

# Viscoelastic Characterization of Biological Tissues & Biomaterials with Commercial Systems

**Cédric SCHMITT, Ph.D.**

Co-founder and CTO of Rheolution inc.

Rheolution Inc.

Montreal, Qc, Canada

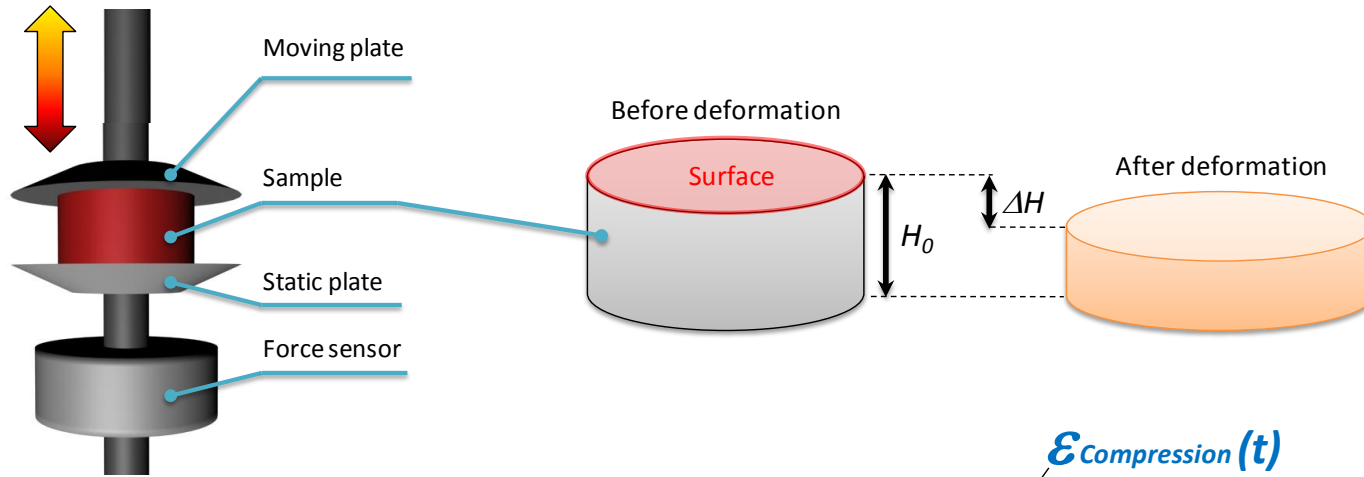
[www.rheolution.com](http://www.rheolution.com)



## Objectives of this presentation

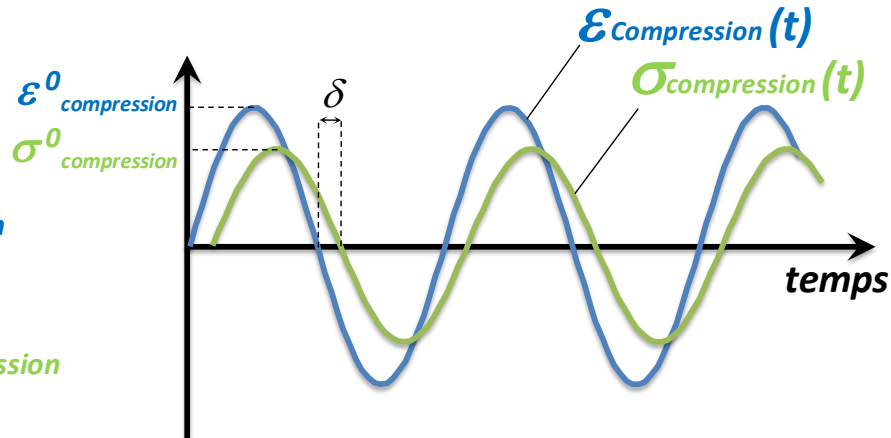
- To list and compare the different **commercially available instruments** for the viscoelastic characterization of materials and biomaterials,
- To give examples in the **context of shear wave elastography calibration**, in term of:
  - Large frequency range,
  - Small deformations,
  - Adaptation to **soft biomaterials and soft biological tissues testing**
    - ❖ Feasible tests
    - ❖ Samples preparation

## Dynamic Mechanical Analysis (DMA) Systems : Principle



$$\frac{\Delta H}{H_0} = \text{deformation } \epsilon_{\text{compression}}$$

$$\frac{\text{Measured Force}}{\text{Surface}} = \text{strain } \sigma_{\text{compression}}$$






Storage modulus

$$E' = \frac{\sigma_0}{\epsilon_0} \cos(\delta)$$

Loss modulus

$$E'' = \frac{\sigma_0}{\epsilon_0} \sin(\delta)$$

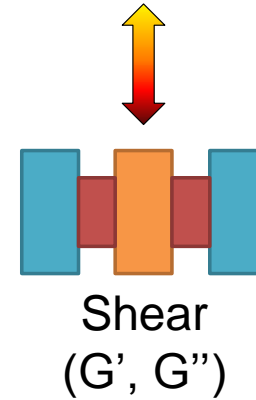
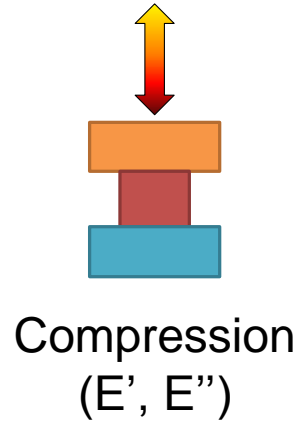
## Deformation modes available in DMA systems

-  Moving part
-  Static part
-  Sample

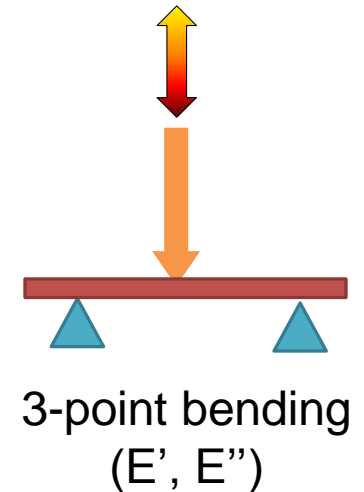
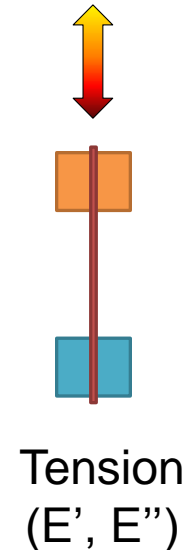
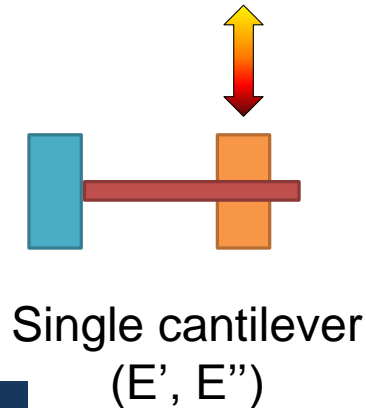
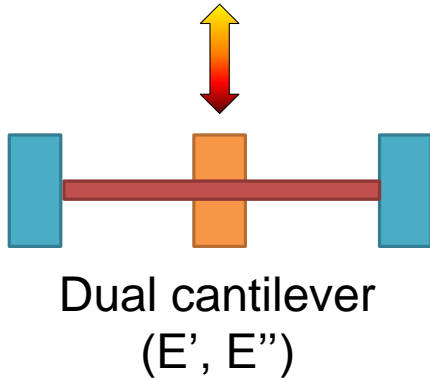
**Medium Soft Samples**  
(kPa to MPa)



