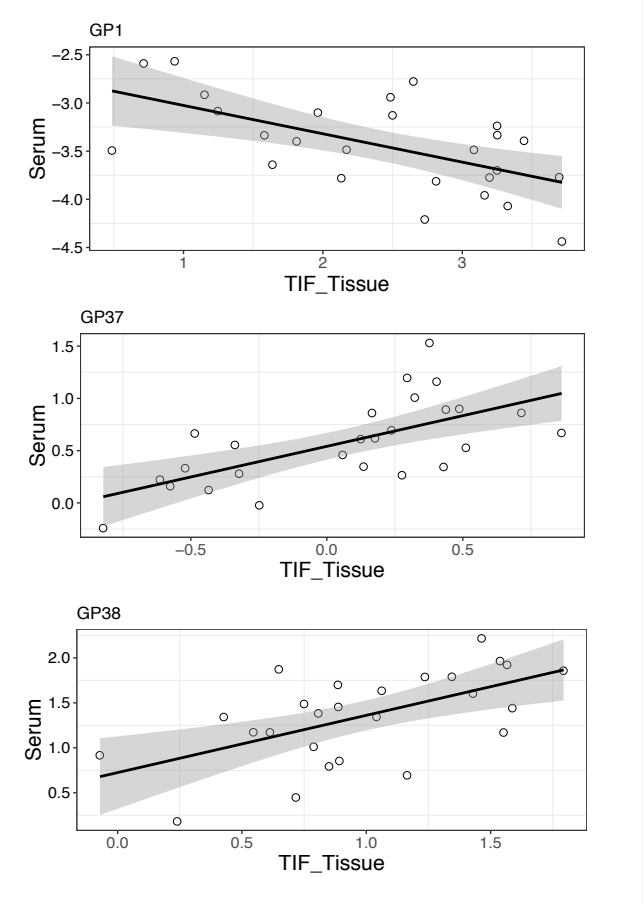


Figure 5: Scatter plots of the 3 N-glycans (GP1, GP37 and GP38) with significant correlations between abundances in TIF and serum. Shaded area indicates confidence of regression line.

6.4 Weighed Gene Co-expression Network Analysis

In order explore the abundance relationship between N-glycans in an unsupervised way, Weighed Gene Co-expression Network Analysis was performed with WGCNA [11]. The cutoff for top most interconnected variables (genes, proteins ect.) in an identified module is set to 25% by default. The user may specify a different cutoff with the flag `-x`. Cutoff for module similarity merging is 0.25 and cutoff for minimum module size is 10 (defaults from the WGCNA tutorial here: `https://horvath.genetics.ucla.edu/html/CoexpressionNetwork/Rpackages/WGCNA/faq.html`). These default parameters cannot be changed with a flag but may easily be modified in the source code of the CAMPP.R script if desired.

Box 6.3.2.1: Survival Analysis (basic).

```
Rscript CAMPP.R -d glycandata.xlsx -m glycanmetadata.xlsx
-v ms -t log2 -b TRUE -w TRUE -n ThirdRunOutput
```

Output:
The run above generates three outputs:

1. An .xlsx file (`ThirdRunOut_WGCNAres.xlsx`) with the stats for variables (in this case N-glycans) which were the among the top n % (default 25%) most interconnected variables from each identified module, e.g. those with the highest kWithin values.
2. WGCNA dendogram, e.g. clustering of variables (N-glycans), with modules colored before an after mergining (`ThirdRunOut_WGCNA_ModuleTree.pdf`). See **Figure 6**.
3. A heatmap for each module network, colored according to variable (N-glycan) co-expression (`ThirdRunOut_moduleHM.pdf`). See **Figure 7**.

The heatmap in **Figure 7** below shows that within the blue module N-glycan features A1, GP1 and GP3 were the most highly co-expressed, followed by N-glycan features S0, G1, GP6 and highM. These results are consistent with both the results of the TIF and serum correlation analysis (**Figure 4**), was well as the variables selected from LASSO regression and differential expression analysis.

