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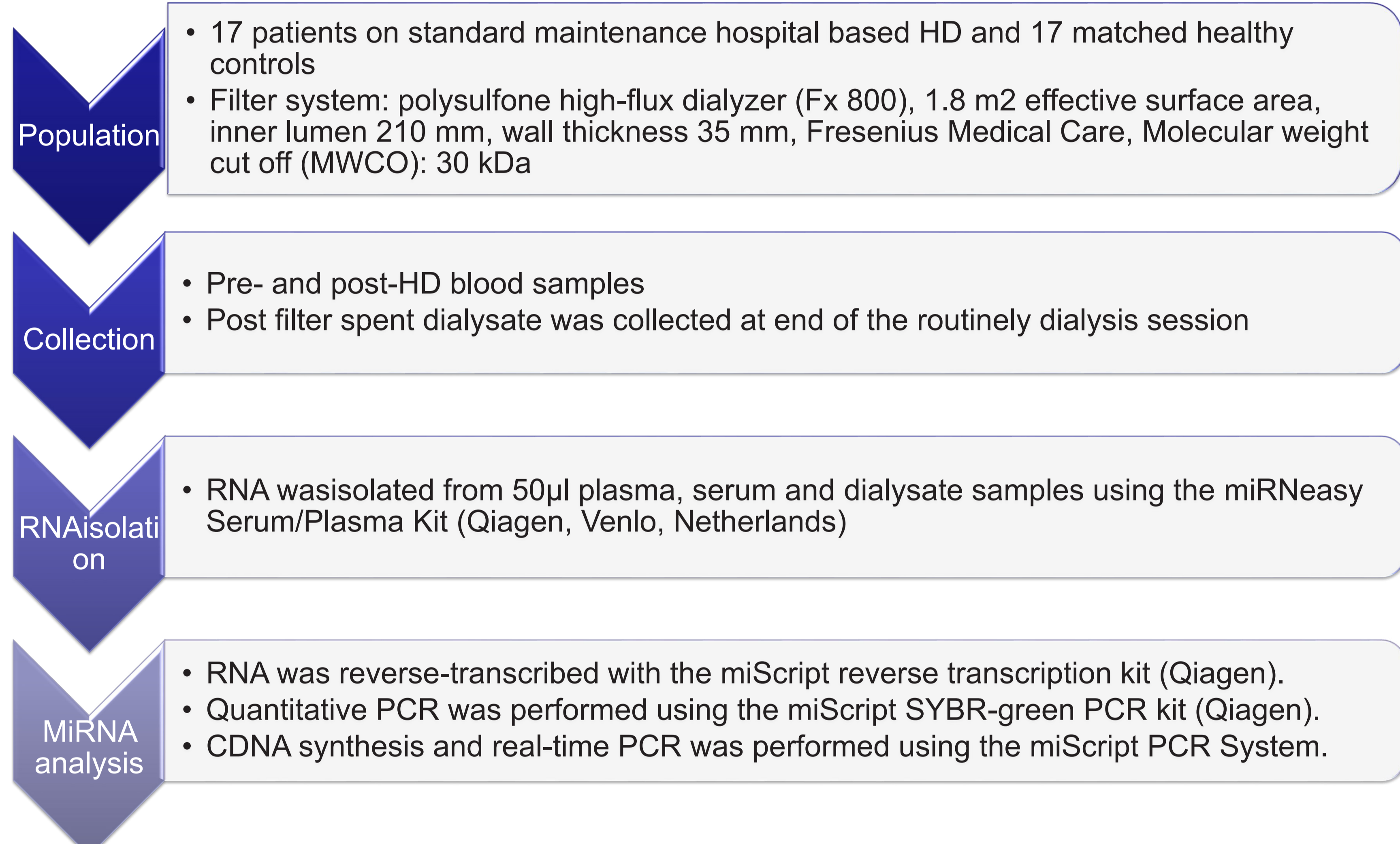
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Introduction and objectives

Liver specific microRNA-122 (miR-122) is a sensitive and specific circulating biomarker that is being qualified for use in the clinical management of a range of liver diseases and for hepatotoxicity screening in drug development. It has been reported that kidney dysfunction is associated with a significant reduction in the concentration of circulating microRNAs. Haemodialysis is a common treatment for acute kidney injury and end-stage renal disease (ESRD). The impact of haemodialysis on circulating microRNAs is variable with some microRNAs significantly reduced by haemodialysis. The objective of this study was to determine the effect of ESRD and haemodialysis on miR-122

Methods

Blood samples were collected from 17 patients with ESRD on maintenance haemodialysis and 17 matched healthy controls. All subjects had standard liver function tests in their respective normal ranges. Samples from ESRD patients were collected pre- and post-haemodialysis. MiR-122 and spiked-in cel-miR-39 were measured by qPCR.