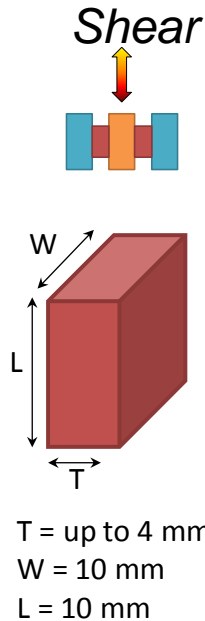
*depending on the sample*



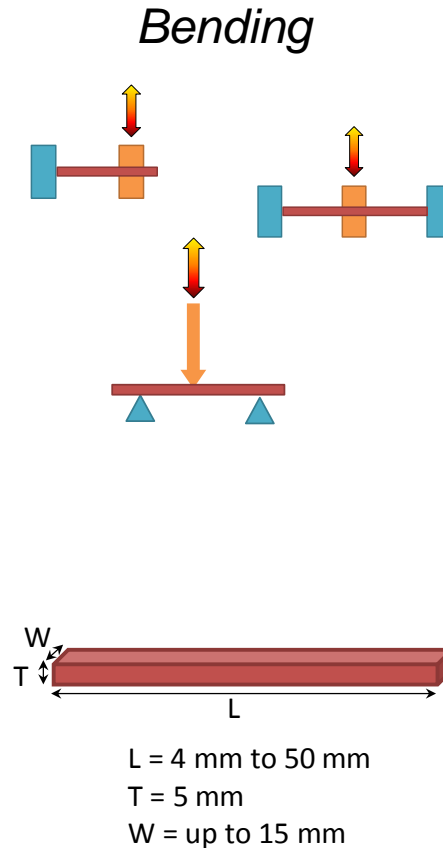
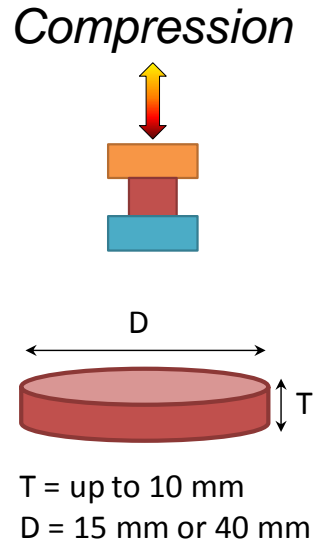
**Rigid samples (MPa to GPa)**



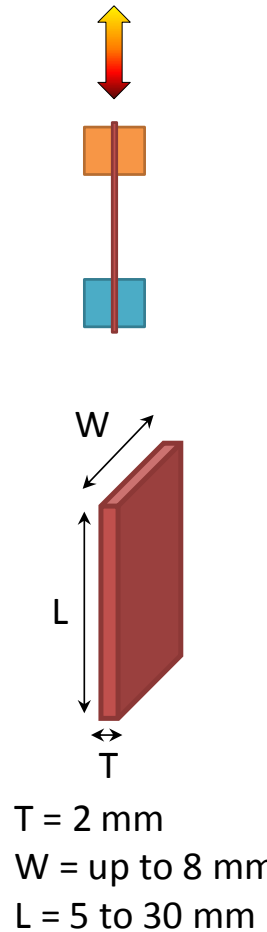
## TA Instruments Q800



## DMA: Samples Dimensions



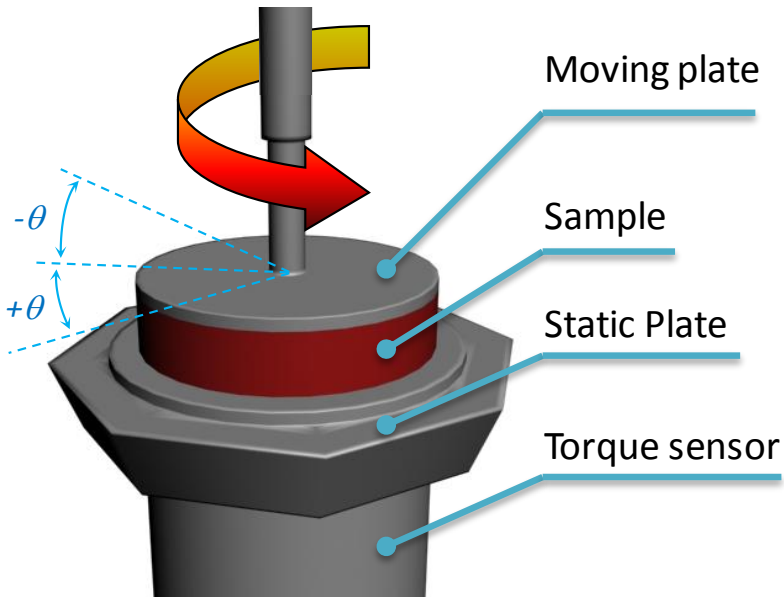
## Tension



### Limitations in the context of SWS calibration

- More adapted for rigid materials
- Not adapted for very small strain without pre-deformation
- One modality for  $G'$ ,  $G''$  measurement
- **Cannot reach high frequencies due to system inertia**

## Oscillatory Rheometry : Principle



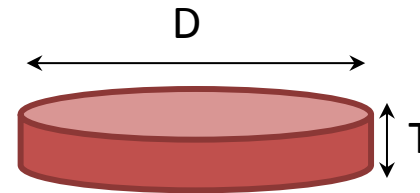
### Basic relations:

$$G' = \frac{\sigma_0}{\varepsilon_0} \cos(\delta) \quad G'' = \frac{\sigma_0}{\varepsilon_0} \sin(\delta)$$

- **Deformation modes : Rotational Shear**
- **Sample stiffness: Pa to kPa**
- **Sample Dimensions**

### Limitations in the context of SWS calibration

- More adapted for fluid testing
- Cannot test rigid samples
- Very sensitive to the sample geometry (surface flatness, thickness) and pre-stress
- Cannot reach high frequencies due to system inertia



$$D = 20T \text{ to } 28T$$

$$D = 20 \text{ mm}$$

$$D = 30 \text{ mm}$$

$$D = 50 \text{ mm}$$

$$T = 0.71\text{-}1 \text{ mm}$$

$$\Rightarrow T = 1.07\text{-}1.5 \text{ mm}$$

$$T = 1.73\text{-}2.5 \text{ mm}$$

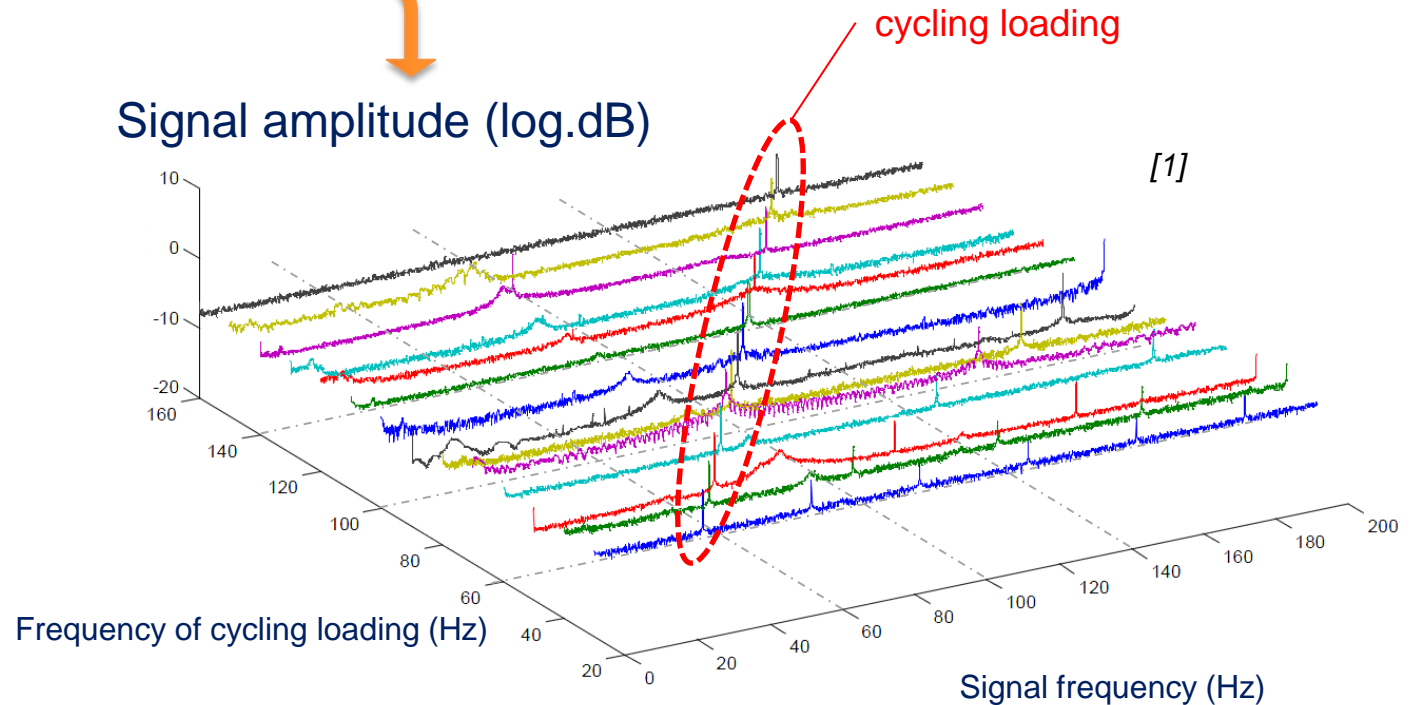
## Origin of the frequency range limitation for the **DMA** and **rheometer** instruments

