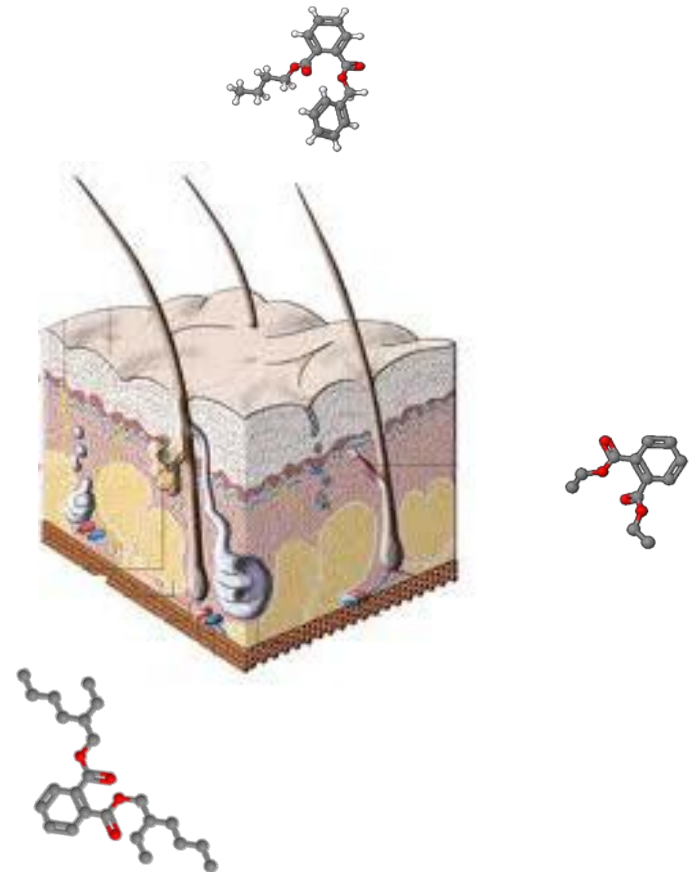


# Dermal uptake of phthalates directly from air

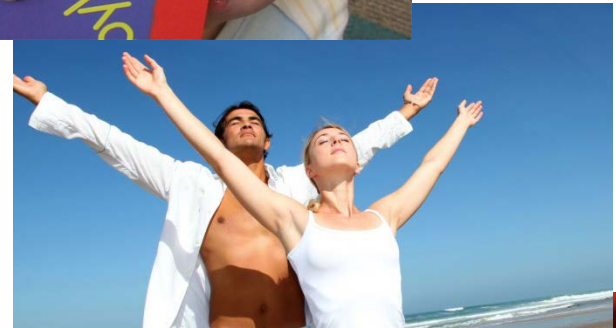
**Gabriel Bekö**



International Centre for Indoor Environment and Energy  
Department of Civil Engineering  
Technical University of Denmark



# You are what you...



**...ingest, inhale, dermally  
absorb**

# Kawah Ijen vulcano sulfur mining - East Java



Numerous respiratory complaints

Life expectancy – 30 years

Is inhalation the only concern?

# Dermal exposure



## Asphalt roof workers

Dermal patch samples analyzed for PAHs (pyrene & BAP) and urine samples analyzed for 1-hydroxypyrene

**Significant dermal exposure**  
(McClellan et al., 2007)



## Cashiers

Highest BPA exposure by occupation – dermal contact to receipts (Braun et al., 2011)

**19-47% remains on hands after hand washing** (Fan et al., 2015)

# Dermal exposure



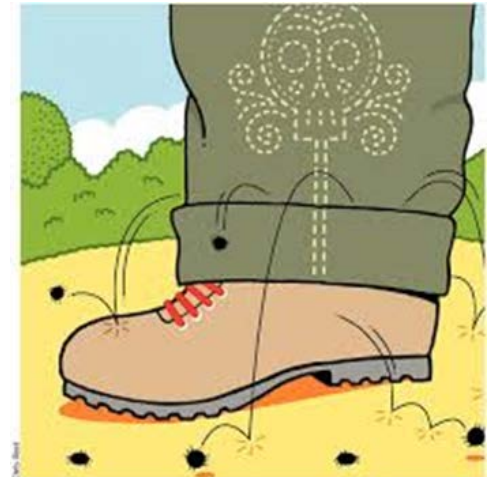
## Tobacco farmers

Correlation between nicotine residue on hands and urinary excretion of cotinine & subjective symptoms.

*(Kongtip et al., 2009)*

# Uptake from the surface of skin is well known

- Transdermal drug delivery (e.g., nicotine, estradiol, testosterone)
- Permethrin from impregnated military uniforms; naphthalene from stored clothing
- DEP and DnBP from creams applied to human skin (*Janjua et al., ES&T, 2007; Int J Androl, 2008*)



# Uptake directly from air? YES for VOCs. ??? for SVOCs

- Piotrowski (1967, 1971)
  - Subjects in chamber with **phenol**
  - Breathed *clean air*
  - Phenol (mg) found in urine
  - Similar results for **nitrobenzene**
- Bader et al. (2008)
  - Subjects in chamber with air containing **N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone (NMP)**
  - Dermal only exposure to NMP using face shield mask
- Measurements on skin (handwipes) and in the air indicate that SVOCs can go from air to skin. But what about the next step – from skin to blood? Modelling suggests this can be the case!



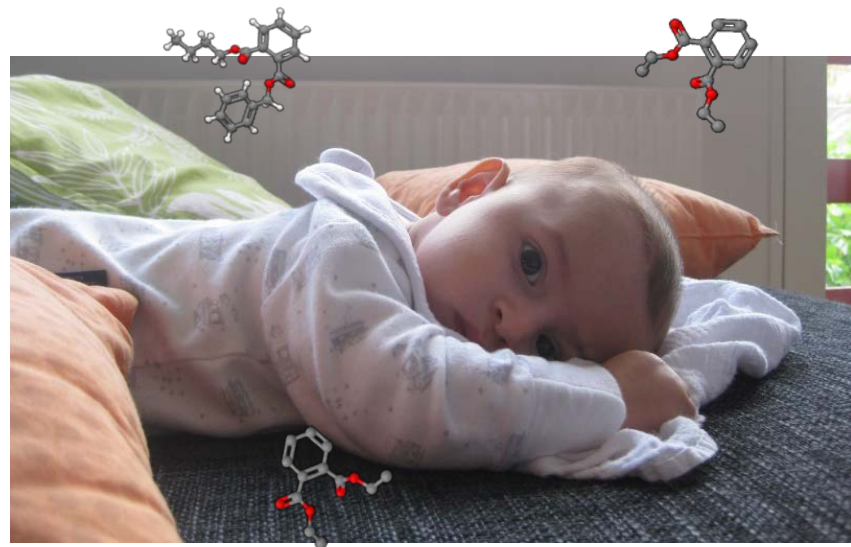
# Phthalates

- Developmental and reproductive toxicants
- Indications of impact on: neurodevelopment, thyroid function, onset of puberty, behavioral development, obesity, respiratory problems