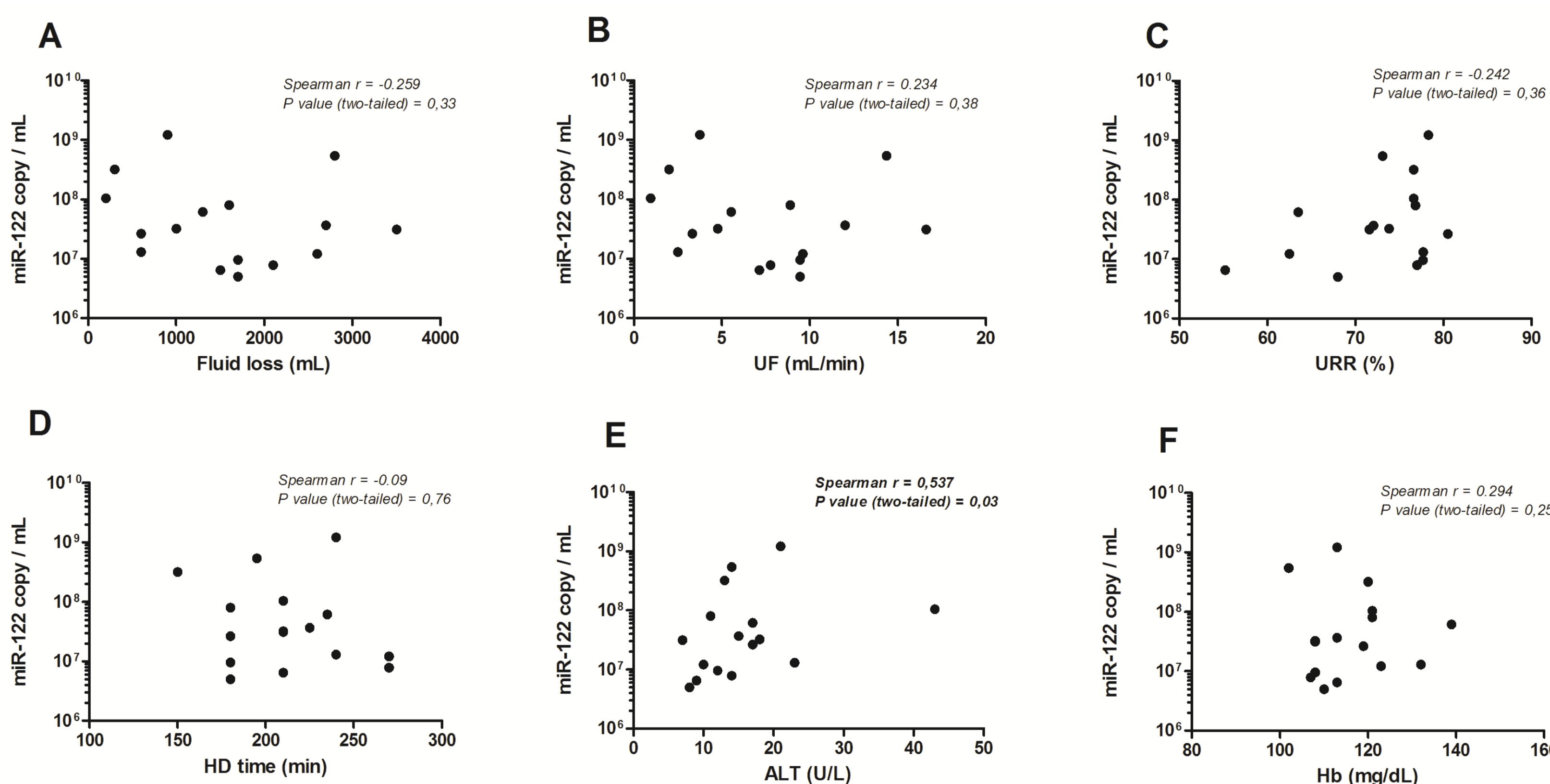


Results

There was no difference in miR-39 concentration across healthy controls and ESRD patients, pre- and post-haemodialysis. Pre-HD miR-122 circulating concentration was 13-fold lower compared with healthy controls (pre-HD mean: 21.7 million copies/mL [95% CI 6.7 – 37 million]; healthy controls mean: 284 million [95% CI 8.9 – 650 million] copies/mL) ($p=0.044$ two-tailed). With HD there was a 8-fold increase in miR-122 to 168 million (95% CI 2.6 – 340.1 million) copies/mL (Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed rank test $p<0.0005$ two-tailed). There was no significant difference between miR-122 post-HD and concentrations in health ($p=0.47$ two-tailed Mann-Whitney test). The increase in miR-122 did not correlate with changes in urea, blood pressure, haematocrit or degree of ultrafiltration and fluid removal