- Sample-holder resonance
- Sample resonance
- Instrument resonance

Laser vibrometer [1]



ElectroForce 3200  
(Bose)



## Time-Temperature Superposition (TTS) principle

- Indirect measurements

Hypothesis:

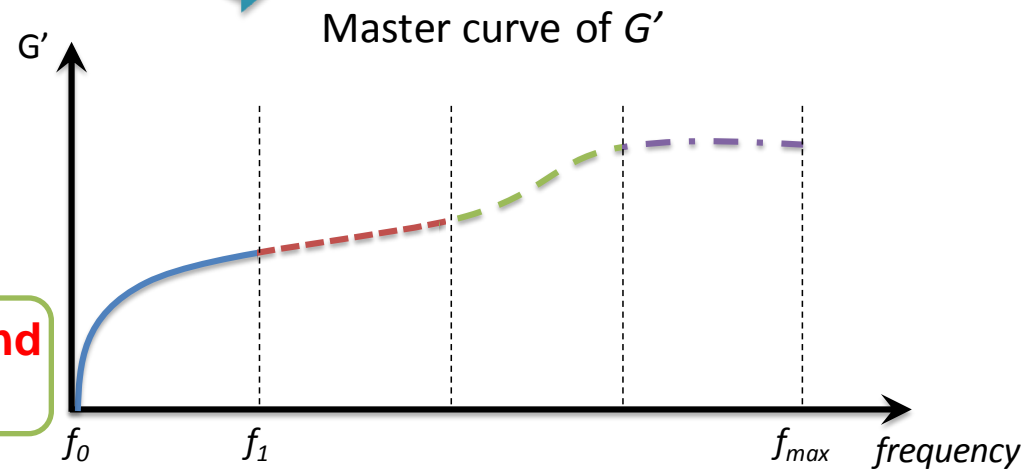
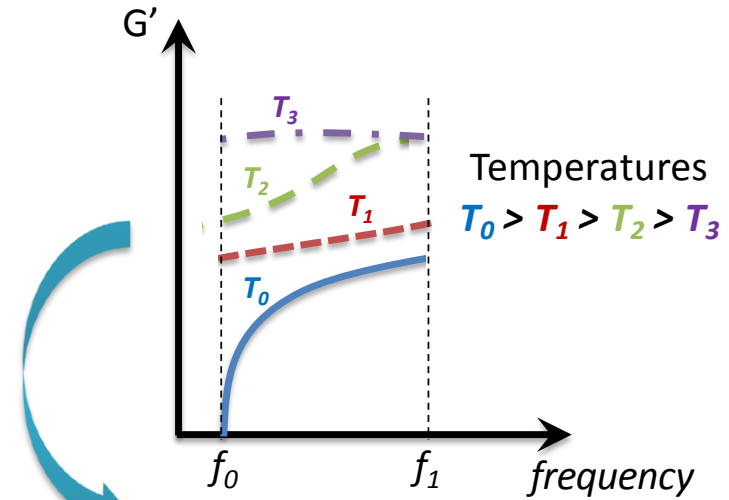
- “Thermorheologically” simple materials



The material presents a similar behavior for different temperatures



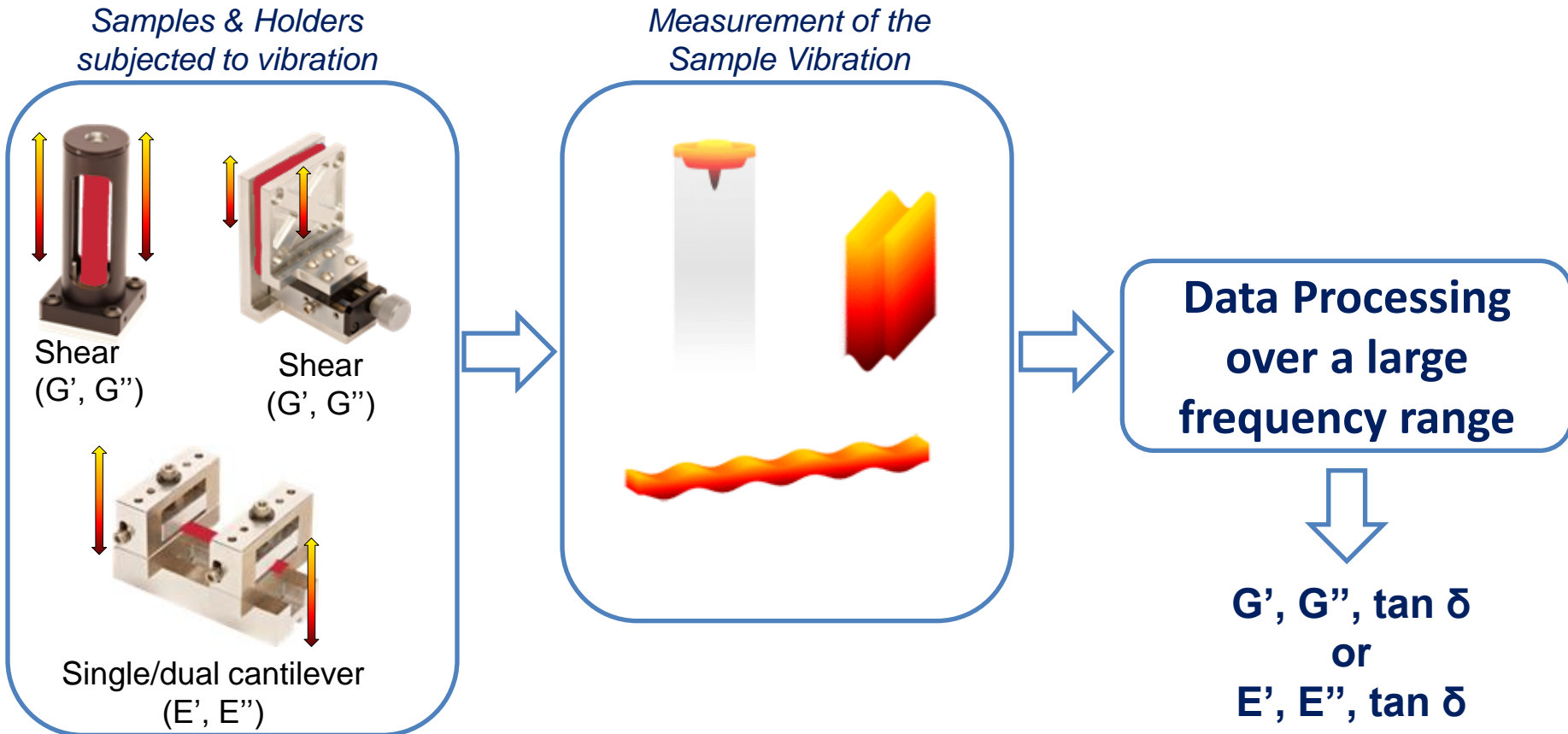
**Assumption not valid for biomaterials and biological tissues<sup>[23-27]</sup>**



[23] M. van Turnhout et al., Passive transverse mechanical properties as a function of temperature of rat skeletal muscle in vitro, *Biorheology*, vol. 42, no. 3, pp. 193-207, 2005.  
 [24] N.T. Wright et al., Denaturation of collagen via heating: an irreversible rate process, *Annu.Rev.Biomed.Eng.*, vol. 4, pp. 109-128, 2002.  
 [25] E. Tornberg, Effects of heat on meat proteins - Implications on structure and quality of meat products, *Meat Science*, vol. 70, no. 3, pp. 493-508, 2005.  
 [26] M.Z. Kiss et al., Investigation of temperature-dependent viscoelastic properties of thermal lesions in ex vivo animal liver tissue, *J.Biomech.*, vol. 42, no. 8, pp. 959-966, 2009.  
 [27] E. Sapin-de Brosses et al., Temperature dependence of the shear modulus of soft tissues assessed by ultrasound, *Phys.Med.Biol.*, vol. 55, no. 6, pp. 1701-1718, 2010.