# 441 homes/children: Contribution of each pathway to total intake from urine

	DEP	DnBP	DiBP
Dust ingestion	0.5%	0.8%	1.2%
Inhalation	13%	1.6%	4.6%
Dermal-air	<b>89%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>44%</b>



# Phthalates in skin and urine

Significant associations between the parent phthalate in handwipes and its monoester metabolite in urine for DiBP, DnBP, BBzP and DEHP

*Gong et al. Indoor Air, 2015*

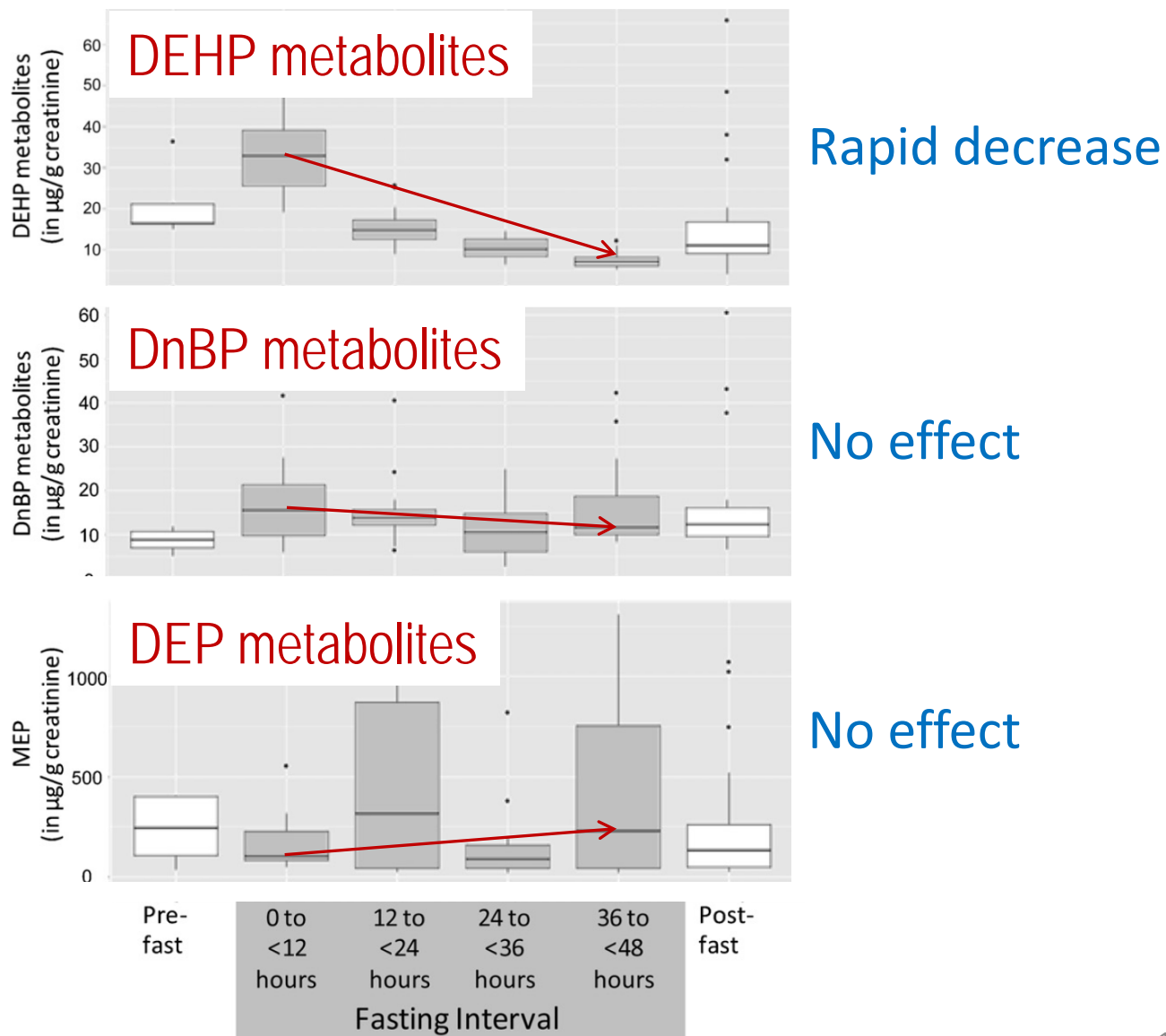


**Time to measure direct uptake!**

# Direct dermal uptake of DEP and DnBP in chamber experiments

- DEP is used as a solvent/carrier in many personal care products
- DnBP is used as a plasticizer for PVC and as a solvent/plasticizer in products such as nail polish
- DEP and DnBP are common in indoor air and indoor dust
- The metabolites of DEP and DnBP are often the most abundant manmade chemicals found in human urine samples
- Modeling suggests that dermal uptake, directly from the air, is an important exposure pathway for both
- Diet is not the dominant exposure pathway for either

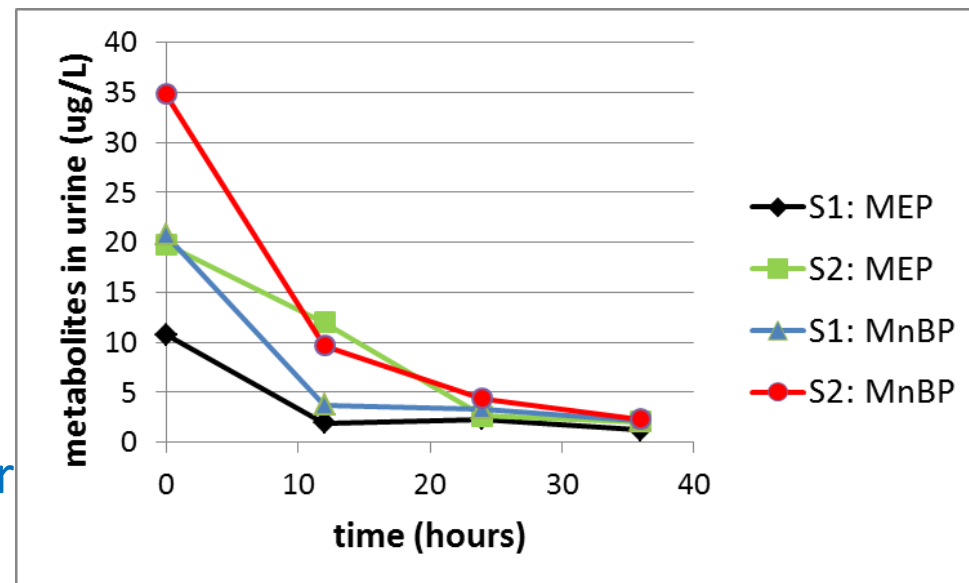
# Impact of 48 hr fast on metabolite levels