	Haemodialysis	Healthy Controls	p
Number of patients	17	17	
Age (years)	58 ± 13	54 ± 8	ns
Sex			
M % (n)	47 (8)	53 (9)	ns
T2DM % (n)	29 (5)		
Hypertension % (n)	70 (12)		
BMI (kg/m ²)	26.9 ± 6	26.3 ± 4	ns
SBP (mmHg)	130 ± 20	130 ± 13	ns
ALT (U/L)	15 ± 8	22 ± 9	ns
Bil (µmol/L)	9.2 ± 3	9.2 ± 4	ns
CRP (mg/dL)	10 ± 15	2 ± 1	0.058
Haemoglobin (mg/dL)	114 ± 12	145 ± 11	<0.001

Figure 3: Correlation (r) and significance (P) of associations between Micro RNA 122 abundance in plasma and laboratory measurements in 17 ESRD on HD



Conclusions

MiR-122 is lower in ESRD compared to health. Haemodialysis restores circulating miR-122 concentration to healthy levels. This should be considered when interpreting liver injury using miR-122 in patients with ESRD and specific reference ranges that define normal in this setting may need to be developed.

References

- Turchinovich A. Et al. Characterization of extracellular circulating microRNA. *Nucleic Acids Res.* 2011
- Emilian C. Et al. MicroRNAs in patients on chronic haemodialysis (MINOS study). *Clin J Am Soc Nephrol.* 2012