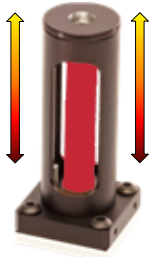
## Hyper-Frequency Viscoelastic Spectroscopy (HFVS) : Principle



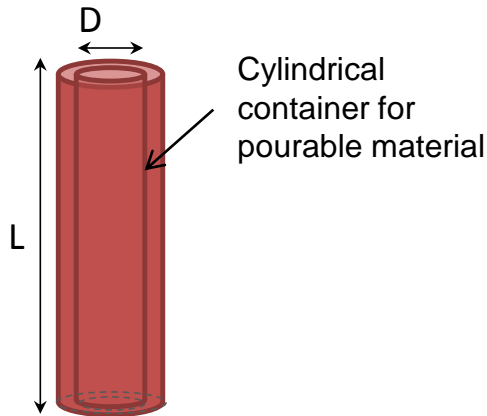
## HFVS: Samples Dimensions



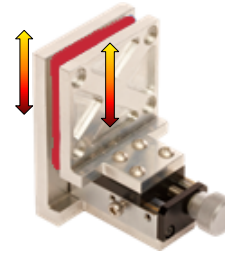
RheoSpectris C400  
(Rheolution)



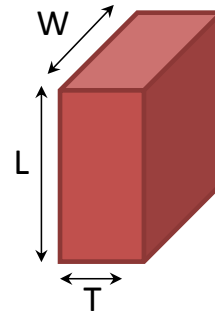
Cylinder



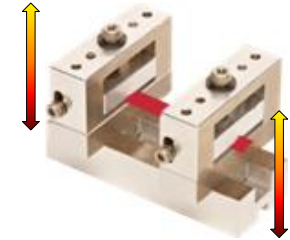
$D = 9.5 \text{ mm}$   
 $L = 76 \text{ mm}$



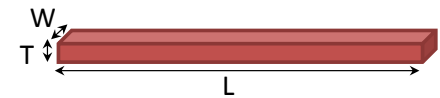
Slice



$T = 3 \text{ to } 12 \text{ mm}$   
 $W \geq 4T$   
 $L \geq 4T$



Beam / Fiber



$L = 6 \text{ mm to } 66 \text{ mm}$   
 $T \leq L/17$   
 $W \approx T$



$L = 6 \text{ mm to } 66 \text{ mm}$   
 $D \leq L/17$

## Commercial Instruments

DMA systems	Frequency range	Stiffness range	Rheometer systems	Frequency range	Stiffness range	HFVS	Frequency range	Stiffness range
 ElectroForce 3200 (Bose)	10 $\mu$ Hz to 150 Hz	Compression ( $E'$ , $E''$ ) 100 Pa* to GPa	 Physica MCR (Anton Paar)	0.0159 $\mu$ Hz to 100 Hz	Shear ( $G'$ , $G''$ ) mPa to kPa*	 RheoSpectris C400 (Rheolution)	10 Hz to 2000 Hz	Shear ( $G'$ , $G''$ ) 10Pa to 1 MPa  Bending ( $E'$ , $E''$ ) 1MPa to 500 GPa
 Q800 (TA Instruments)	0.01 Hz to 200 Hz	1kPa* to GPa	 ARES-G2 (TA Instruments)	0.0159 $\mu$ Hz to 100 Hz	Shear ( $G'$ , $G''$ ) mPa to kPa*			
 ELECTROPULS (Instron)	Up to 100 Hz	kPa* to GPa	 HAAKE MARS (Thermo Scientific)	1 $\mu$ Hz to 150 Hz	Shear ( $G'$ , $G''$ ) mPa to kPa*			
 DMA/SDTA861e (Mettler Toledo)	<b>Shear mode:</b> 0.01 Hz to 1000 Hz  <b>Bending/tension/compression</b> 0.01 Hz to 300 Hz	Shear mode ( $G'$ , $G''$ ) 1 kPa* to 1GPa  Tension/compression ( $E'$ , $E''$ ) 0.1 MPa* to 30 GPa  Bending ( $E'$ , $E''$ ) Up to 500 GPa	 Kinexus (Malvern)	10 $\mu$ Hz to 100 Hz	Shear ( $G'$ , $G''$ ) mPa to kPa*			

**Rheolution inc.:** [www.rheolution.com](http://www.rheolution.com)  
**Bose :** <http://worldwide.bose.com>  
**TA instruments:** <http://www.tainstruments.com>  
**Instron :** [www.instron.com](http://www.instron.com)  
**Mettler Toledo:** [ca.mt.com](http://ca.mt.com)  
**Anton Paar:** [www.anton-paar.com](http://www.anton-paar.com)  
**Thermo Scientific:** [www.thermoscientific.com](http://www.thermoscientific.com)  
**Malvern:** [www.malvern.com](http://www.malvern.com)

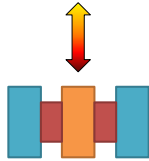
\* Depending on the sample, the strain rate and the frequency range.

## Applications in the literature : Elastography

DMA  
(Q800, TA Instruments)



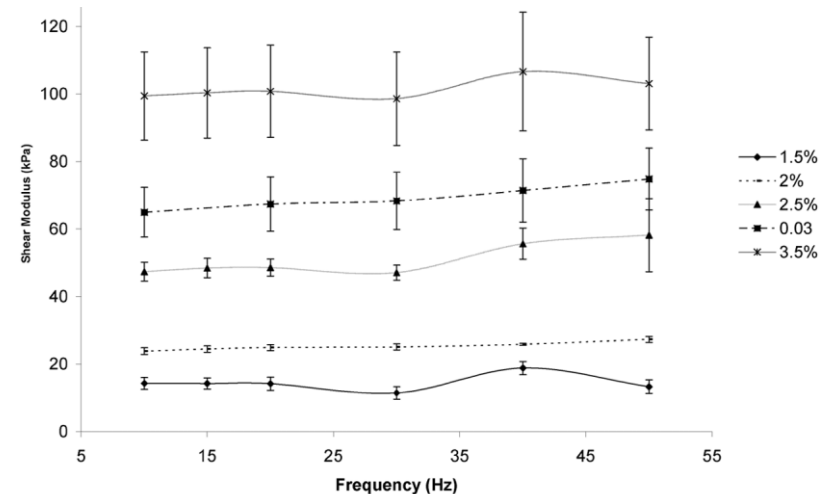
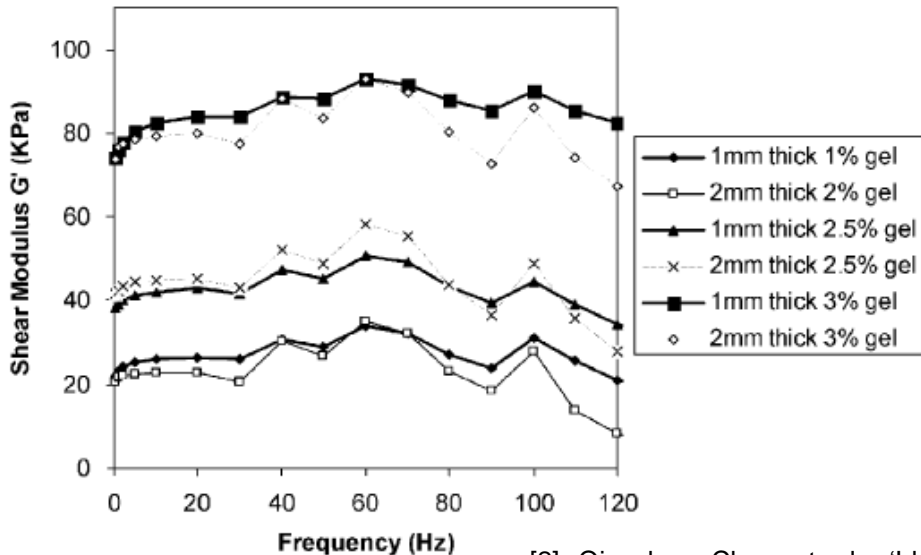
Shear



Validation of MRI elastography on agar samples by using a DMA instrument<sup>[2][3]</sup>

Agarose gel with concentrations ranging from 1.5 to 3.5% in 0.5% increments (sample dimension: 5.5 mm × 10 mm × 1-2 mm)<sup>[3]</sup>

Gels with agar concentration of 2%, 2.5% and 3% (sample dimension: 5.5 mm × 10 mm × 1-2 mm)<sup>[2]</sup>



[2] Qingshan Chen et al., 'Identification of the testing parameters in high frequency dynamic shear measurement on agarose gels', Journal of Biomechanics 38, 959–963, 2005.