*Koch et al., Int J Hyg Environ Health, 2013*

# Preliminary experiments

- DEP and DnBP levels in air needed to be  $> 100 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$   
(typical indoor levels: DEP  $0.1$  to  $0.6 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ; DnBP  $0.3 - 1.4 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )
- Latex paint doped with DEP & DnBP – Steady concentrations in air:
  - ~ $250 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  for DEP
  - ~ $125 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  for DnBP
- Reduction of background levels in our urine:
  - No use of personal care products
  - Restricted diet – **only**:
    - Tap water
    - Wasa “Sport”
    - Fruits with thick skins
- Urine samples from 8 subjects for 48 hours after beginning and continuing restrictions



# Breathing arrangements

## When the movies inspire science...



Dr. No



General van Dyke



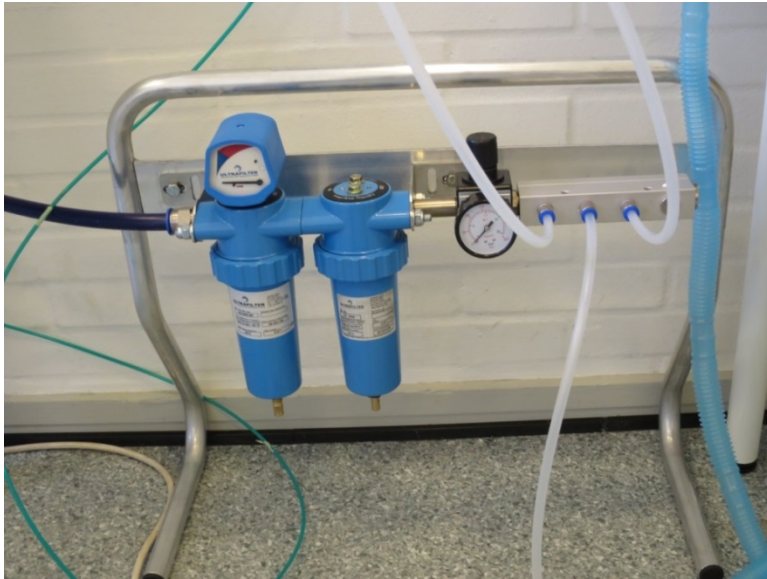
Alien??

# Breathing arrangements

- To expose subject only dermally, we used “breathing hoods” used by Rigshospitalet (Copenhagen) in their hyperbaric oxygen chamber
- Checked the phthalate levels in breathing hood

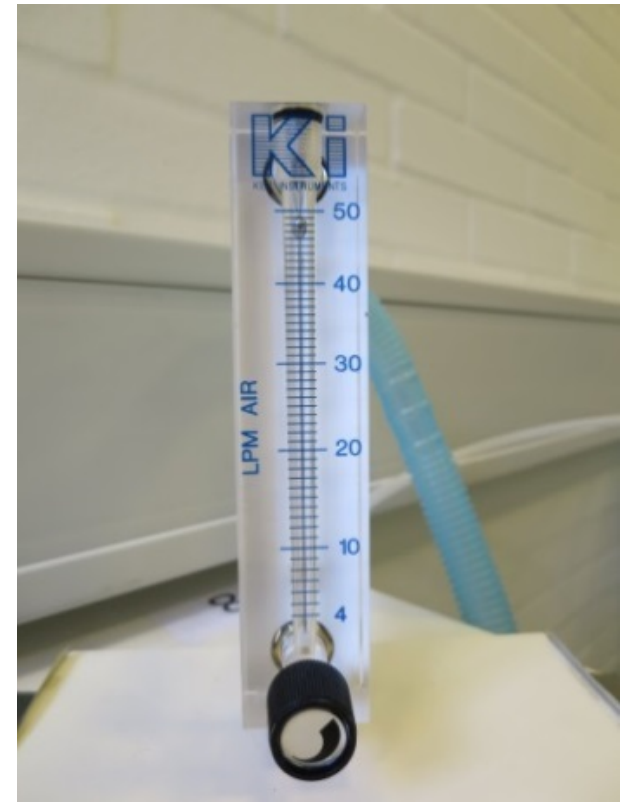


# Breathing arrangements



Outdoor air was compressed and filtered

Breathing air delivered at 48 liters/minute



# Actual experiments

- 6 subjects
- 2 conditions
- 6 hours each (several days in between)
- Restricted diet and PCP use from 12h before until 48h after exposure
- 6+48 hours urine collection