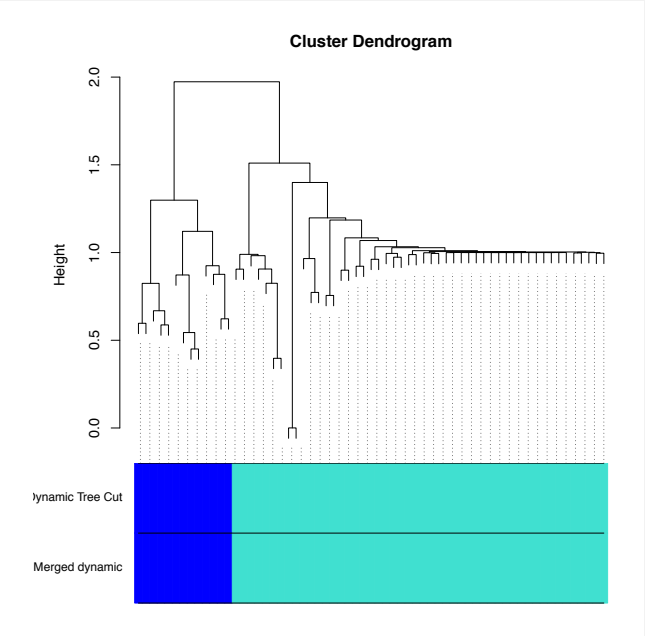


Figure 6: WGCNA module dendogram showing hclust of N-glycans and which modules each N-glycan was assigned to. The plot shows the modules, in this case two, before and after merging on module similarity. As similarity was not enough to merge, the two original modules were retained in this example.

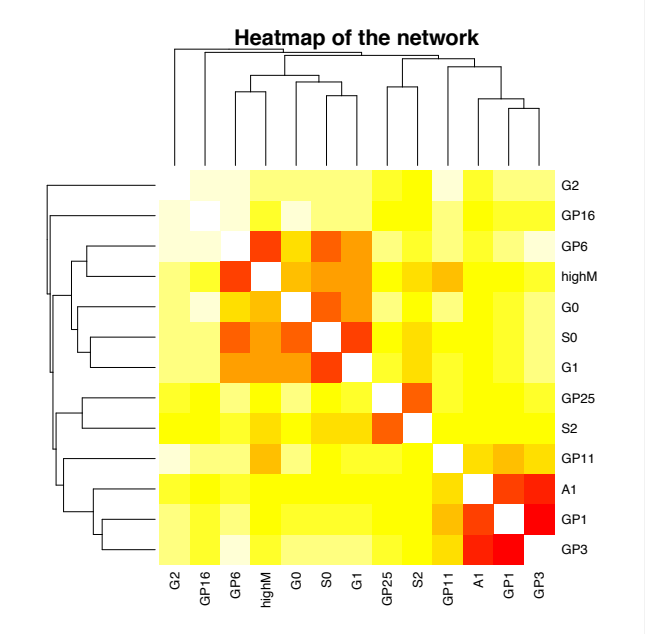


Figure 7: Heatmap of the blue module (heatmap of turquoise module not shown).

6.5 Survival Analysis

Cox proportional hazard model was used to assess whether any differentially abundant N-glycans had potential as prognostic biomarkers for the survival of breast cancer patients.
CAMPP only provides cox proportional hazard models for overall survival and simple relapse-free survival, e.g. one time entry per patient/sample.
CAMPP checks two underlying assumptions of the cox model before performing survival analysis (I) a linear relationship of continuous co-variates with log hazards and (II) proportional hazards of categorical and continuous co-variates, e.i. constant relative hazard. If the requirement of linearity is not fulfilled, cubic splines will be added to the co-variate(s) in question, and analysis is continued. If the proportional hazard assumption is violated for a categorical variable the user may apply stratification and re-run the pipeline. However, the pipeline does not currently handle continuous variables with non-proportional hazards, e.i. that the user should ignore any cox models where this is the case.

Mandatory Columns for Survival Analysis (metadata.xlsx):
In order to perform cox proportional hazard regression with CAMPP, the user must ensure that the `metadata.xlsx` sheet contains at least four columns in addition to the sample IDs named; 'age' (age in years at diagnosis, surgery or entry into trail), 'outcome.time' (time until end of follow-up, censuring or death in weeks, months or years), 'outcome' (numeric 0 = censuring, 1=dead) and 'survival' (numeric 0 = no survival info, 1=survival info available). If the user wishes to correct for potential confounders (e.g. tumor grade, hormone levels, drug-treatment ect.) these should also be included in the `metadata.xlsx`.

Files used in the example below, can be found in the `DataExamples` folder.
Command-line box 6.3.2 shows an example of a CAMPP survival analysis run. TIF N-glycan abundances were corrected for experimental batch and log2 transformed before regression analysis.