[3] Stacie I. Ringleb et al., Quantitative Shear Wave Magnetic Resonance Elastography: Comparison to a Dynamic Shear Material Test, Magnetic Resonance in Medicine 53:1197–1201, 2005.

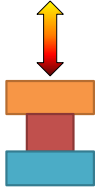
## Applications in the literature : Elastography

DMA  
(ElectroForce 3200, Bose)

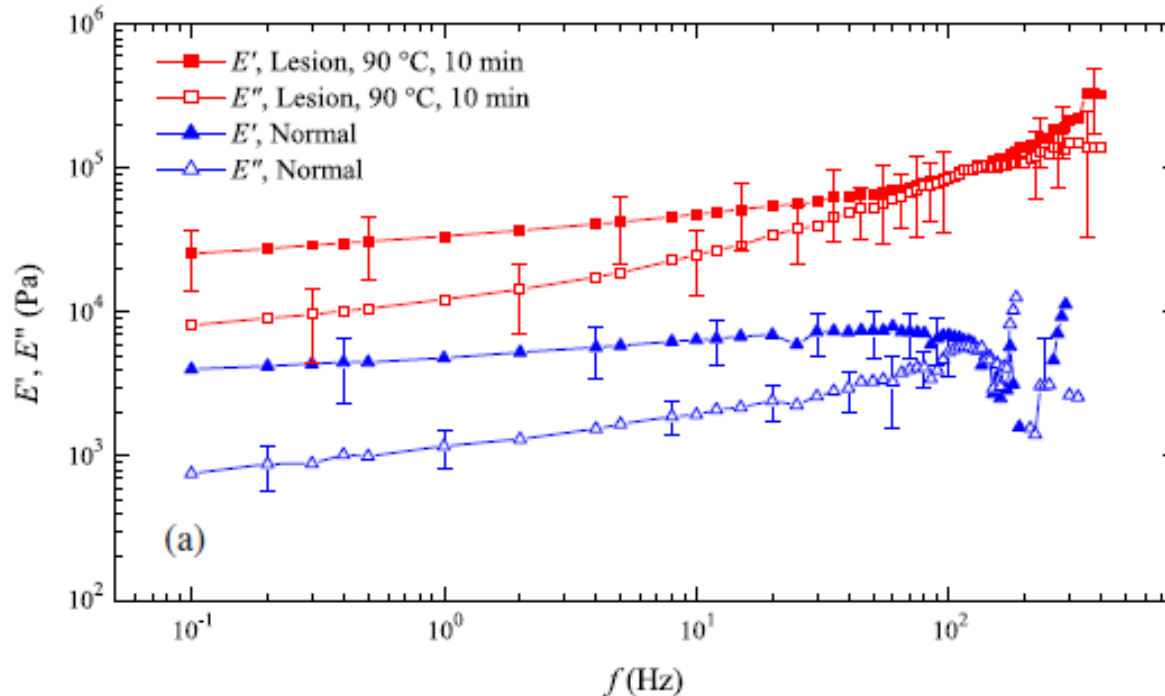


*In vitro* viscoelastic characterization of canine liver  
using a DMA instrument<sup>[4]</sup>

Compression



**Canine liver (fresh or after thermal ablation)**  
(sample dimension: 20 mm in diameter, thickness around 5 mm)<sup>[1]</sup>



## Applications in the literature : Elastography

Rheometer  
(Physica MCR, Anton Paar)



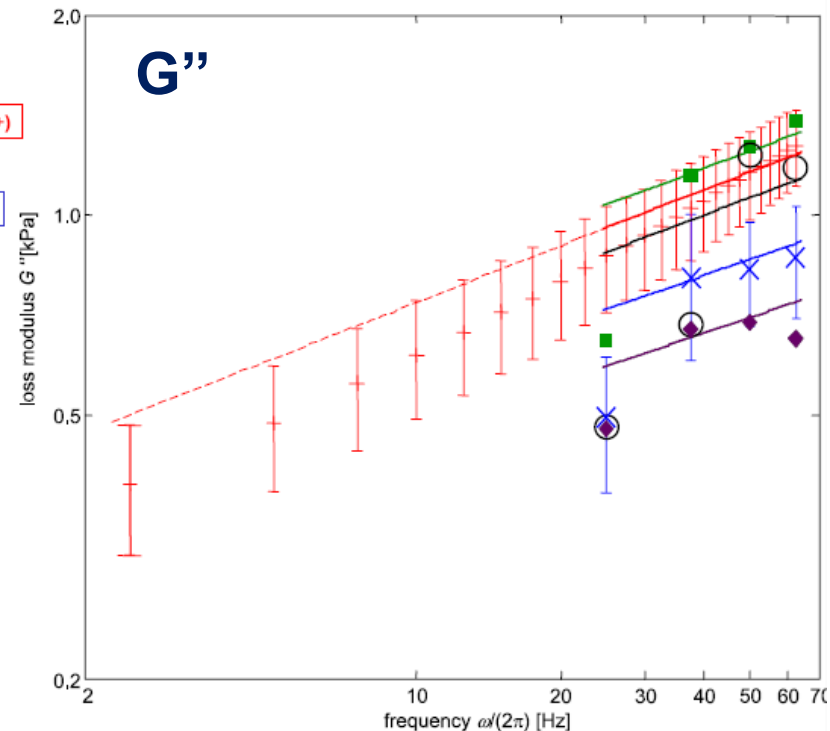
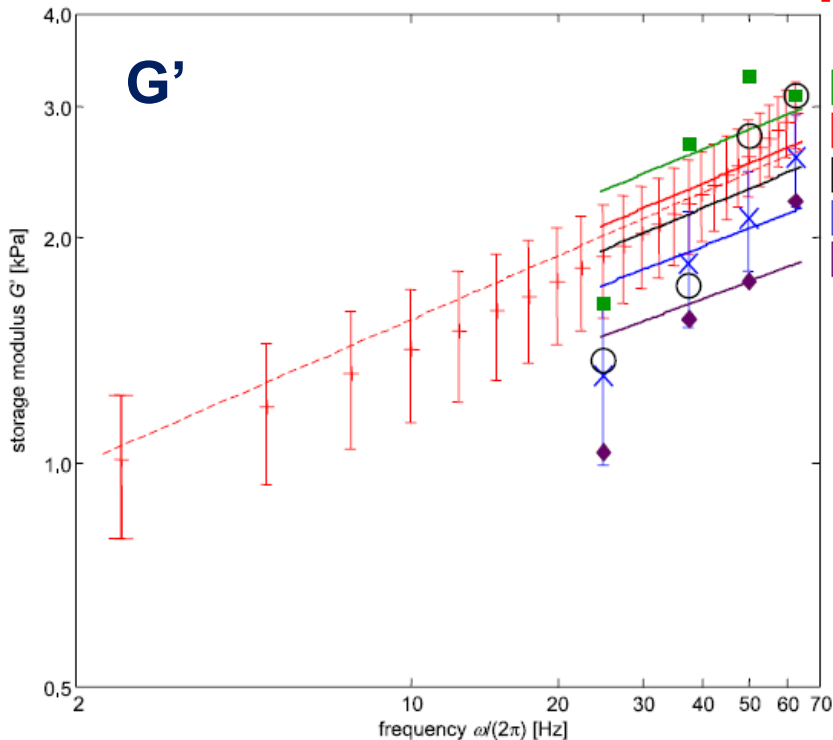
Rotational shear