*Subjects in chamber during “dermal only” pathway experiments*

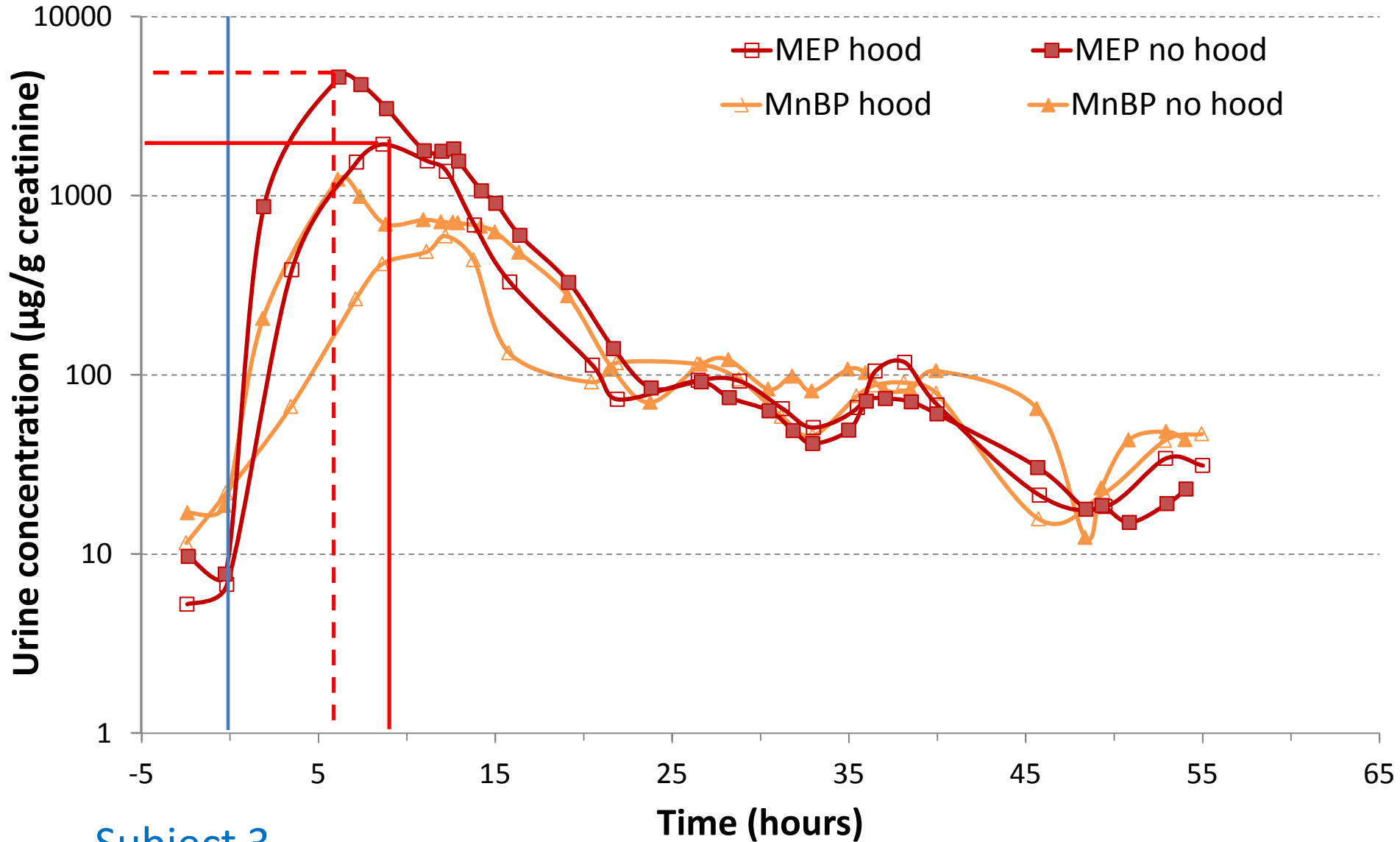


Weighing  
urine  
samples

Urine samples in  
freezer before  
shipment to  
Germany for  
analysis

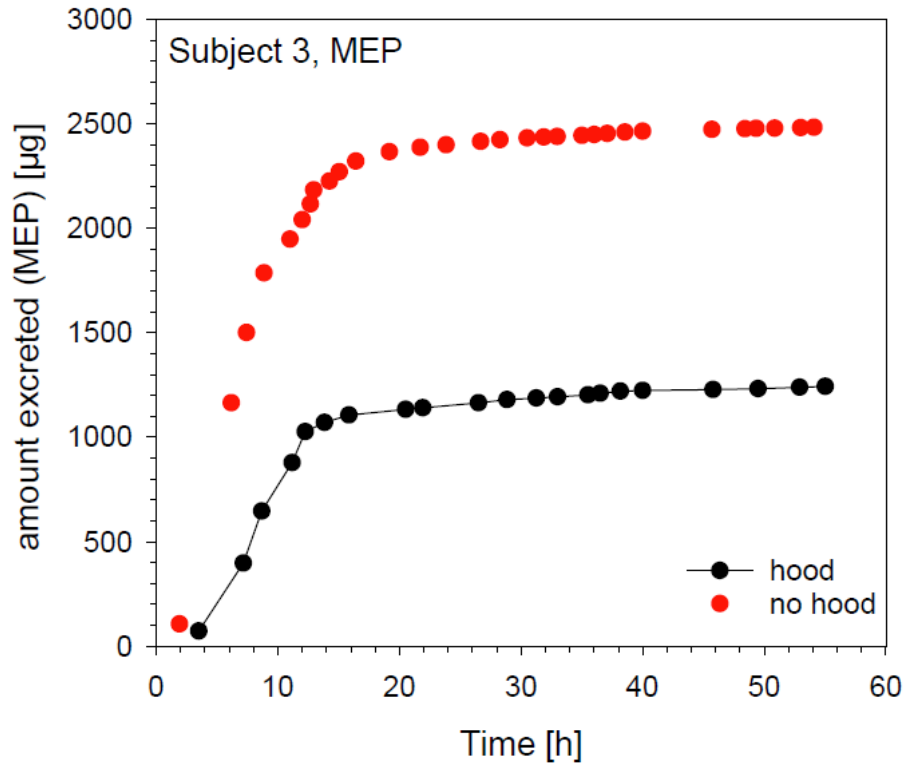


