

Biostatistics statement

The statistics we used in our manuscript is standard.

Data were analyzed by parametric and nonparametric statistical tests using SPSS (version 16) and Simca-P (version 11.0). Continuous data were compared by one-way ANOVA. Differences in metabolic profiles on LC/MS were determined by principal component analysis and partial least squares discriminant analysis.

To validate the importance of metabolites, and to further gauge their ability to distinguish among patients with NASH and NAFLD and healthy controls, their potential predictive utility for the process of NAFLD was assessed by ROC curve analysis. ROC analysis was performed using MS peak areas corresponding to metabolite concentrations in each of the three subjects groups. Areas under the ROC curve were calculated using RORC package.