### Validation of MRI elastography on bovine liver using a rotational rheometer instrument<sup>[5]</sup>

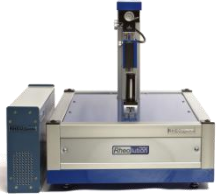
Bovine liver (sample dimensions: 50 mm diameter and a slice thickness of 0.9–2.4 mm)

[Liver tested at 1°C to avoid clotting]



## Applications in the literature : Elastography

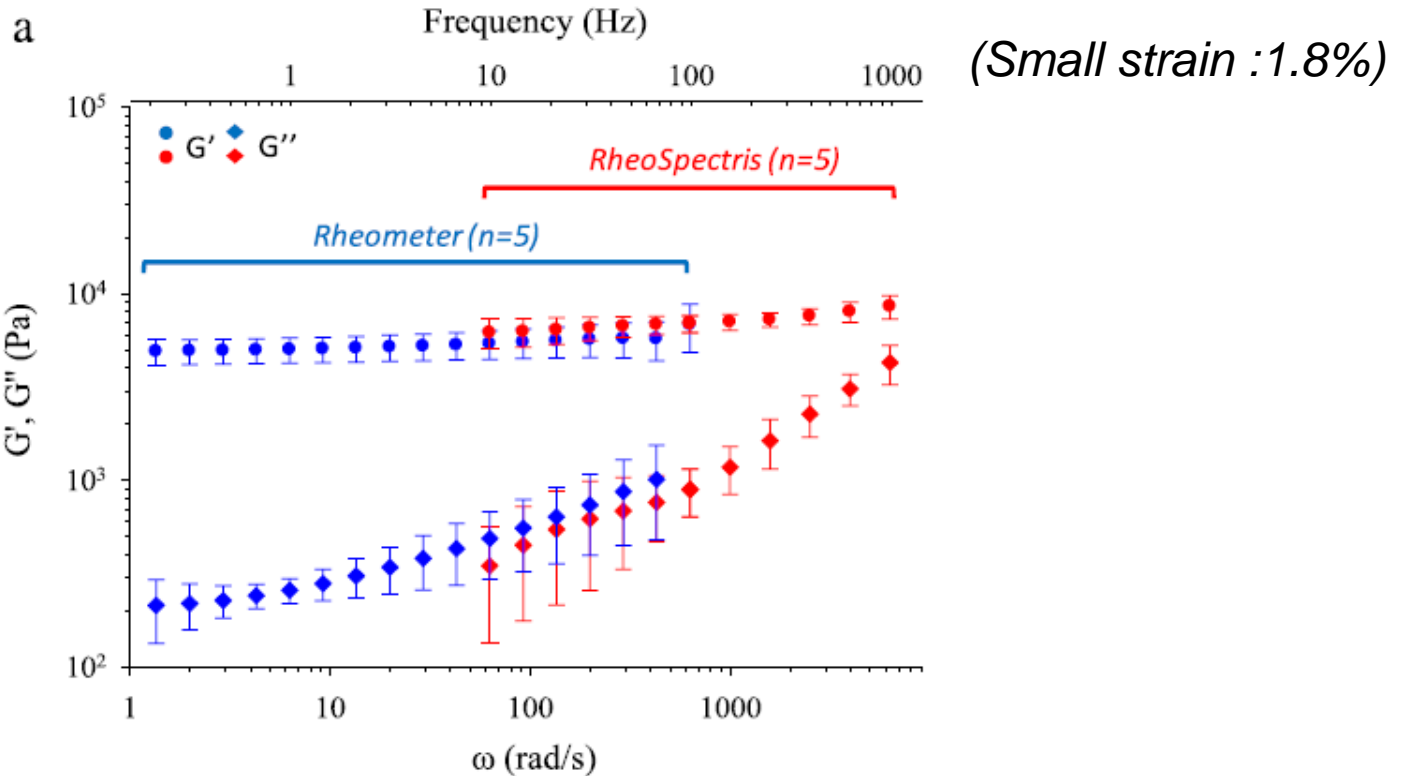
HFVS  
(RheoSpectris C400,  
Rheolution)



Hyper-frequency viscoelastic spectroscopy of biomaterials and elastography phantoms [6]

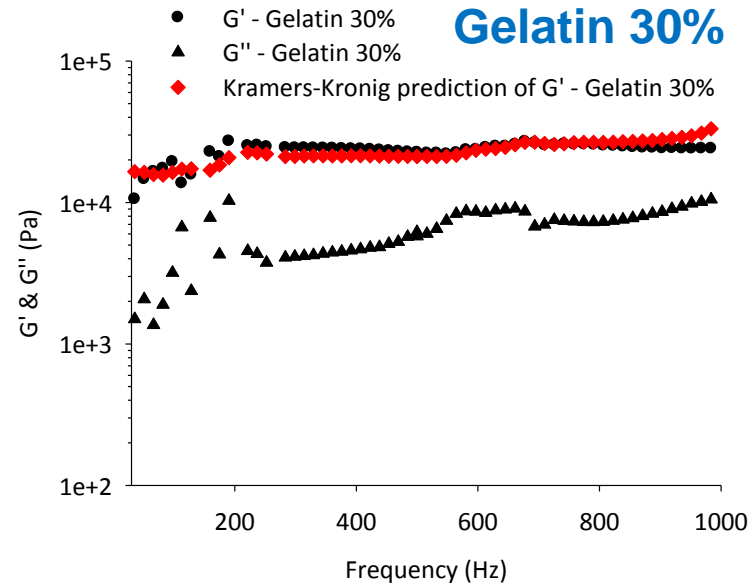
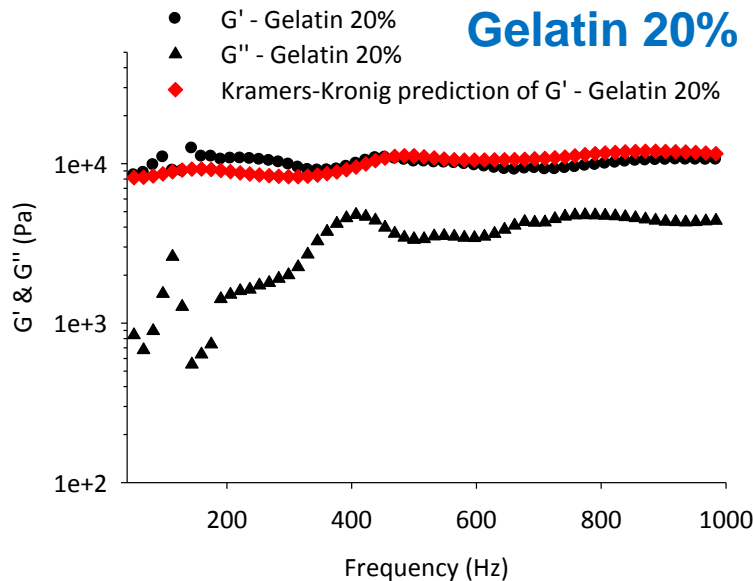
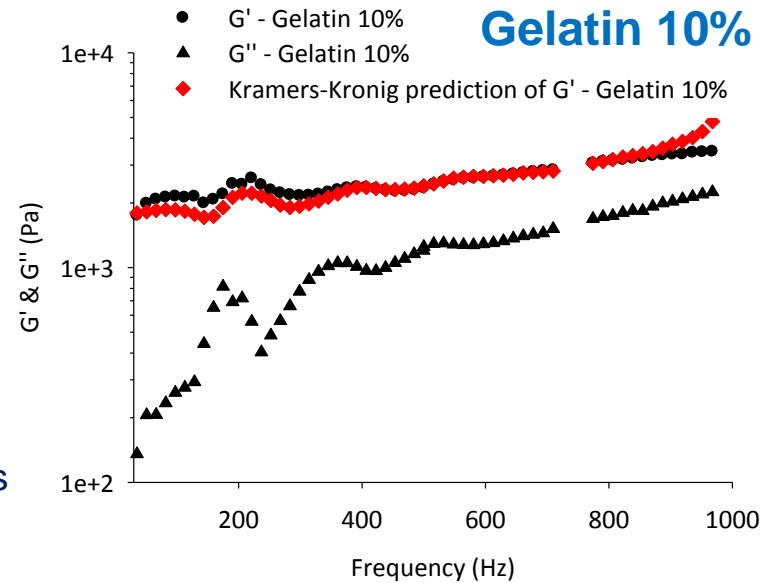
### Polyvinyl alcohol cryogel (PVA-C)

(samples dimensions: 9-14 mm diameter, 70-80 mm long)



## Example HFVS of gelatin using RheoSpectris C500

- Measurement of complex shear modulus of commercial gelatin at three different concentrations: 10%, 20% and 30%.
- Conformity of measurements to the causality principle (Kramers-Kronig)<sup>[21,22]</sup>:
  - Kramers–Kronig: bidirectional mathematical relations connecting the real and imaginary parts of  $G'$  and  $G''$ ,
  - Verify the causality: measurements where the output depends on past and current measurements but not future inputs.