# MEP & MnBP in urine vs. time

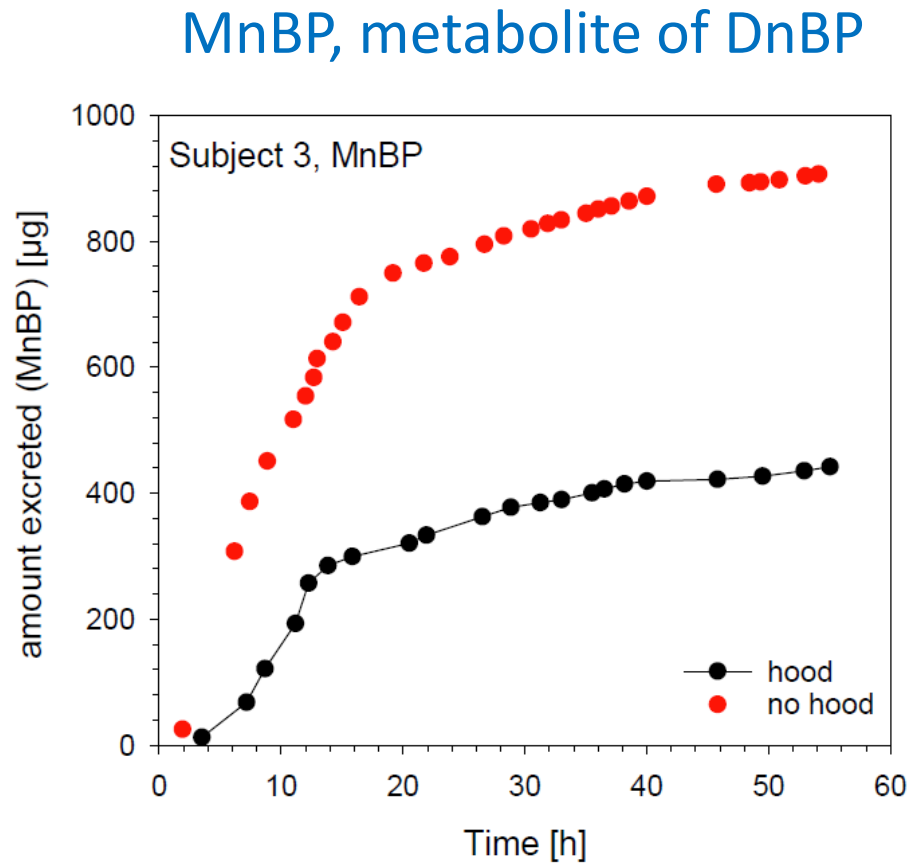


Subject 3

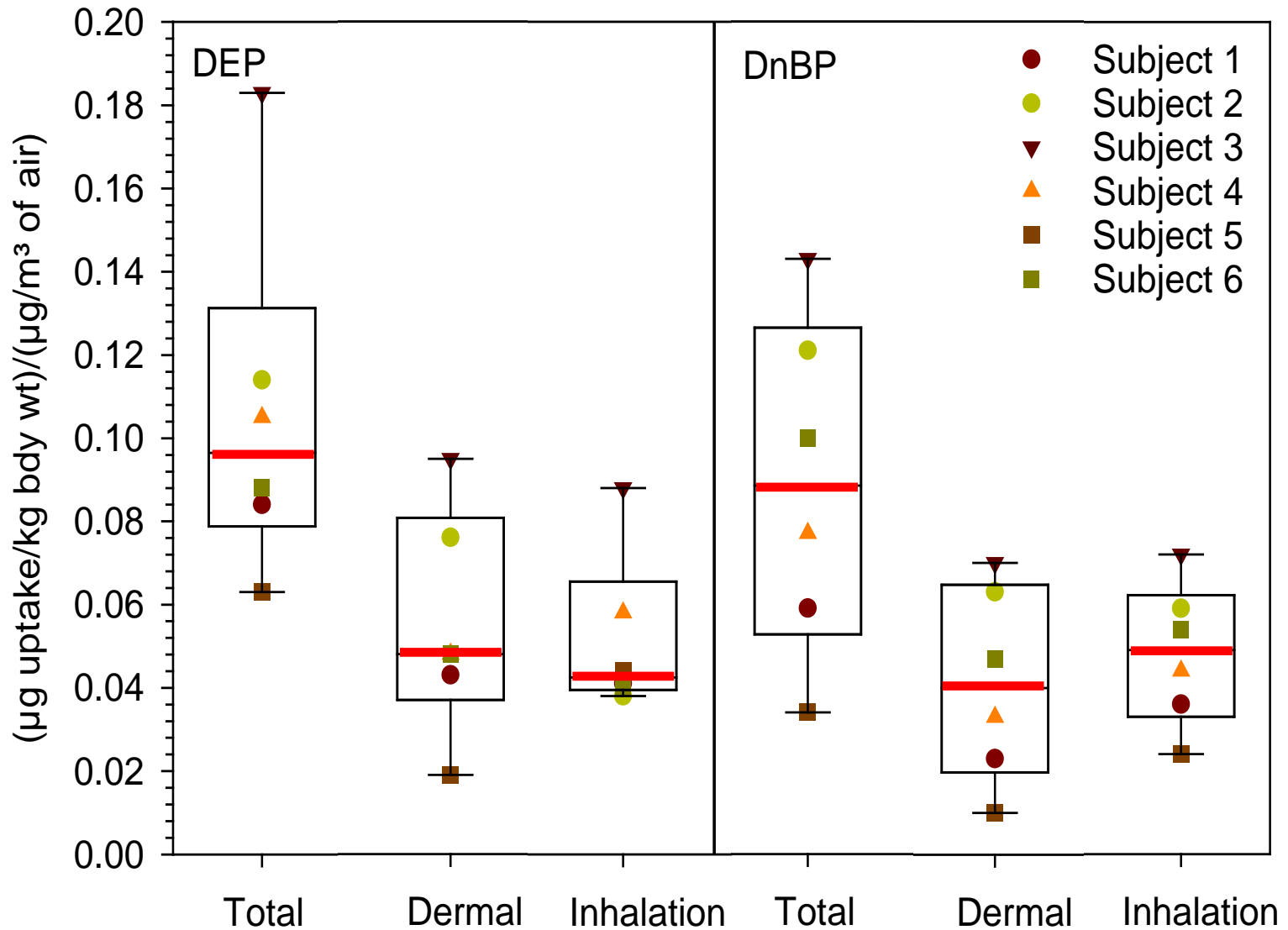
# Net MEP & MnBP in urine vs. time



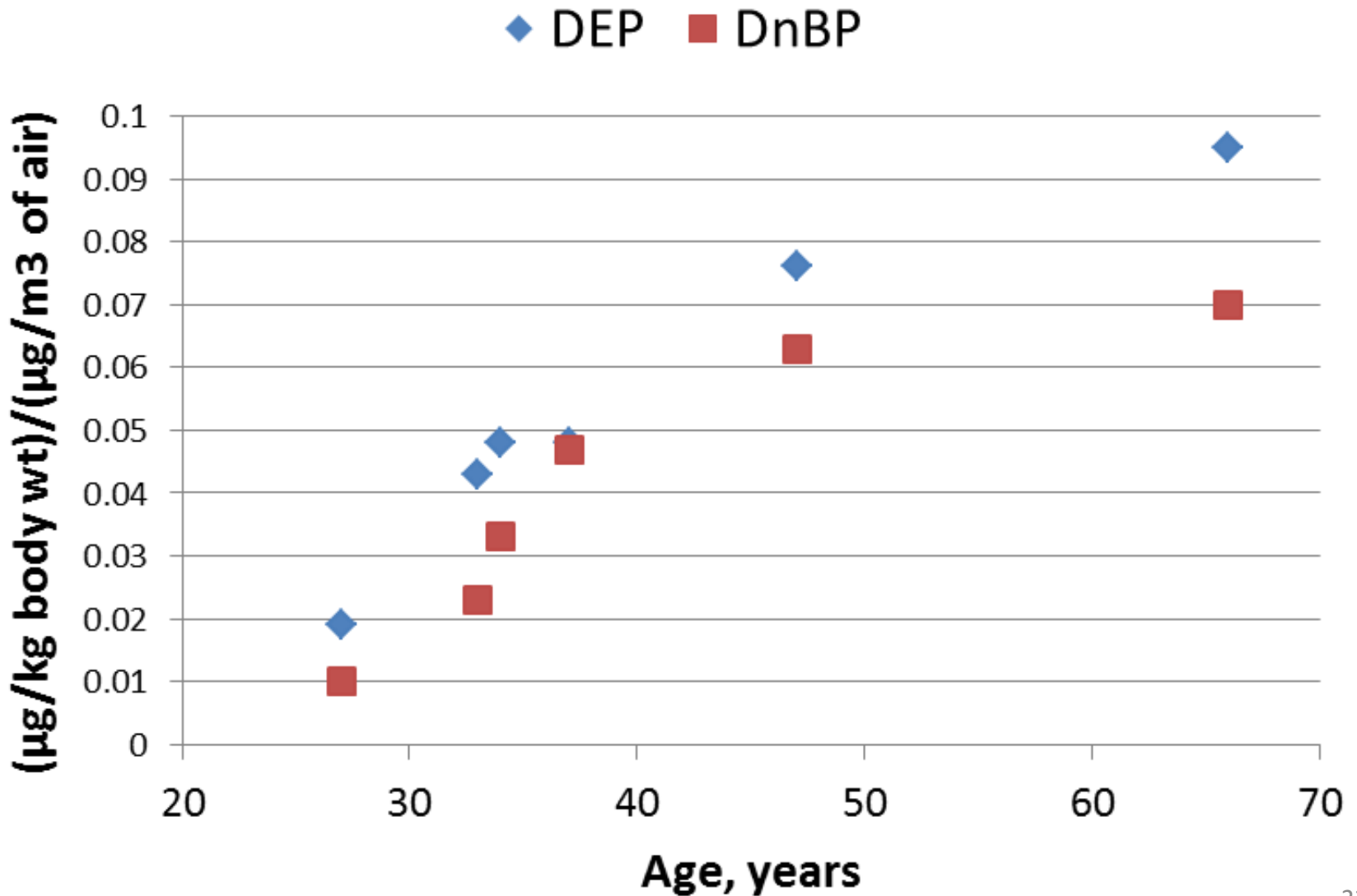
MEP, metabolite of DEP



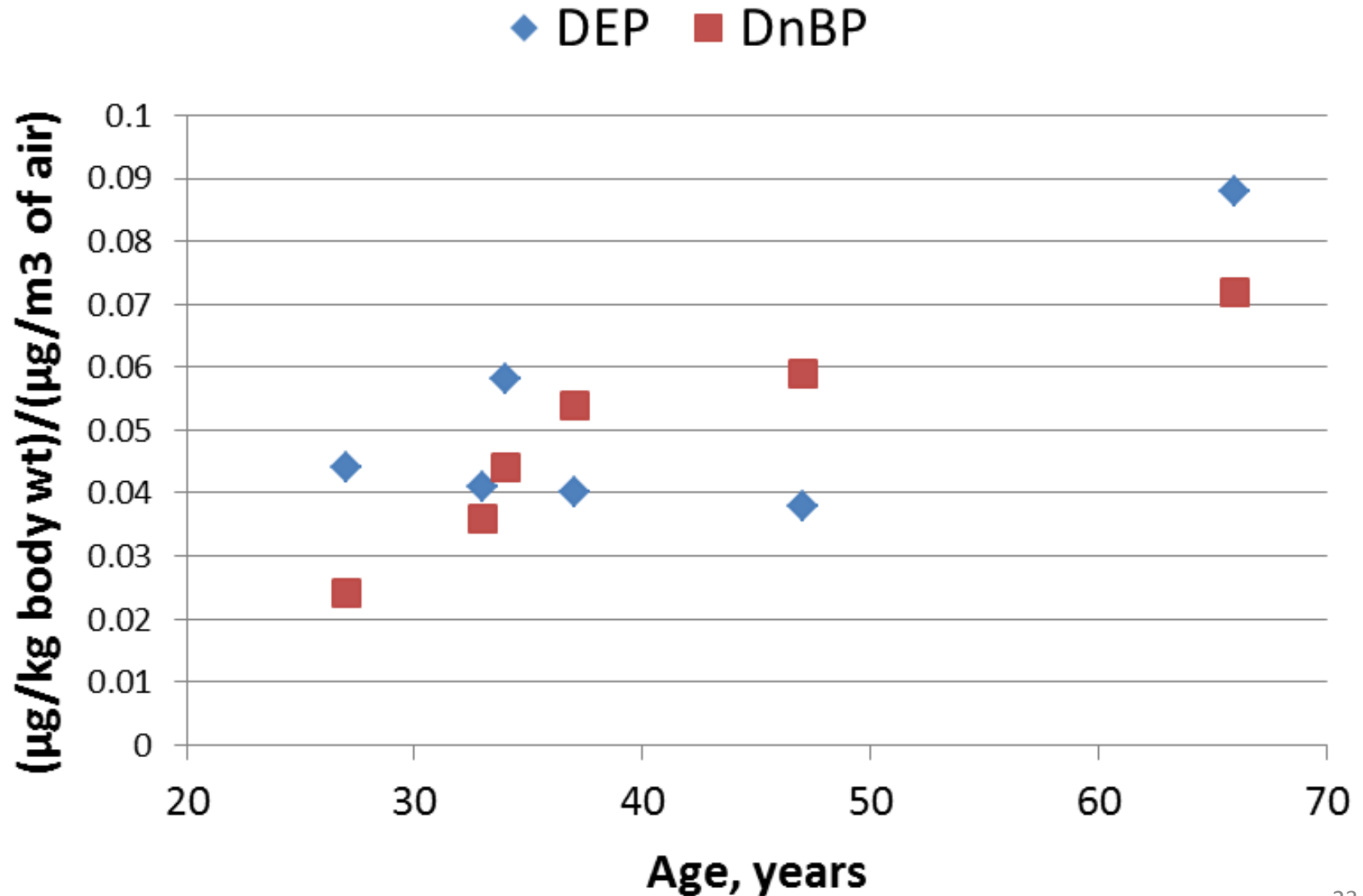