Figure 1: Plasma concentration of MicroRNA 122

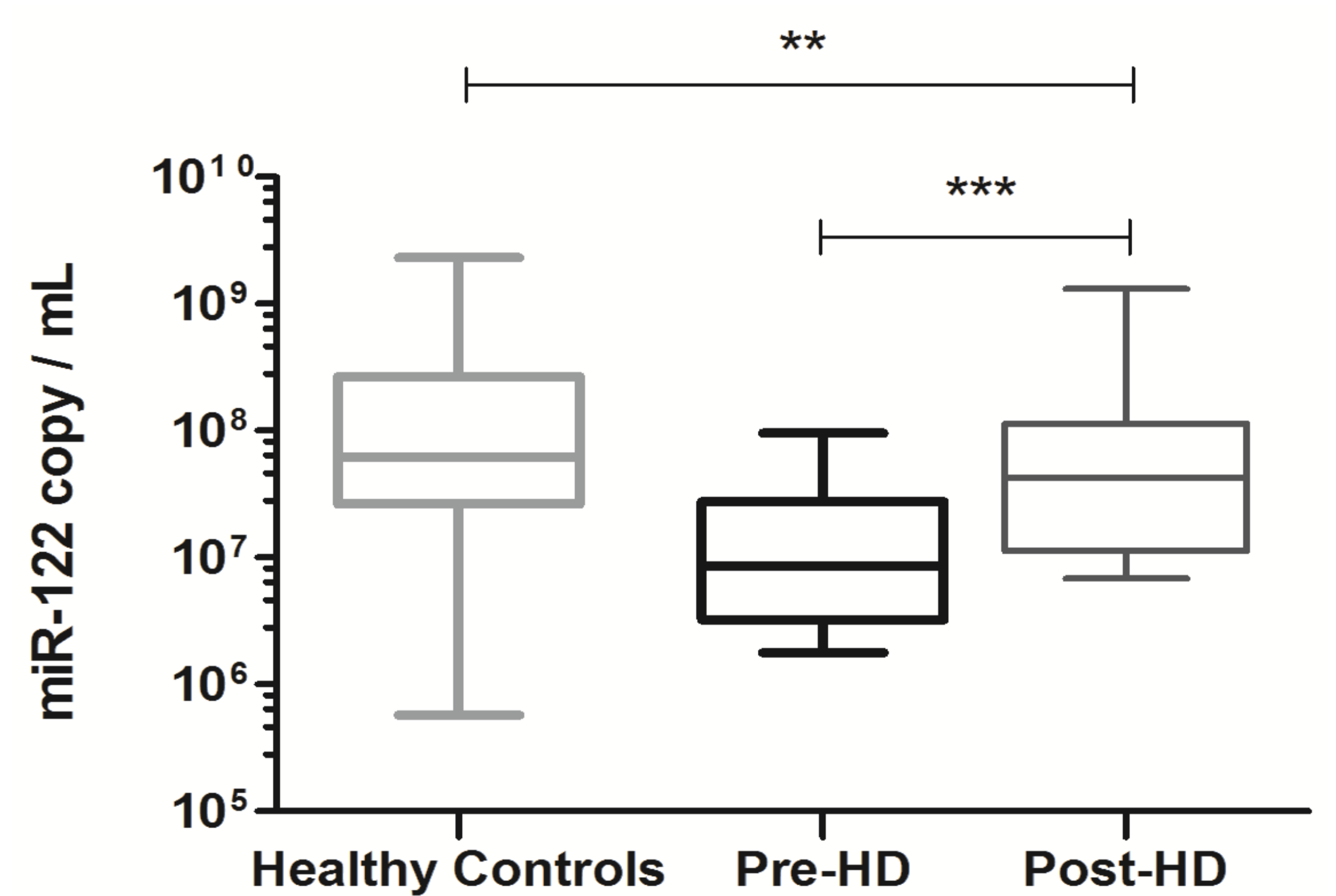
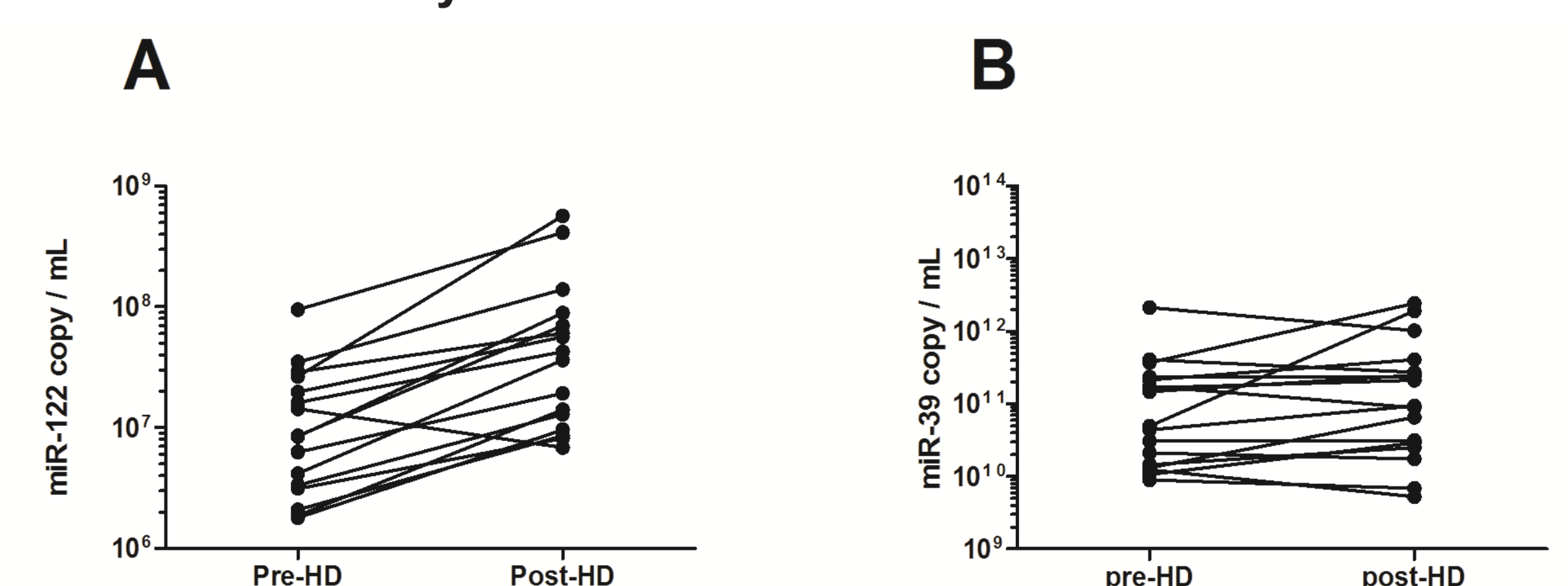


Figure 2: (A) Plasma concentration of MicroRNA 122 pre and post a single dialysis session. (B) Plasma concentration of MicroRNA 39 before and after dialysis



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