Box 6.3.2.1: Survival Analysis (basic).

```
Rscript CAMPP.R -d glycandata.xlsx -m glycanmetadata.xlsx
-v ms -t log2 -b TRUE -u TRUE -n FourthRunOutput
```

In the example above the cox model only contains patient age at diagnosis (default), however, the user may specify other confounders to include. co-variates are included with the flag **`-p`**. If multiple confounders are added these should be separated by commas and their

names should match those of the desired columns within `metadata.xlsx`. In the run below, survival analysis was performed with tumor infiltrating lymphocyte status (name: TILS, type: categorical) and tumor size (name: TSize, type: continuous) as co-variates - See the `metadata.xlsx` sheet in the `DataExampels` folder.

> **N.B** It is important to note that each time a co-variate is added to the model we increase the degrees of freedom. It is therefore essential to have a dataset of an appropriate size for the number of co-variates added. The good rule of thumb is 10 events per parameter/variable.

Box 6.3.2.2: Survival Analysis (confounders).

```
Rscript CAMPP.R -d glycandata.xlsx -m glycanmetadata.xlsx
-v ms -t log2 -b TRUE -u TRUE -p TILS,TP -n FourthRunOutput
```

If a CAMPP run produces the warning message below, it means that some of the specified co-variates violate the proportional hazard assumption:

```
WARNING: The following variables and/or co-variates failed the test of
proportional hazard:  TILS.
IF the co-variates that failed are categorical you may use strata by
re-running the pipline adding flag -y followed by the names of the
categorical co-variates to stratify (if multiple, separate by comma).
N.B, this pipeline does not handle continuous variables that violate
the proportional hazard assumption, if any of these failed PH test,
the hazard ratios of these should NOT be evaluated.
```

If the co-variates are categorical we can re-run the pipeline with stratification using the flag **`-y`**:

Box 6.3.2.2: Survival Analysis (confounders and stratification).

```
Rscript CAMPP.R -d glycandata.xlsx -m glycanmetadata.xlsx -v ms
-t log2 -b TRUE -u TRUE -p TILS,TP -y TILS -n FourthRunOutput
```

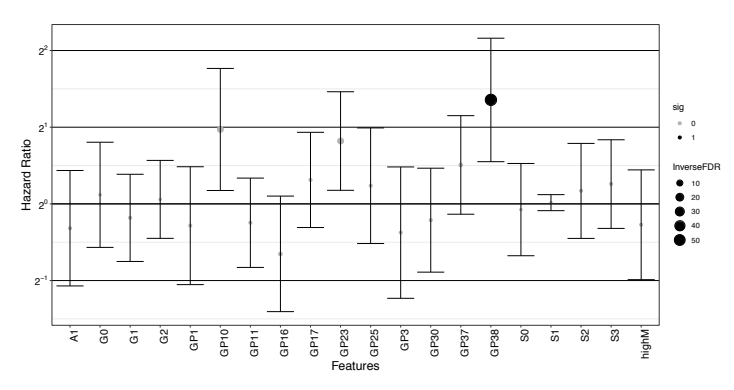


Figure 8: Summary plot of hazard ratios (and confidence intervals) for cox regression with each of the 20 N-glycans found to be differentially abundant between TIF and NIF. A hazard ratio (HR) < 1 indicates that a high level of a given N-glycan is associated with a positive outcome (longer overall survival after diagnosis), while a HR > 1 suggests that a high level of a given N-glycan predicts poorer overall survival. The dot size denotes inverse FDR, e.g. a larger dot is associated with a smaller FDR. Significant N-glycans (FDR <= 0.05) have blue dots, while non-significant N-glycans have orange dots.

Output:
The runs above generate two outputs:

1. An .xlsx file (`FourthRunOut_survival.xlsx`) with the stats for variables (in this case N-glycans) displaying significant associations between abundance/expression in tumor sample (interstitial fluid) and patient outcome.
2. A plot of the hazard ratios for variables (in this case N-glycans) with confidence intervals and significance (`FourthRunOut_survivalplot.pdf`). See **Figure 8**.

Figure 8 shows that one N-glycan, GP38, was found to be significantly associated with survival, e.i. a high level of this N-glycan was predictive for poor overall survival. GP38 was one of the three N-glycans displaying a correlation between abundances in TIF and serum, suggestion that this glycan structure may have potential as a prognostic serum biomarker.

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