# Net uptake normalized by air conc & weight



# Net dermal uptake (normalized) vs. age



# Net inhalation uptake (normalized) vs. age



# The role of clothing?



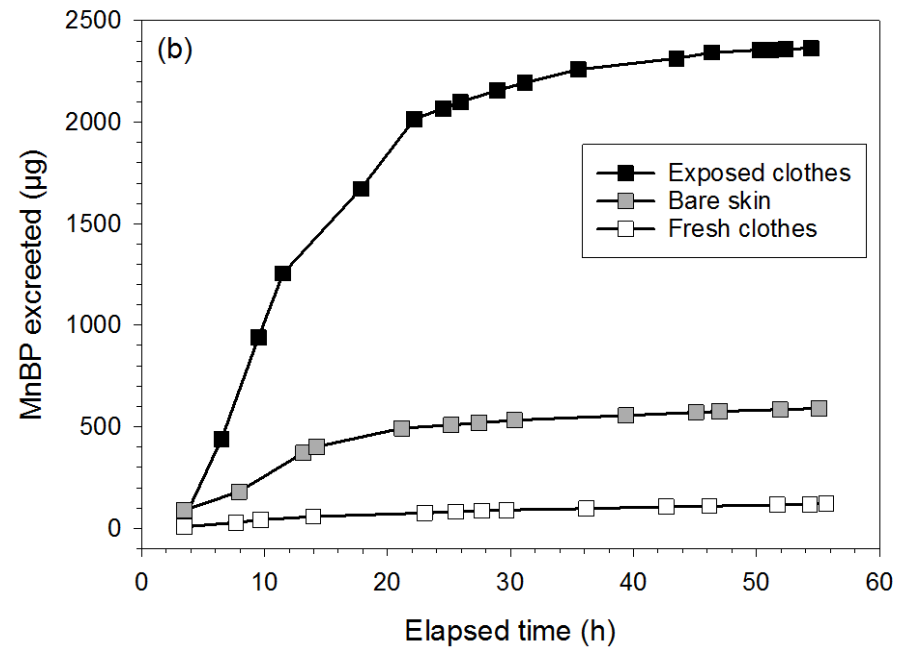
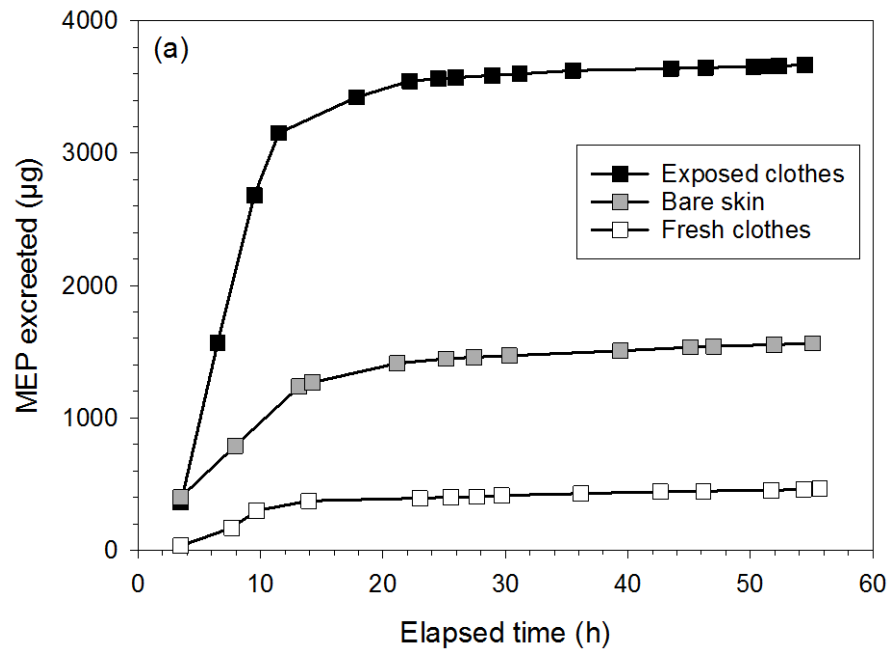
# Freshly cleaned vs. exposed clothes