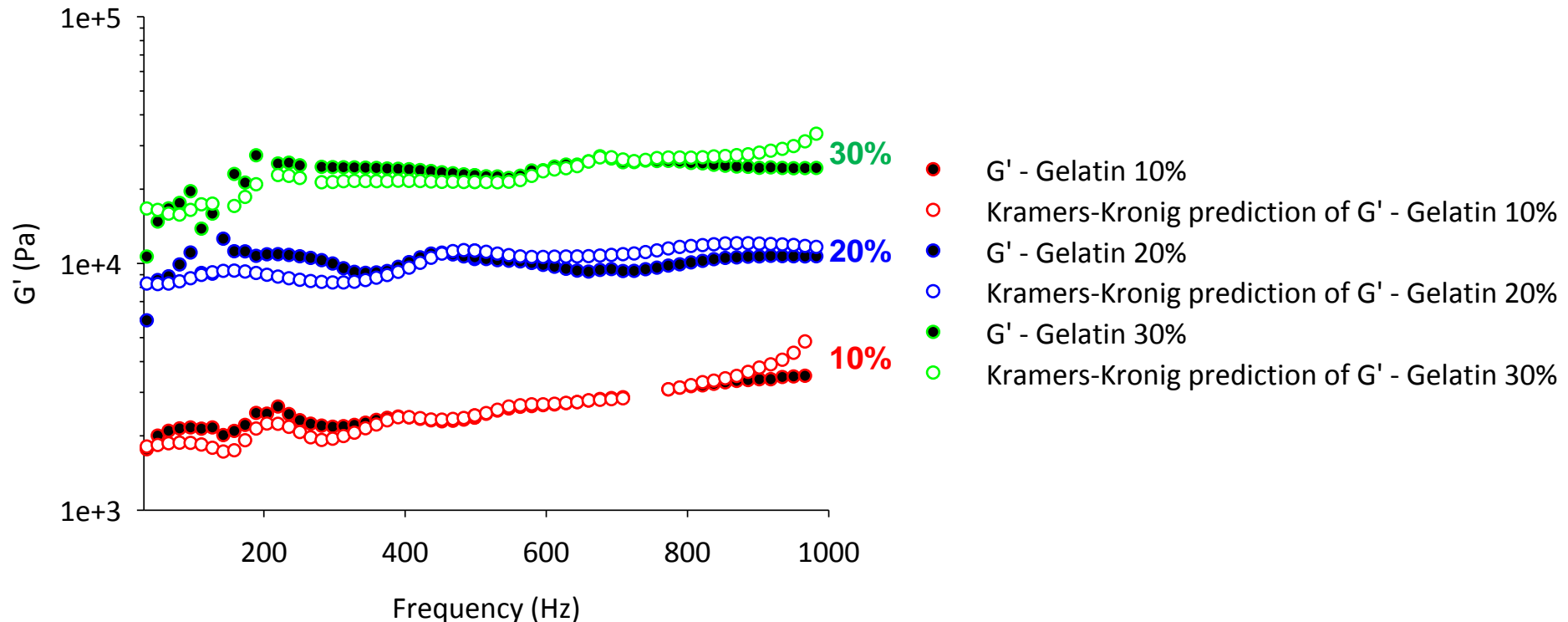




## Conformity of measurements to the causality principle<sup>[21,22]</sup>

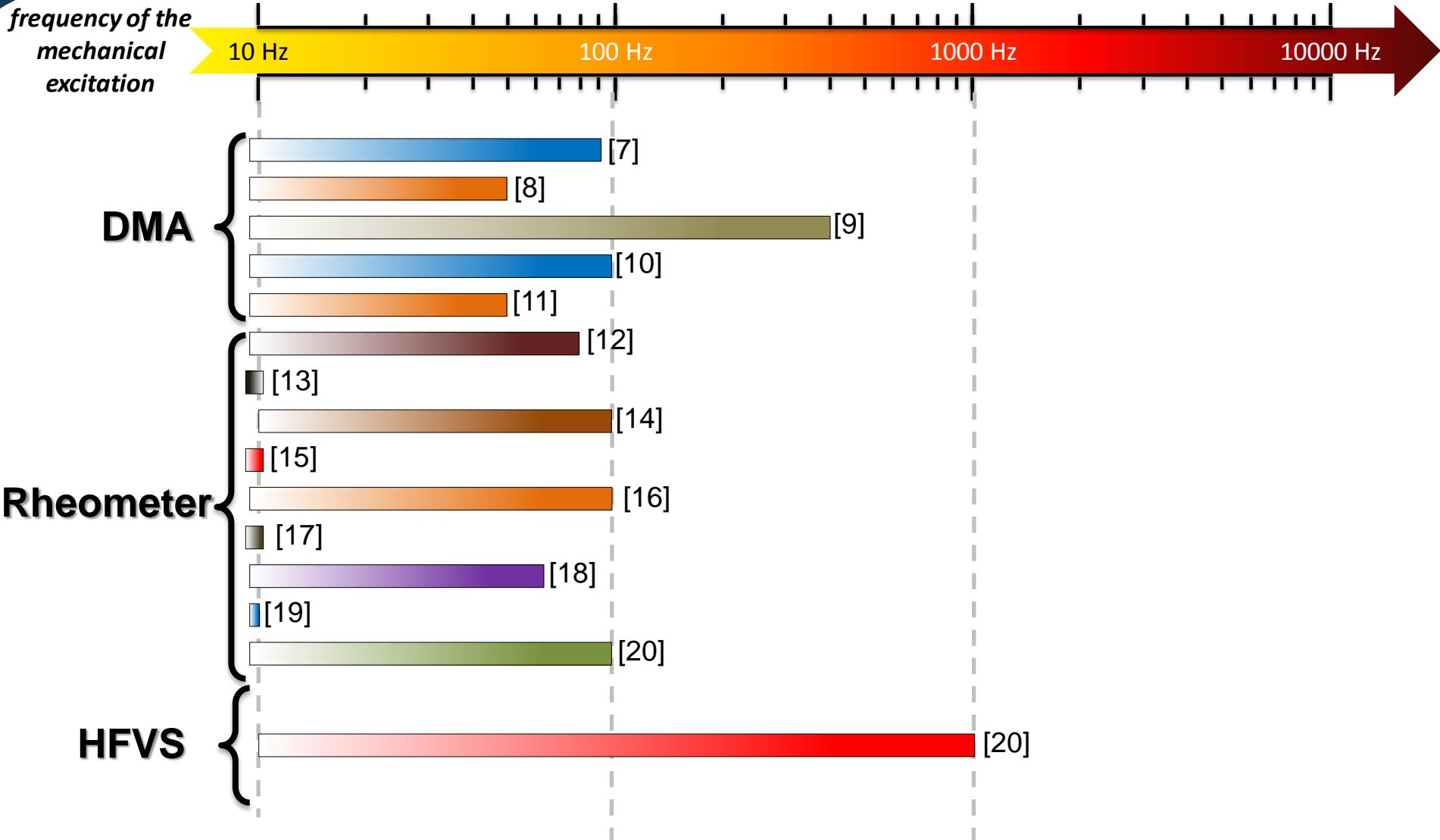
$$G'(\omega) - G'(\infty) = \frac{2}{\pi} P \int_0^{\infty} \frac{\beta G''(\beta)}{\beta^2 - \omega^2} d\beta$$

Comparison of the measured storage moduli ( $G'$ ) with the calculated storage moduli predicted from the measured loss moduli ( $G''$ ) using the Kramers-Kronig relation