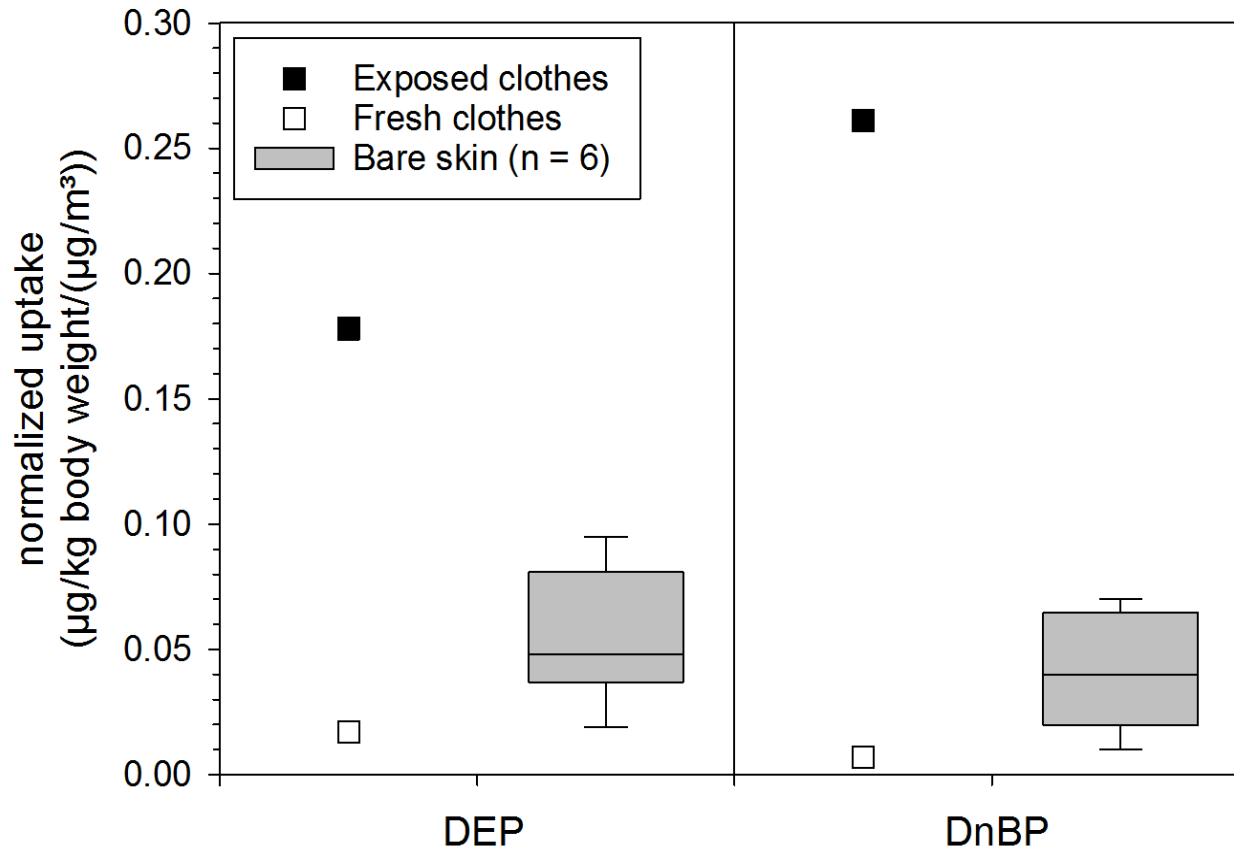
# The role of clothing?