Ref	Instrument	Mode	Sample	Sample dimensions	Frequency range	Stiffness range
[7]	DMA (TA Instruments)	shear	agar	5.5 * 10 * 1-2 mm <sup>3</sup>	0.1 to 90 Hz	G' = 10kPa-95kPa
[8]	DMA (Electroforce)	compression	Porcine and canine liver	20 mm diameter, 3-5 mm thick	0.1 to 50 Hz	E*  = 13kPa-45kPa
[9]	DMA (Electroforce)	compression	Canine liver (fresh and after thermal treatment)	20 mm in diameter, ~ 5 mm thick	0.1 to 400 Hz	E*  = 4kPa-400kPa
[10]	DMA (Electroforce)	compression	human uterine tissue	Rectangular : 10-20 mm	0.1 to 100 Hz	E*  = 35kPa-95kPa
[11]	DMA (TA Instruments)	shear	agar	5.5 * 10 * 2 mm <sup>3</sup>	10 to 50 Hz	G' = 15kPa-100kPa
[12]	Rheometer (TA instruments)	rotational shear	gelatin	40mm diameter, 1mm thick	1 to 80 Hz	G' = 1.3kPa to 1.4kPa
[13]	Rheometer (TA instruments)	rotational shear	Copolymer-in-oil	20 mm in diameter 3 mm thick	0.01 Hz to 3 Hz	G' ~ 1 kPa
[14]	Rheometer (Anton Paar)	rotational shear	agar	60 mm diameter 2 mm thick	10 Hz to 100 Hz	G' = 4kPa to 30kPa
[15]	Rheometer (TA instruments)	rotational shear	polyacrylamide gel, Agar-gelatin	10 mm diameter 4 mm thick	0.1 Hz to 10 Hz	G' = 1kPa to 3.5kPa

Ref	Instrument	Mode	Sample	Sample dimensions	Frequency range	Stiffness range
[16]	Rheometer (Anton Paar)	rotational shear	Polyacrylamide	50 mm diameter 1-2 mm thick	0.5 Hz to 100 Hz	$G' = 10 \text{ Pa to } 20\text{kPa}$
[17]	Rheometer (TA instruments)	rotational shear	Porcine brain	20 mm diameter 4-5 mm thick	0.1 Hz to 10 Hz	$G' = 400 \text{ Pa to } 1.4\text{kPa}$
[18]	Rheometer (Anton Paar)	rotational shear	Bovine liver	50 mm diameter 0.9-2.4 mm thick	2.5 Hz to 62.5 Hz	$G' = 1 \text{ kPa to } 3\text{kPa}$
[19]	Rheometer (TA instruments)	rotational shear	Porcine liver	20 mm diameter 3-5 mm thick	0.1 Hz to 4 Hz	$G' = 320\text{Pa to } 600\text{Pa}$
[20]	Rheometer (Anton Paar)	rotational shear	Silicone Polyvinyl chloride PVA-C Chitosan hydrogel Agar-gelatin gel	25 mm diameter 0.1-1.5 mm thick	0.01 Hz to 100 Hz	$G' = 2 \text{ kPa to } 30 \text{ kPa}$
[20]	HFVS (Rheolution inc)	shear	Silicone Polyvinyl chloride PVA-C Chitosan hydrogel Agar-gelatin gel	9-14 mm diameter 70-80 mm long	10 Hz to 1000 Hz	$G' = 200 \text{ Pa to } 45\text{kPa}$



## References

- [1] Placet, V.; Foltête, E., Is Dynamic Mechanical Analysis (DMA) a non-resonance technique?, ICEM 14 – 14th International Conference on Experimental Mechanics, Poitiers, France, EPJ Web of Conferences, Volume 6, id.41004, 2010.
- [2] Qingshan Chen et al., 'Identification of the testing parameters in high frequency dynamic shear measurement on agarose gels', Journal of Biomechanics 38 (2005) 959–963.
- [3] Stacie I. Ringleb et al., Quantitative Shear Wave Magnetic Resonance Elastography: Comparison to a Dynamic Shear Material Test, Magnetic Resonance in Medicine 53:1197–1201 (2005).
- [4] Miklos Z Kiss et al., Viscoelastic characterization of in vitro canine tissue, Phys. Med. Biol. 49, 4207–4218, 2004.
- [5] Dieter Klatt, Viscoelastic properties of liver measured by oscillatory rheometry and multifrequency magnetic resonance elastography, Biorheology 47, 133–141, 2010.
- [6] A. Hadj Henni et al., Hyper-frequency viscoelastic spectroscopy of biomaterials, J. Mech. Behav. Biomed. Mater., 4(7):1115-22, 2011.
- [7] Qingshan Chen et al., Identification of the testing parameters in high frequency dynamic shear measurement on agarose gels, Journal of Biomechanics 38, 959–963, 2005.
- [8] Miklos Z. Kiss et al., Investigation of temperature-dependent viscoelastic properties of thermal lesions in ex vivo animal liver tissue, Journal of Biomechanics 42, 959–966, 2009.
- [9] Miklos Z Kiss et al., Viscoelastic characterization of in vitro canine tissue, Phys. Med. Biol. 49, 4207–4218., 2004
- [10] Miklos Z Kiss, Frequency-dependent complex modulus of the uterus: preliminary results, Phys. Med. Biol. 51, 3683–3695, 2006.
- [11] Stacie I. Ringleb et al., Quantitative Shear Wave Magnetic Resonance Elastography: Comparison to a Dynamic Shear Material Test, Magnetic Resonance in Medicine 53:1197–1201, 2005.
- [12] P.V. Bayly et al., Magnetic resonance measurement of transient shear wave propagation in a viscoelastic gel cylinder, Journal of the Mechanics and Physics of Solids 56, 2008.
- [13] J. Oudry et al., Copolymer-in-oil phantom materials for elastography. Ultrasound in Med. & Biol., Vol. 35, No. 7, pp. 1185–1197, 2009.
- [14] Sebastian Papazoglou et al., Multifrequency inversion in magnetic resonance Elastography, Phys. Med. Biol. 57, 2329–2346, 2012.
- [15] Jonathan Vappou et al., Quantitative viscoelastic parameters measured by harmonic motion imaging, Phys. Med. Biol. 54, 3579–3594, 2009.
- [16] Kishore Kumar et al., Measurement of Viscoelastic Properties of Polyacrylamide-Based Tissue-Mimicking Phantoms for Ultrasound Elastography Applications, IEEE Transactions on Instrumentation and Measurement, Vol.59, No 5, 2010.
- [17] Jonathan Vappou et al., Magnetic resonance elastography compared with rotational rheometry for in vitro brain tissue viscoelasticity measurement, Magn Reson Mater Phy, 2007.
- [18] Dieter Klatt, Viscoelastic properties of liver measured by oscillatory rheometry and multifrequency magnetic resonance elastography, Biorheology 47, 133–141, 2010.
- [19] Simon Chatelin, In vivo liver tissue mechanical properties by transient elastography: Comparison with dynamic mechanical analysis, Biorheology 48, 75–88, 2011.
- [20] A. Hadj Henni et al., Hyper-frequency viscoelastic spectroscopy of biomaterials, J. Mech. Behav. Biomed. Mater., 4(7):1115-22, 2011.
- [21] Rod Lakes, Viscoelastic Materials, Cambridge University Press, (2009).
- [22] Ferry, J.D., 1980. Viscoelastic Properties of Polymers. John Wiley & Sons, New York.
- [23] M. van Turnhout et al., Passive transverse mechanical properties as a function of temperature of rat skeletal muscle in vitro, Biorheology, vol. 42, no. 3, pp. 193-207, 2005.
- [24] N.T. Wright et al., Denaturation of collagen via heating: an irreversible rate process, Annu.Rev.Biomed.Eng, vol. 4, pp. 109-128, 2002.
- [25] E. Tornberg, Effects of heat on meat proteins - Implications on structure and quality of meat products, Meat Science, vol. 70, no. 3, pp. 493-508, 2005.
- [26] M.Z. Kiss et al., Investigation of temperature-dependent viscoelastic properties of thermal lesions in ex vivo animal liver tissue, J.Biomech., vol. 42, no. 8, pp. 959-966, 2009.
- [27] E. Sapin-de Brosses et al., Temperature dependence of the shear modulus of soft tissues assessed by ultrasound, Phys.Med.Biol., vol. 55, no. 6, pp. 1701-1718, 2010.