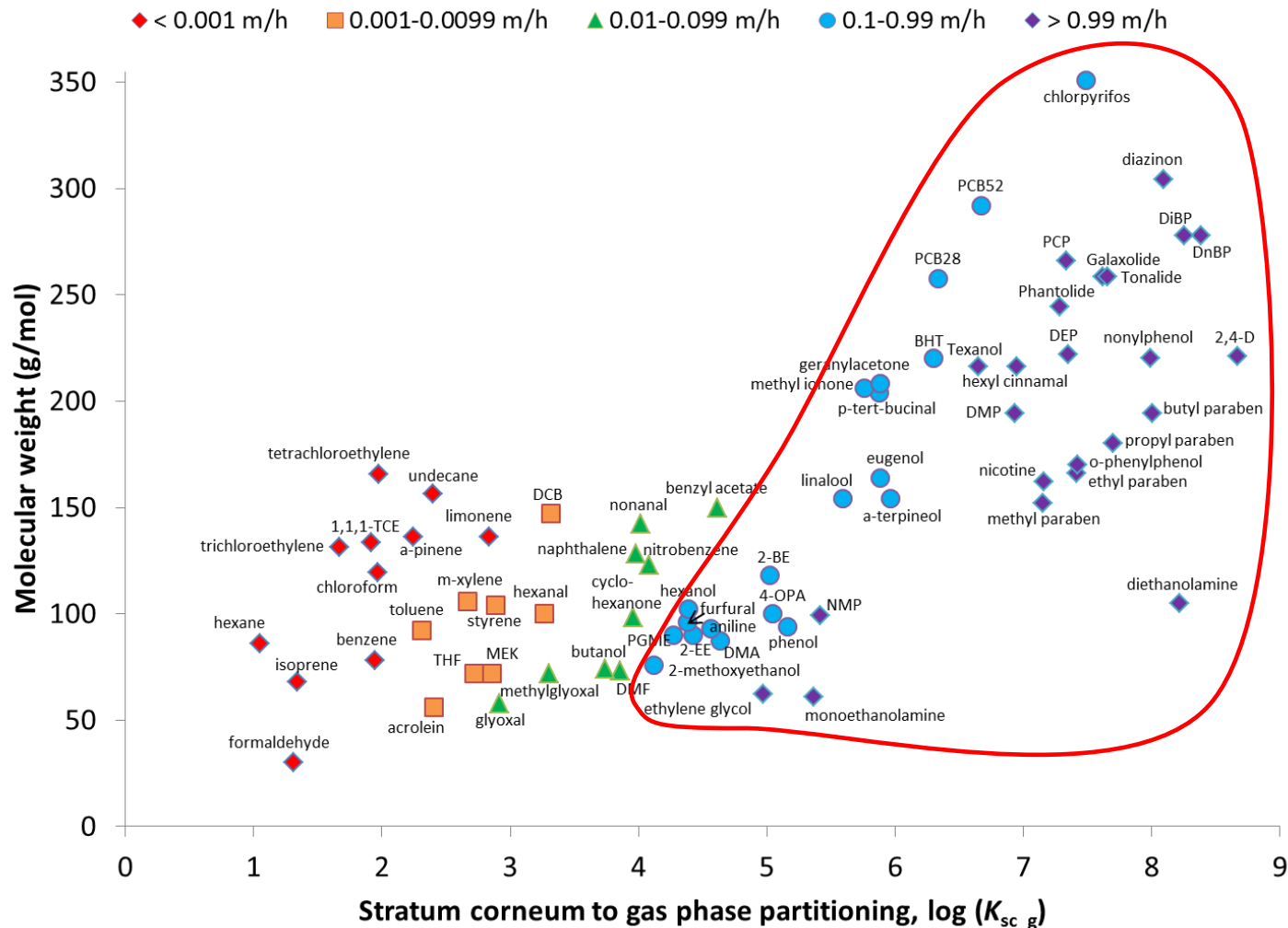
# What got into him? Net MEP & MnBP in urine vs. time



# Net uptake of DEP and DnBP normalized by air concentration & body weight



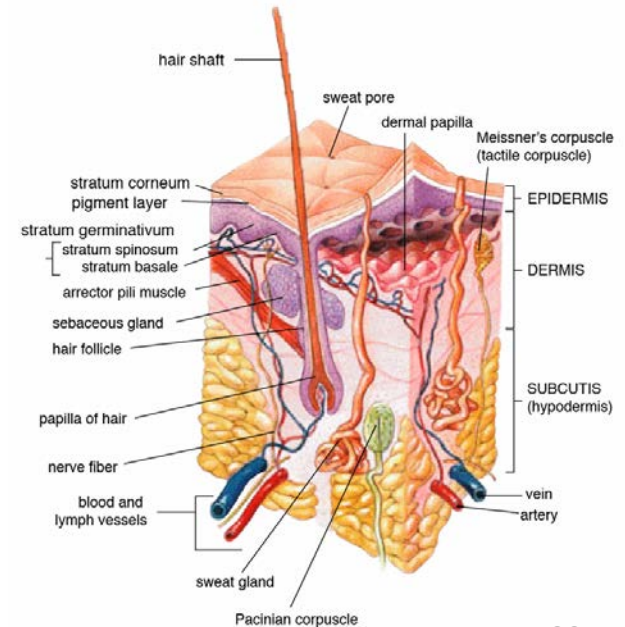
# Broader implications for dermal absorption from air



> thirty  
common  
indoor  
pollutants  
predicted to  
have dermal  
uptakes >  
co-occurring  
inhalation  
intake

# Lots of questions to be answered

- What happens when we change environment (different air concentration) – steady state vs. dynamic conditions
- Effect of putting on clothes after chamber exposure (what does the clothes do to our skin surface lipids)
- Fabric properties, air gap, contact, air/cloth partitioning, time
- Bathing, bedding
- Complexity of air to skin to blood to urine processes (skin layers, composition, thickness, penetration, storage, metabolism...)
- ...

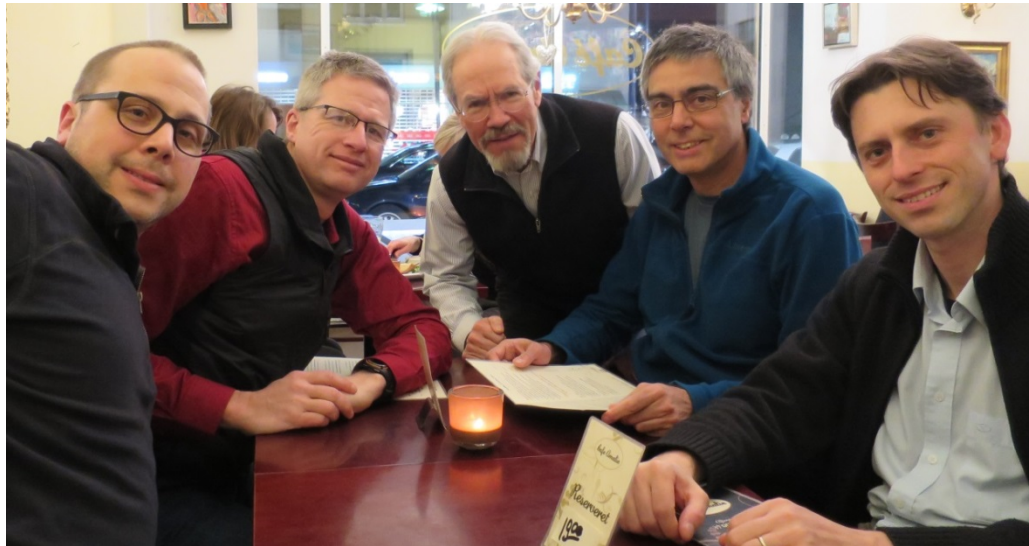


# Summary

- Dermal uptake, directly from air, is a meaningful exposure pathway for DEP and DnBP
- DEP uptake from air was roughly equal to inhalation intake; DnBP uptake from air was ~ 80% of inhalation intake (can be much higher in reality)
- Clean clothing can act as a barrier to dermal exposure from air
- Clothing that has absorbed chemicals can accelerate the dermal uptake of the absorbed chemicals
- We are exposed to “home pollutants” outside our home while wearing clothing that has absorbed home pollutants

# Volunteers at their best

- Air sampling & analyses - Tunga Salthammer, Tobias Schripp (Fraunhofer WKI, Germany)
- Urine analyses - Holger Koch (Institute for Prevention and Occupational Medicine , Bochum, Germany)
- Glenn Morrison (Missouri Univ. of Science & Technology)



Glenn, Lulu & Tobias



Jørn and Geo